

## Change and Variation in the Judeo-Spanish Subjunctive

**Abstract:** Judeo-Spanish, also known as Ladino, is a dialect of Spanish which developed after the 1492 Expulsion from the Iberian Peninsula. The Judeo-Spanish dialect displays syntactic change and variation in comparison to the Peninsular and Latin-American dialects in the subjunctive mood. There is also variation present within the different Judeo-Spanish communities, as this study presents evidence from Monastir, Salonika, and the online newsgroup Ladinokomunitá. This different treatment of the subjunctive may be due to the particular history of Judeo-Spanish, a dialect which has preserved Old Spanish forms, created innovative structures, has been influenced by a wide range of languages (French, Italian, Turkish), while at the same time struggling to survive language shift.

**Keywords:** Sociolinguistics, Historical Linguistics, Syntactic Variation, Subjunctive, Spanish Dialects, Judeo-Spanish, Ladino, Preservation, Innovation, Language Death

**0. Introduction.** Judeo-Spanish, also known as Ladino, is the Spanish dialect that developed in the former Ottoman Empire among the *Sephardim*, or Spanish Jews, expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1497 (T. Harris 1994, 17). These Sephardic communities, from the Hebrew name for Spain, ספרד, *Sfarad*, became Spanish-speaking islands in the Balkans and Levant, and their dialect is characterized by traditional usage of the Hebrew Rashí script, preservation of many Old Spanish features, independent linguistic innovations, and extensive lexical borrowing from Hebrew, Aramaic, Turkish, Greek, Italian, French, and other surrounding languages. The Sephardim thrived in the Balkans and the Levant until the fall of the Ottoman Empire, when the newly independent states imposed nationalistic and linguistic measures, and the Nazi invasion of the Balkans, which led to the deportation and extermination of entire Jewish communities (T. Harris 1994, 18-19, 45-49, 197-199).

This syntactic variation study focuses on the usage of the subjunctive mood in three sets of Judeo-Spanish data: a series of interviews from Monastir (present-day Bitola, Macedonia), newspapers from Salonika (present-day Thessaloniki, Greece), and an online newsgroup (Ladinokomunitá). The variety evident in this data echoes the limitations present when analyzing a moribund language. The strengths and weaknesses of each set of data will also be discussed in relation to variation analysis and methodology. Furthermore, if any variation is found, I will try to present different scenarios that can account for it.

**1. Spanish Subjunctive: Modern Usage and Variation.** Because mood is a language-dependent feature, it is hard to give a general definition that encompasses all of its characteristics. According to Porto Dapena (1991, 12), there are three concepts in Spanish that trigger the subjunctive mood: 1)

communication between speaker and listener, 2) attitude of the speaker towards and action, and 3) grammaticality. These concepts echo earlier studies that sought to define the subjunctive mood in terms of both syntax and semantics. For example, Vicente Salvá's 1830 *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (cited in Manteca Alonso-Cortés 1981, 13-4) proposed that mood indicates how the meaning of the action is considered at the time of speech. Furthermore, Manteca Alonso-Cortés (1981, 14) proposes three characteristics particular to the Spanish subjunctive: 1) It is a dependent structure, 2) There is a tendency for the subjunctive clause to not begin a sentence, and 3) There is the assumption that the subjunctive element is related to other elements in the sentence. Manteca Alonso-Cortés's definition of the subjunctive environment seems to be primarily syntactic, but it is not exhaustive. Luquet's characterization contrasts subjunctive as the opposite of the indicative since the latter is defined by the instant of speech and the former is not (Luquet 1988, 313). In this study, the definition of the subjunctive mood reflects that of Dapena (1991, 12), in that both semantic (attitudes, communication) and syntactic (position within the sentence) components are taken into consideration.

As expounded by Asencio et al. (1985, 5-6), the analysis of subjunctive occurrences is inherently problematic because there are instances where the usage of the subjunctive mood is either obligatory or optional. If obligatory, the failure to use the subjunctive mood would yield an ungrammatical sentence. In instances where it is optional, it would yield a different meaning depending on whether the indicative or the subjunctive is utilized. The choice is linked directly with the attitude of the speaker towards the action, which is not overtly expressed but inferred from the subjunctive mood. Therefore, only those instances where the subjunctive is linked with an expressed emotion are counted in our data, thereby eliminating instances in which subjunctive is chosen over indicative to express a certain meaning. The examples below (from Asencio et al., 1985, 5-6) serve to illustrate those instances where subjunctive is obligatory (1) vs. optional (3), (4), (5), and (6):

(1) Te doy el libro cuando **vengas**. (The subjunctive obligatory after temporal clauses)

'I'll give you the book when you come'

(2)\*Te doy el libro cuando **vienes**. (The indicative yields ungrammaticality)

(3) Voy a casarme con una chica que **cocina** muy mal. (indicative)

'I'm going to marry a girl who cooks horribly (*and I know this for a fact*)'

(4) Voy a casarme con una chica que **cocine** muy mal. (subjunctive)

'I'm going to marry a girl who cooks horribly (*this girl is very hypothetical*)'

(5) Dile a Emilio que **bebe** poco. (indicative)

'Tell Emilio that he drinks very little (*simple statement*)'

- (6) Dile a Emilio que beba poco. (subjunctive)  
 'Tell Emilio to drink very little (*a command*)'

Therefore, only those clear cases where the context had previously stated an emotion or other environments that trigger the subjunctive mood (see 1.2.1-1.2.3 below) were recorded. The following sections illustrate subjunctive usage according to both semantic and syntactic environments (Benjamin and Butt 1995, 242-272). Sentences in both Modern Castilian Spanish (henceforth MCS) and in Judeo-Spanish (henceforth JS) are used whenever possible. The Judeo-Spanish examples are taken from the Salonika dialect (Bunis 1999), since the Monastir dialect forms differ considerably at the phonological level from the other dialects and the correlation with the MCS examples may not be as evident.

Subordinate clauses present the most varied and numerous instances of the subjunctive mood. This observation agrees with Manteca Alonso-Cortés's proposed tendency of the subjunctive to be dependent and not to appear at the beginning of the sentence (Manteca Alonso-Cortés 1981, 14). The semantic environments that trigger subjunctive use in subordinate clauses are the following (N.B. the labels in caps and bold are used for coding purposes):

A. **POSS.** Statements of possibility and probability.

- (7) MCS: Es posible que llueva hoy.  
 'It is possible that **it may rain** today'

- (8) JS: No pwedeser ke no avlen de afwera.  
 'It is not possible that they cannot **talk** from the outside'

B. **INF.** Statements of influence and necessity.

- (9) MCS: Quiero que vengas a visitarme.  
 'I want you to **come** visit me'

- (10) JS: Hiuv es el primer dia ke te alevantes?  
 'Is it necessary that **you get up** on the first day?'

C. **EMO.** Emotional reactions and value judgements.

- (11) MCS: Temo que llegues tarde.  
 'I'm afraid that you **might arrive** late.'

- (12) JS: Virgwensa ke no sepa loke es mishmará.  
 'It is a shame that s/he does not **know** what *mishmará* means.'

D. **DEN.** Denial of truth or perceptions, as well as doubt.

(13) MCS: No es verdad que **hayas llegado** tarde.  
 'It's not true that you **arrived** late'

E. **FUT.** After subordinators of future action.

(14) MCS: El tren llega cuando **den** las cuatro en punto.  
 'The train arrives when **it's** four o'clock.'

(15) JS: No trushites mwezes ke te **faga** borekas?  
 'Didn't you bring walnuts so that I can **make** you pastries?'

F. **COND.** After subordinators of condition, concession, and exception.

(16) MCS: El tren llega a las cuatro, a menos que **haya** un retraso.  
 The train arrives at four, unless **there is** a delay.

(17) JS: A kondisyón ke me **tragas** simit kon halvá.  
 With the condition that you **bring** me bread with halva.

The subjunctive in the main clause is limited to imperative sentences (IMP) and to the expression of wishes or formulaic invocations for divine intervention (WISH). In the case of imperatives (IMP) it is present only in the positive command form for the first and third persons in the plural (yo, ustedes ~ vozotros) and in all negative commands.

G. **IMP.** Examples of negated imperatives:

(18) MCS: ¡No **vayan** a la playa!  
 Don't (you-all) **go** to the beach!

(19) JS: Mira Djamila, no me des repwesta.  
 Look Djamila, don't **answer back** to me.

H. **WISH.** These are wishes, curses, polite benedictions, and divine invocations.

(20) MCS: ¡Ojalá que **lleguen** con salud!  
 May they **arrive** with good health, God willing!

(21) JS: La mwerte ke me **yevara**!  
 May death **take** me **away**!

Examples (3) and (4) above belong in the relative clauses class. As we observed earlier, this is a particular interesting semantic environment because there is a choice between subjunctive (for unknown referents) and indicative (for known referents). There are several ways that we can assure that the right

instances of presence/lack of subjunctive were accounted for instead of instances of mere choice. These criteria are 1) the presence of the definite article *el/la* and the particle *a* always indicates a known referent, 2) the presence of the indefinite article *un/una* may indicate an unknown referent, and 3) simply by context, whether or not the referent has been previously introduced in the text or not. Observe the (22) definite and (23) indefinite examples below:

(22) MCS: Busco a la mujer que sabe francés. (*a* particle + definite article + indicative)

I'm looking for **the** woman who **speaks** French.

(23) MCS: Busco una mujer que sepa francés. (indefinite article + subjunctive)

I'm looking for **a** woman who **speaks** French.

I. **UNID.** These are relative clauses where the antecedent is unidentified, unspecified, unknown, or denied; this is usually translated into English as whatever, whoever, wherever, etc.:

(24) MCS: Se busca un hombre que tenga permiso para conducir.

Wanted: a man who **has** a driver's license.

(25) JS: Komo al tyempo suyos ke se venian ande hwese.

Like the time when they would go **wherever**.

The environments expounded in A through I are representative of the guidelines utilized while coding the presence or absence of subjunctive in the different sets of texts. These are also the abbreviations used henceforth, especially in charts, to refer to each environment in which subjunctive is present.

Studies on variation in the Spanish subjunctive are not new. However, most studies have focused on the different forms of the subjunctive and not on the presence/absence paradigm. For example, historical linguistic studies (Wright 1933) describe how the *-ra* subjunctive was originally indicative in Latin and it competed with the original *-se* imperfect subjunctive form. Therefore, most Spanish subjunctive studies are limited to the competition between the *-ra* and *-se* forms (Wright 1926; Luquet 1988, 115-120, 134-146; Benjamin and Butt 1995, 239), concluding that the form *-ra* is more prevalent in Latin America while the *-se* form survives in Spain and there is ambivalence in Argentina. Bolinger's (1956) study of Ecuadorian, Castilian, and Cuban Spanish illustrated how the *-se* and *-ra* subjunctive forms are actually part of a semantic chain, along with the conditional and the imperfect, that ranges from the most remote representation of an action (*-se* subjunctive), to an expressed desire (*-ra* subjunctive), to a high possibility (conditional), to the total denial of any possibility (imperfect). Other studies (Dalbor 1969) have highlighted the relation between subjunctive and the different past tenses.

Very few studies have taken into consideration the absence of the subjunctive where there should be a subjunctive form. Luquet's study of the subjunctive in Old Spanish (Luquet 1988, 123) noted that the Old Spanish future subjunctive – *re* form was very sporadic in adverbial clauses (FUT), thus documenting a variation according to the semantic-syntactic environment. Benjamin and Butt (1995, 239) point out in their grammar of modern Spanish that in Latin American "spontaneous" speech the subjunctive is occasionally replaced by indicative constructions. Coincidentally, an example of those environments where the subjunctive is replaced by the indicative is in the Argentinean Spanish FUT construction (Benjamin and Butt 1995, 242). Gutiérrez's study of Houstonian Spanish revealed that generational attrition had an effect on the replacement of conditional forms by subjunctive forms, thus documenting instances where the subjunctive mood has expanded (Gutiérrez 1996, 571). Even though Gutiérrez attributed this particular variation to attrition and influence from English, an earlier study by Lavandera (1975) concluded that the subjunctive mood is very unstable and its usage is directly linked with gender, age, and socioeconomic status, and this instability occurs even in monolingual communities. Therefore, second-language influence cannot account fully for subjunctive limitation or expansion. However, these studies illustrate that the Spanish subjunctive displays different kinds of variations, in both form and presence/absence in required environments.

This study focuses on the absence or presence of the Spanish subjunctive mood in the environments described in sections 1.2.1-1.2.3. Three sets of data are used to achieve this goal. The origin of each set of data, as well as its strengths and weaknesses will be discussed in the following sections. There are several reasons to expect syntactic variation in Judeo-Spanish in contrast to Modern Castilian Spanish: 1) It has been noted that Judeo-Spanish is archaic in comparison to Modern Castilian Spanish, but also 2) Judeo-Spanish is a dialect of Spanish that has evolved isolated from other Hispanic communities, 3) It has long been in contact with a set of languages different from other Spanish-speaking communities, and 4) it is currently an endangered, dying language. All these are factors that are able to trigger variation at a syntactic level. Furthermore, a recent study at the morphosyntactic level (Romero 2004) presented considerable differences in the gender assignment systems between Modern Castilian Spanish and Judeo-Spanish.

**2. Data from Monastir Judeo-Spanish (MJS).** The Sephardic community of Monastir, present-day Bitola, Macedonia, was established in the mid-sixteenth century and even though they were not forced by the Ottomans to live in specific quarters, they settled primarily in a large building complex called *The Great Court*, similar to the Spanish courtyards (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 9, 33). However, the isolation of the Monastir community increased after Jews were banned from the wool trade in 1540, thus making contact with the prosperous city of Salonika unnecessary. Thus, even though it lay between Salonika and Sarajevo and Vienna, this community remained practically isolated from the rest of the Judeo-Spanish speaking world. Early in the nineteenth century, the

establishment of a school by the Alliance Israélite Universelle, an organization which sought to educate the Jews of the Balkans and the Levant in the French language, brought French as the language of science and literature (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 91-92). However, in spite of its isolation, the community was deeply affected by World War I. The Austrian conquest of the Balkans devastated the region. Many migrated to the United States and the Levant. The Jewish population of Monastir fell from 1,250 families to 650 families in 1918; 400 of these families lived in extreme poverty. By 1927, the time when Luria conducted his study on the Monastir Dialect (1930) only about 3,000 Jews lived in Monastir (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 92, 145).

**2.1. Data Quality: Strengths and Weaknesses.** Luria's data consists of a series of interviews conducted in 1927 in Monastir (Luria 1930). He collected folk stories and proverbs, as well as lists of words. One of the many useful points for a variation study is that he noted the informant's names, occupations, and the native village of their parents. Most of his informants, however, were NORMs (non mobile, older, rural males) with only one female informant. Thus, even though a variation study based on gender cannot be conducted, an in-group variation study seems more realistic. Another of Luria's strengths is that he recorded his interviews in a phonetic short transcription, thus enabling a possible phonological variation study. This is especially relevant since the Monastir Judeo-Spanish dialect (MJS henceforth) differs from other Judeo-Spanish dialects in the Balkans by characteristic 'Portuguese-like' phonological features such as the preservation of initial Latin F- (Latin FERMOSU > MJS *fermozú* 'beautiful') and other independent phonological developments, such as the lack of velar and dental fricatives in intervocalic position. The most interesting feature is the raising of final unstressed vowels. Thus: Salonika Judeo-Spanish *kortijo* > MJS *kortiju* 'courtyard', Salonika Judeo-Spanish *gáina* > MJS *gáine* 'chicken'. Even though these features are present in Modern Portuguese, they were also part of Medieval Spanish, therefore their presence may simply indicate preservation of the Medieval Spanish unstressed vowel system. This dialect, in conjunction with other Balkan Judeo-Spanish dialects such as Sarajevo Judeo-Spanish and Bucharest Judeo-Spanish, are sometimes derisively referred as the *digi digi* dialects, and it has the pejorative sense of being rural, backward, and "from the provinces" (Kohen and Kohen-Gordon 2000, 116).

These phonological characteristics are relevant in our subjunctive study since subjunctive-marking vowels often occur in unstressed positions and consequently often adopt a different phonetic form from their counterparts in other dialects. For example, observe the Modern Standard Spanish system for the indicative and the subjunctive pattern:

	(26) cantar 'to sing'	(27) comer 'to eat'	(28) subir 'to ascend'
Indicative	él canta	él come	él sube
Subjunctive	que él cante	que él coma	que él suba

Thus, Modern Standard Spanish verbs that have *-a/-* as their thematic vowel (last vowel in the infinitive) change to */e/* in the subjunctive, and verbs that have *-e/-* and *-i/-* as their thematic vowels change to */a/* in the subjunctive. The system for unstressed vowels in MJS, however, raises the vowels when in final position, thus yielding the following indicative and subjunctive pattern:

	(29) kantar 'to sing'	(30) kumer 'to eat'	(31) suvir 'to ascend'
Indicative	el kante	el kumi	el suvi
Subjunctive	Ki el kanti	Ki el kume	Ki el suve

Therefore, the indicative/subjunctive paradigm in Monastir Judeo-Spanish is indicative */e/* and subjunctive */i/* for verbs that have the *-a/-* thematic vowel and indicative */i/* and subjunctive */e/* for verbs that have *-e/-* or *-i/-* thematic vowels. Such paradigm is consistent throughout Luria's data.

**2.2. Results from Monastir.** The analysis of Luria's (1930) data yielded the following results for the presence/absence of the subjunctive mood in subjunctive-triggering environments. The asterisk (\*) represents the absence of the subjunctive mood in the relevant environment.

**Figure 1. MJS Results for subjunctive presence/absence**

Environment	# of tokens		presence % (calculated only for environments # of tokens > 10)
		*	
<b>INF</b>	78	2	98%
<b>FUT</b>	45	8	85 %
<b>WISH</b>	22	1	96 %
<b>IMP</b>	21	1	95 %
<b>COND</b>	8	6	57 %
<b>POSS</b>	6	1	NA
<b>EMO</b>	2	0	NA
<b>DEN</b>	0	2	NA
<b>UNID</b>	9	25	26 %

A Chi-square test was also applied in order to investigate if the distribution was significant. The results for the Chi-square test were  $df=8$ , Chi-square=99.197, and  $p \leq 0.001$ . The distribution is significant. It is interesting to note that the subjunctive appears to be more stable in INF subordinate clauses, and presents more variation in UNID relative clauses. The main-clause environments WISH and IMP are also highly stable, with almost no variation at all. These results will be compared in relation to the other sets of data in section 5.

**3. Data from Salonika Judeo-Spanish (SJS)** In sharp contrast with Monastir, the Sephardic community of Salonika (present-day Thessaloniki, Greece) thrived

and served as the cultural, religious, and linguistic center for Ottoman Jewry. The community settled early after 1492 and by 1570 it had reached a Jewish population of more than twenty thousand (Sachar 1995, 77, 82). Salonika became a prosperous Mediterranean harbor, and it was the only city in the Ottoman Empire where the Sephardim actually made up the majority of the population. In the seventeenth century, the economic role of the Sephardim in Salonika was so overwhelming that all business, Jewish and non-Jewish, closed on the Sabbath. This prosperity was extended to religion as well. The *Talmud Torah* of Salonika became the highest authority in training scholars and rabbis in the Sephardic world (Sachar 1995, 135; Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 25). However, the splendor of the “Jerusalem of the Balkans,” as Salonika was romanticized, began to fade when Dutch and British textile industry grew and shifted the trade routes from the Mediterranean and the Levant to Western Europe and the Americas in the early 1700s (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 45). Religion also suffered greatly, as a series of false Messiahs began to emerge and further divided the Jewish community. Even though the tobacco trade provided a brief economic recovery, by 1911 almost half of Salonika’s 13,000 Jewish families lived in poverty and were receiving aid from benevolent institutions (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 82). In 1924, the Greek-Turkish population exchange, which decreed that all Muslims be resettled in Turkey, and all Christians in Greece, concluded with a Jewish minority in Salonika. Furthermore, the *Dönme*, a Jewish sect that converted to Islam under a false Messiah and whose members continued to speak Judeo-Spanish, was forced to resettle in Turkey (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 58, 98). The new Greek government immediately imposed nationalistic Hellenization policies, such as the 1930 prohibition for Greek citizens (Jews included) to attend foreign elementary schools. Thus, efforts of the Alliance Israélite Universelle to promote education among Sephardic Jewry were abruptly limited. By 1940, the time when the city’s last Judeo-Spanish newspapers were being published, only about 56,000 Jews remained in Salonika (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 100).

**3.1. Data Quality: Strengths and Weaknesses.** The data for Salonika Judeo-Spanish (henceforth SJS) comes from David Bunis’ *Kolot mi-Salonika ha-Yehudit* (1999), in which excerpts from four Judeo-Spanish newspapers, *El Mesajero*, *El Rizón*, *Aksyón*, and *Rayo de Fwego*, published in 1929, 1932, and from 1935 to 1940, are transliterated from the Hebrew Rashí alphabet into a phonetically-based alphabet. This set of data is very extensive, providing a total of 384 tokens, in comparison to MJS’s 237 and Ladinokomunitá’s 161. However, because these particular newspaper excerpts were drawn from the comic or satire section, most entries are anonymous, thus making a variation analysis based on gender and/or age impossible. Also, in order to convey a satirical effect, it is possible that many of the dialect’s features have been emphasized purposely in order to represent a stereotypical character. Most personified characters are old couples discussing ‘modern’ times and feeling nostalgia for the ‘glorious’ Sephardic days.

**3.2. Results from Salonika.** The analysis of Bunis' (1999) data provided the following results for the presence/absence of the subjunctive mood in subjunctive-triggering environments.

**Figure 2. SJS Results for subjunctive presence/absence**

Environment	# of tokens		presence % (calculated only for environments # of tokens > 10)
		*	
INF	116	2	98 %
FUT	52	3	95 %
WISH	113	0	100 %
IMP	37	1	97 %
COND	5	3	NA
POSS	6	5	55 %
EMO	10	13	43 %
DEN	1	1	NA
UNID	6	10	38 %

In addition, a Chi-square test was applied in order to investigate if the distribution was significant. The results for the Chi-square test were  $df=8$ , Chi-square=156.55, and  $p \leq 0.001$ . The distribution is significant. The results from SJS are similar to those of MJS in many aspects. For example, in both sets of data INF and WISH have the highest percentages of subjunctive occurrences, while UNID has the lowest. These and other correlations will be discussed in section 5.

**4. Data from Ladinokomunitá Judeo-Spanish (LKJS)** Ladinokomunita is the first and only Judeo-Spanish list serve on the Internet. In 1997, the Israeli government established an institution for the preservation and fomentation of Judeo-Spanish language and culture: *La Autoridad Nacionala de Ladino i su Kultura*. This organization sponsored several publications (Bunis' 1999 *Kolot mi-Salonika ha-Yehudit* is one of them) and congresses, and in the 1999 Jerusalem conference it reached the conclusion that standardization of Judeo-Spanish spelling is essential for its instruction and preservation. The Ladinokomunitá list serve originated as an idea to spread the standardized spelling known as *Aki Yerushalayim*, named after an Israeli Judeo-Spanish journal which first introduced it (Amado Bortnick 2001, 3). The Ladinokomunitá list serve began in January 2000 and gained an impressive number of active subscribers very quickly. As of December 2004, when this study was conducted, the Ladinokomunitá list serve was still operating and it consisted of about 570 members, with more than 11,500 messages.

**4.1. Data Quality: Strengths and Weaknesses.** The third set of data, Ladinokomunitá Judeo-Spanish (henceforth LKJS), is actually a subset of the

larger Ladinokomunitá list serve messages. LKJS was drawn from the first five months, January-May 2000, a crucial period before the role of moderators increased considerably. In a series of electronic messages, the current moderators, all native speakers, expressed that the most common changes they make deal with spelling, especially in changing the messages into the standardized *Aki Yerushalayim* system. Grammatical errors were seldom mentioned as part of the corrections. The moderators expressed that they consulted several Ladino dictionaries, but there was no mention of Castilian Spanish grammars or Judeo-Spanish instruction manuals, such as Matilda Koén-Sarano's *Kurso de Djudeo-Espanyol (Ladino) Para Adelantados*, which has an extensive section on the subjunctive mood (Koén-Sarano 2002, 84-91).

The LKJS data also excluded those messages posted by non native speakers in order to rule out subjunctive presence or absence as a result of second-language acquisition errors. Large messages containing stories or songs taken from books or other literary sources were similarly expunged. Thus, the LKJS data tried to obtain as natural sample as possible. The five-month period subset contained over one-hundred messages posted by 24 different subscribers, 13 men and 11 women, with a total of 161 tokens. Even though it may seem that this is the first set of data that contains both male and female speakers (unlike the predominantly-male MJS and the ambiguous cases in SJS), LKJS is not adequate for a variation study based on gender because the majority of the messages were written by women, who wrote often and extensively, whereas most men wrote only once. However, the Ladinokomunitá list serve at large, containing more than 11,500 messages and 570 members, may actually be more adequate for a gender-based variation study. Also, the fact that the list serve is already in electronic form opens the possibility to explore variation and any other type of corpora-based studies utilizing concordance programs.

**4.2. Results from Ladinokomunitá.** The analysis of the LKJS data provided the following results for the presence/absence of the subjunctive mood in subjunctive-triggering environments.

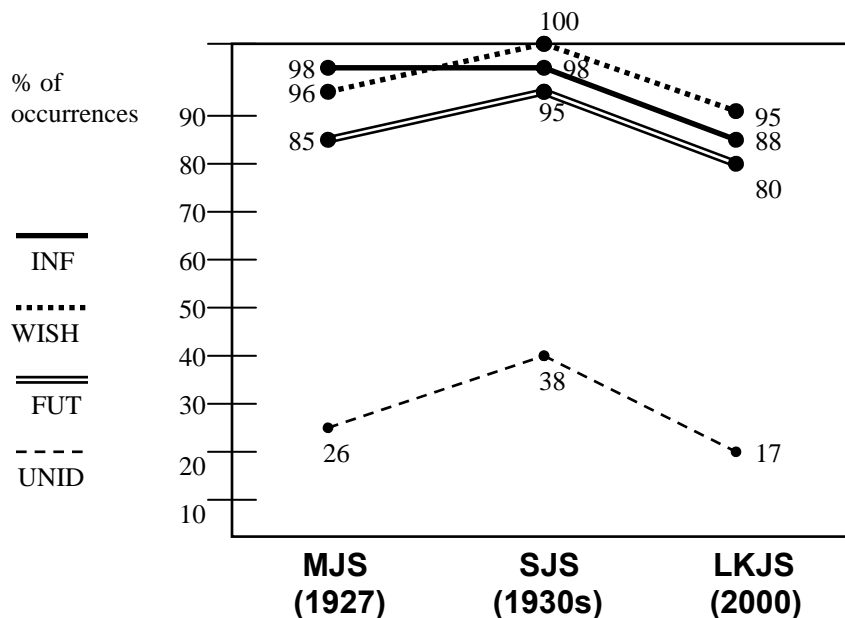
**Figure 3. LKJS Results for subjunctive presence/absence**

Environment	# of tokens		presence % (calculated only for environments # of tokens > 10)
		*	
<b>INF</b>	44	6	88 %
<b>FUT</b>	12	3	80 %
<b>WISH</b>	19	1	95 %
<b>IMP</b>	0	0	NA
<b>COND</b>	5	1	NA
<b>POSS</b>	0	16	0 %
<b>EMO</b>	5	15	25 %

<b>DEN</b>	3	2	NA
<b>UNID</b>	5	24	17 %

Furthermore, a Chi-square test was applied in order to investigate if the distribution was significant. The results for the Chi-square test were  $df=7$ , Chi-square =84.96, and  $p \leq 0.001$ . The distribution is significant. The results from LKJS are strikingly similar to those drawn from MJS and SJS in that they conclude WISH and INF have the highest percentages of subjunctive presence whereas UNID has the lowest percentage.

**5. Interpretation of Results.** Because not all environments were significantly present in all three sets of data, we can only draw a generalization from four environments: INF, WISH, FUT, and UNID. The following graph shows the distribution in percentages of the said environments in all three sets of data: **Figure 4. Subjunctive occurrence (%) in INF, WISH, FUT, and UNID environments in MJS, SJS, and LKJS.**



All three syntactic positions in which subjunctive occurs are represented: Main clause (WISH), subordinate clause (INF, FUT), and relative clauses (UNID). The highest percentages of the subjunctive mood occur in Salonika Judeo-Spanish and the lowest occur in the Ladinokomunitá set. Most interesting is the behavior of UNID, displaying the lowest percentage of subjunctive occurrences in all three sets of data. There are also other environments that were present in only two sets of data that can be compared. For example, IMP seems to be relatively stable in both MSJ (96%) and SJS (97%); unfortunately the IMP environment was not found in the LKJS set. There are two dramatic instances of subjunctive decline from SJS to LKC: Subjunctive in the EMO environment in SJS (43%) is

reduced in LKJS (25%). Similarly, Subjunctive usage in the POSS environment in SJS (55%) completely disappears in LKJS (0%). In the following sections I provide different scenarios that could account for this variation in the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive.

**5.1. Preservation.** Because Judeo-Spanish retained much of the phonological system of Old Spanish (Ariza 1996, 155), this dialect gives the erroneous impression of being ‘Spanish frozen in time.’ This is also true at the syntactic level. For example, some Judeo-Spanish dialects still retain the article-possessive construction as in Old Spanish:

(31) Ande está el mi ijo?  
 where is the my son  
 ‘Where is my son?’

(32) Dos amantes tengo la mi mama  
 two lovers I.have the my mother  
 ‘I have two lovers, mother’

Subjunctive usage in Judeo-Spanish and Old Spanish is similar in several points. Some of the high levels of subjunctive usage have been stable even as early as Vulgar Latin, for example, WISH introduced by *si* < Latin *si*, ‘if only ...’, used to introduced many set phrases, displays the highest percentages of occurrences in SJS and LKJS, and it is the second-highest in MJS. Similarly, the pattern of IMP, which is high and stable in both MJS (96%) and SJS (97%) is already displayed in the twelfth century epic *El Cantar de Mio Cid* (Jensen and Lanthrop 1973, 15, 17). Therefore, the behavior of the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive in WISH and IMP may be presented as a preservation of the Old Spanish subjunctive system.

It is possible that the variation in the environment FUT may be the result of preservation of the Old Spanish system. As Figure 4 above illustrates, the FUT environment in subordinate clauses displayed considerable variation in all three sets of data: MJS (85%), SJS (95%), and LKJS (80%). Variation in the FUT environment is already attested in Old Spanish, with a sporadic presence of the subjunctive form *-re* (Luquet 1988, 123). Even though in Judeo-Spanish the subjunctive mood is primarily present, this variation may be an extension of Old Spanish ambivalence. A complete shift to the indicative can be observed in other Romance languages such as Italian and French (Benjamin and Butt 1995, 241). Observe the following Italian (33) and French (34) examples:

(33) Ci andremo quando **farà** bel tempo.  
 there we.will.go when it will.do good weather  
 ‘We will go there when there’s good weather’

(34) On y ira quand il **fera** beau temps.  
 one there will.go when it will.do good weather  
 ‘One will go there when there’s good weather’

Notice how French and Italian have opted for the future of the present indicative in the FUT environment. Can the ambivalence of the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive in the FUT environment be attributed to French and Italian influence? Even though Judeo-Spanish lexicon was greatly influenced by both French and Italian, an affirmative answer cannot be assumed since this pattern is also present in Latin American dialects (Benjamin and Butt 1995, 242):

- (35) ?Se lo diré cuando **vendrá**.                      (36) Se lo diré cuando **venga**.  
 him it I.will.tell when he.will.come                      him it I.will.tell when he.comes  
 'I will tell him when he comes'                      'I will tell him when he comes'

The French/Italian pattern in (35) with the future indicative is not as accepted as sentence (36) with the present subjunctive. As a matter of fact, Benjamin and Butt (1995, 242) claim that in Argentinean Spanish a pattern like (36) and (37) with the present indicative is the norm:

- (37) Te lo diré cuando **llega**.  
 'I will tell you when he **comes**'

The following Judeo-Spanish examples illustrate the usage of the indicative in FUT environments:

- (38) MJS Dami kuandu la **veyu**  
 'Give me when I **see** her.'
- (39) SJS Amanyana es muerir asta ke se **arekoje**.  
 'Tomorrow is a very tiring task until it **ends**.'
- (40) LKJS Ya vos vo eskvirir kuando **tengo** un poko de tyempo.  
 'I will write to you soon, when I **have** some time'

The majority of the Judeo-Spanish indicative forms in this environment are in the present indicative. Therefore French/Italian influence cannot account for this variation, which appears to reflect a continuum of the subjunctive behavior from Old Spanish. This of course does not rule out a conjunction of different factors triggering this variation. In section 5.4, I will present several arguments dealing with the influence of surrounding languages.

As we observed earlier, the environment UNID in relative clauses demonstrated the lowest percentage of subjunctive presence in all three sets of data: MJS (26%), SJS (38%), and LKJS (17%). Could this be interpreted as an Old Spanish feature preserved in Judeo-Spanish? In their study on Old Spanish syntax, Jensen and Lathrop point out that in relative clauses that contain two verbs or more, the subjunctive appears in the first verb, but it is replaced by the indicative in the second even when there is no change in modality. Their argument is that the subordination of the second verb is forgotten, causing a break in the sentence structure and yielding the indicative mood (Jensen and

Lathrop 1973, 28-30). Therefore, in Old Spanish, syntax seems to play an important role in causing the substitution of the subjunctive by the indicative. The presence of the subjunctive mood in French and Italian relative clauses is independent of syntax and is purely semantic (Manteca 1981, 42). Observe the following examples from Italian:

(41) Cerco una ragazza che **abbia** i capelli biondi.  
 'I'm looking for a girl who has blond hair'

(42) Cerco una ragazza che **ha** i capelli biondi  
 'I'm looking for a girl who has blond hair'

Whereas (41) would be considered grammatical in Spanish, (42) may be questionably ungrammatical because the indefinite article (in Italics) triggers subjunctive. In Italian, the subjunctive mood functions within the referential context, thus its usage merely indicates a less possible reality, an *irrealis*. Thus Italian has different degrees of unreality; the girl in (41) is simply more abstract and less likely to exist than the girl in (42). The same can be argued for the following French examples (Manteca 1981, 61):

(43) Il connaît un cuisinier qui **sait** le faire.  
 'He knows a cook who **knows** how to do it'

Here the indicative is used, because as the sentence itself suggests, the referent (cook) is known and very specific. However, the subjunctive can also be used in similar contexts:

(44) Je mange le seul gâteau qui **soit** le bon.  
 'I'm eating the only cake that **is** good'

In (44), the cake is a *realis* because it is being eaten, and it is also very specific, however, the subjunctive is used to indicate doubt on the absolute truth that *the cake is good*. The Judeo-Spanish pattern, however, does not present similar alternations in the subjunctive mood in UNID relative clauses. Even though Manteca (1981) argues that the subjunctive mood is relatively free in relative clauses in Modern Castilian Spanish (Manteca 1981, 61), the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive displacement by the indicative best mirrors the Old Spanish system when subjunctive was sporadic in these clauses. We cannot discard, however, that the disappearance of the subjunctive in UNID relative clauses may also be an independent innovation, such as those discussed in the following section.

**5.2. Innovation.** One of the disadvantages of using Modern Castilian Spanish as the base to identify subjunctive environments is that we may miss other environments that the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive has crept into. In this section I discuss a particular environment in which the subjunctive appears in all three sets of Judeo-Spanish data, but not in Modern Castilian Spanish. I have labeled

this environment as EXT, or extension of the subjunctive replacing the infinitive. As a general rule, the subjunctive is only required when the subject in the main clause and the subject in the subordinate clause are different (Benjamin and Butt 1995, 241), for example (45):

(45) LKJS Vos rogo [ke me lo mandesh].  
 'I pray you [that **you** send it]'

In (45), the subject of the main clause, 'I' is exhorting an action on the subject of the subordinate clause 'you'. When the subjects of the main clause and the subordinate clause are the same, then the infinitive must be used:

(46) LKJS Kería [kuzir un botón de una bluzá].  
 'I wanted [**to sew** a button of a blouse].'

In (46) the subject is exhorting an action upon itself. In EXT, however, Judeo-Spanish uses the subjunctive mood even if the subject is the same. Observe the following examples from Monastir and Salonika:

(47) MJS Agora no sé [lu kue fage].  
 'Now I don't know [what **to do**].'

(48) SJS A si biva yo, ke no sé [kwalo ke faga kon ti].  
 'By heaven's sake, I don't know [what **to do** with you].'

There are several arguments that can account for the innovative presence of the subjunctive in same-subject clauses. Similar to Italian and French (see 5.2 above), the EXT subjunctive has lost its syntactic property of being in a different-subject clause and it has reinforced its semantic property, in the case of (47) and (48), of being in the DEN environment, that is, the environment where knowledge is negated. This construction is not limited to DEN, but examples of INF were also found. It is not clear, however, that this is an independent innovation, since Italian presents a similar case of subjunctive usage in same-subject clauses. Observe the following examples from Italian:

(49) Credo [che io **sono** stanco]. (50) Credo [che io **sia** stanco].  
 'I think I'm tired' 'I think I'm tired'

Even though both sentences have the same gloss, (50) can be in the subjunctive to express a higher degree of improbability. However, this is not identical to EXT because the extension of the subjunctive needs an environment. Even though the verb *credere* requires a subject in Italian (and not an infinitive), the subjunctive/indicative alternation present in (49) and (50) is not free. It serves to reflect a shade of meaning. Thus, the EXT in (47) and (48) above are triggered because *no sé* 'I don't know', the negation of knowledge (DEN), provides the right environment. Gabinski (1996) briefly explained that the replacement of the

infinitive by the subjunctive may be due to Romanian influence, where it has a similar function (Gabinski 1996, 199). Modern Greek also follows a similar pattern. Gabinski, however, does not clarify how this phenomenon may have spread to other non-Romanian and non-Greek speaking areas such as the Jewish communities of Monastir and Sophia. Also, it is not clear how Romanian and Greek can affect the syntactic structure of Judeo-Spanish if there is no strong lexical presence in Judeo-Spanish from Greek and Romanian. Overall, EXT is best explained as an innovation proper to Judeo-Spanish, where the semantic environment simply ignores the syntactic structure of the sentence. The following section intends to expose some areas in which the majority languages surrounding Judeo-Spanish may have played a role in subjunctive variation.

**5.3. Influence from Surrounding Languages.** One of the main differences between Judeo-Spanish and Castilian Spanish is the lexicon. During the Ottoman exile, the Sephardim borrowed lexical items from almost every linguistic group they came into contact with. Séphiha (1997, 29) claims that the Modern Judeo-Spanish lexicon is composed of 20% French, 15% Turkish, and 10% Hebrew, Aramaic, and Hebrew-Spanish calque borrowings. These lexical items are fully incorporated into the language and they may trigger subjunctive usage depending on their semantic content; observe the following examples from SJS with borrowed lexicon in italics:

(51) Agora es zort ke **se syenta** palavras. (INF)  
'Now it's *obligatory* for words **to be heard**.'

(52) Ya va ser de verdad *shilet* ke **vayamos** yo i tu a la fwar. (EMO)  
'Truly it will be a *scandal* that **we go** to the carnival.'

(53) Hiuv es el primer dia ke te **alevantes** i **vayas** a vijitar a Shuniko? (INF)  
'Is it *necessary* that **you get up** and **go** visit Shuniko on the first day?'

The borrowed words *zort* (< Turkish *zor*), *shilet* (< Turkish *shirret*) and *hiuv* (< Hebrew חיוב) propitiate the correct environments for subjunctive usage, thus behaving consistently with the rest of the lexicon.

We have already discussed the possible influences of Italian and Romanian in different environments, and even though French became the language of prestige and education during the last years of the Ottoman Empire, it is not clear that French influence played a major role in subjunctive variation as we observed in the previous sections. Therefore, the rest of this section will focus on the main non-Indo-European language surrounding Judeo-Spanish, Turkish. In 1492, upon arrival in the Ottoman Empire, the Sephardic Jews encountered a policy of *dhimmis* similar to that of Medieval Spain under Muslim rule. The Ottoman Sultan, Bayezid II, granted the Jews complete religious freedom and communal autonomy in exchange for a tax. Thus, the Sephardic Jews were not forced to

convert to Islam, and they settled instinctively in *kals* or quarters according to their Iberian origin. The Sephardic community had its own administration, courts, jails, hospitals, cemeteries, schools, and synagogues, thus they were not compelled to learn Turkish or any of the surrounding languages. They used Spanish as a medium of communication and instruction, and as a way to create a separate identity from the Greek-speaking Romaniot community already present in the empire (T. Harris 1994, 35; Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 51). Thus, Judeo-Spanish remained an island amid Turkish and Balkan languages for centuries. Since Turkish contributed almost one-sixth of modern Judeo-Spanish lexicon, is it possible that it also contributed to syntactic changes? Varol-Bornes gives evidence of certain syntactic phenomena that are clearly Turkish, for example the Judeo-Spanish construction  $N^1N^2$  to indicate that  $N^1$  possesses  $N^2$  (Varol-Bornes 1996, 228-229):

(54) El rav d'agora la mujer era direktrisa de la skola Alyansa.

The rabbi of today<sup>1</sup> the wife<sup>2</sup> was director of the school Alliance  
'The wife of the current rabbi was the director of the Alliance school.'

The Turkish counterpart has almost identical syntax at the noun phrase level:

(55) Bugünkü haham-ın karı-sı Alliance okulu-nun müdür-ü-ydü

Today rabbi-possessor<sup>1</sup> wife-possessed<sup>2</sup> Alliance school-possessor  
director-possessed was  
'The wife of the current rabbi was the director of the Alliance school.'

Varol-Bornes also gives evidence on the introduction of the 'sudden' aspect into Judeo-Spanish as a consequence of Turkish influence. Her study illustrates that Turkish has indeed affected Judeo-Spanish syntax at least at the noun phrase and aspect construction level. Could the variation displayed in the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive be due to Turkish influence? The following illustrates how Turkish may convey some of the environments which use the subjunctive mood in Judeo-Spanish (from Underhill 2001):

**POSS** (56) Ahmet gel-ebil-ir.

Ahmet come-**possibility**-aorist  
'**It is possible** that Ahmet comes/will come.'

**INF** (57) Yusuf doktor-a diş-i-ni çek-tir-di.

Yusuf doctor-dative tooth-his-accusative pull-**causative**-past  
'Yusuf **made** the doctor pull out his tooth.'

**INF** (58) Bu iki mesele-yi ayır-malı-yız

This two problem-accusative separate-**necessitative**-we  
'We **have to** separate these two problems.'

**IMP (59)** Lütfen geç kal-**ma**-yınız  
 Please late arrive-**not**-you(pl)  
 'Please **don't** arrive late.'

There is no direct syntactic correlation between the Judeo-Spanish and Turkish environments, since Turkish works with a system of agglutination providing a different infix for every environment, unlike Judeo-Spanish which uses subjunctive for all environments. The UNID environment, which displayed the lowest percentage of subjunctive occurrences in Judeo-Spanish, is conveyed by the presence of *bir* 'one' before the referent.

(60) Fransızca **konuş**-an bir kadın arıyorum.  
 French speak-who one woman looking-I  
 'I'm looking for **a** woman who **speaks** French'.

(61) Fransızca **konuş**-an kadın-ı arıyorum  
 French speak-who woman-**the** looking I  
 'I'm looking for **the** woman who **speaks** French'.

The Turkish UNID environment illustrated in (60) may have influenced the low presence of the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive because 1) in both languages *one* serves as the indefinite article, thus conveying indefiniteness of the referent and 2) the verbal root (*konuş* in (60)) is not altered. Perhaps the minimal presence of the subjunctive in the UNID environment is explained as a preservation of the Old Spanish system further influenced by the Turkish UNID system, but more research is needed, especially in communities not affected by Turkish, such as those in Italy.

**5.4. Language Death.** Language death and influence from the dominant languages go hand-in-hand. For example, Dressler's two presuppositions for language death are bilingualism or multilingualism and language shift from the recessive to the dominant language (Dressler 1996, 196). However, throughout most of the history of Judeo-Spanish, there was no major unstable bilingualism to trigger the complete transfer from the recessive language (Judeo-Spanish) to the dominant language (French, Turkish, and Greek). On the contrary, as was noted previously, the Sephardic Jews did not receive any pressure from the Ottoman Empire to adopt Turkish, and consequently both Hebrew and Judeo-Spanish remained the languages of religion and education respectively (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 51). However, the fragmentation of the Ottoman Empire and the nationalistic language policies imposed by the newly independent nations reduced the prestige of Judeo-Spanish to a recessive language (Séphiha 1997, 32-4). Unlike mere influence from the dominant language as expounded in section 5.4, a change in language attitude, from a literary and prestigious medium to a worthless dialect or patois impedes transmission from one generation to another. Judeo-Spanish became synonymous with 'jargon' among Sephardim since it was perceived as a mixture of languages due to its large

number of lexical borrowings and code-switching among speakers (Dressler 1996, 199; Busse 1996, 239-243).

As Dressler describes (1996, 97), imperfect or semispeakers do not notice phonological, lexical, or grammatical corruptions, and the older generation fails or does not perceive it as worthwhile to correct them. Thus, the grammar of a dying language may undergo drastic structural changes. This structural decay, in turn, may trigger functional decay (Dressler 1996, 197; T. Harris 1994, 257). Could the variation in the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive be a reflection of the language's ongoing death? T. Harris (1994) lists phonological leveling, individual variation (imperfect speakers), borrowing, code-switching, hesitations, and halting speech as signs of language endangerment (T. Harris 1994 258-260). Modern Judeo-Spanish speakers display all these linguistic symptoms. There are several reasons that initiate language death: The reduction of language domain, fewer speakers, lack of young speakers, no monolingual speakers, and lack of institutional support; all these are relevant to the decline of Judeo-Spanish (T. Harris 1994, 254-257). The reduction of language domain is inherent to the nature of Jewish languages. As T. Harris explains, even in Medieval Spain the Spanish Jews spoke a variety of Judeo-Romance as a secret language different from the Romance spoken by non-Jews (T. Harris 1979, 30). Judeo-Spanish currently remains as the language of the elderly and its once prestigious usage has been reduced to that of comic relief or as a storytelling language.

Judeo-Spanish also has a reduced number of speakers as can be illustrated by the fate of the Monastir and Salonika communities. As we recall, during the time of Luria's (1930) study only about 3,000 Jews remained in Monastir. A decade later, on March 11, 1943, as a result of the Axis conquest of Macedonia, Bulgaria deported most Macedonian Jews, 3,342 from Monastir, to concentration camps, thus annihilating the Monastir dialect (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 176). The Salonika community suffered a similar fate. There were about 56,000 Jews living in Salonika in 1940. Although a much larger community than Monastir, the Salonika community was equally devastated. On April 9, 1941, the German invasion of Greece forced the closing down of the city's Judeo-Spanish newspapers. The last Salonikan Judeo-Spanish newspaper was *El Mesajero*, part of the SJS data set (see section 3). An immediate program of deportation to concentration camps emptied the once 'Jerusalem of the Balkans' of its Jewish population. By 1943, 56,000 Jews had been deported to concentration camps (Benbassa and Rodrigue 2000, 166, 169). In 1994, T. Harris calculated that the total number of Judeo-Spanish speakers, including all the dialects and semi-speakers approximated 60,000 (T. Harris 1994, 255).

There are also no young Judeo-Spanish speakers. The language is simply not passed down to the next generation, thus replacing Judeo-Spanish with the official English, Hebrew, or Turkish. Even among the Ladinokomunitá subscribers, it is hard to find young speakers. A questionnaire conducted by Amado Bortnick (2001) revealed that the members' age ranged from twenty-two

to eighty-one years, and ninety percent of them were over forty years of age. Only seven people were in the 22-29 year old category. Also, there are no monolingual speakers of Judeo-Spanish, making the language non essential for daily life. Amado Bortnick's questionnaire reflects this reality: 96% of the interviewed members were proficient in English, 61% in French, 53% in Castilian Spanish, 36% in Italian, 33% in Turkish, and 32% in Hebrew (Amado Bortnick 2001, 9).

The LKJS data is interesting since it presented the lowest presence of subjunctive in all the environments. Could these results be explained by the dialect's moribund state? Dressler (1996) argues that structural decay in dying languages accelerates functional decay (Dressler 1996, 197). In LKJS, subjunctive usage has been reduced almost by half in some environments (EMO 43% in SJS, 25% in LKJS) and it has disappeared in others (POSS 55% in SJS, 0% in LKJS). Dressler (1996) also argues that an often-cited syntactic phenomenon for dying languages is the decay of subordinate clauses (Dressler 1996, 204). The low percentages of subjunctive presence in LKJS may actually be the result of subordinate clause decay. A third structural change typical of a dying language is centered on style. Dressler (1996) presents monostylism as one of the tendencies of terminal language decay, thus a dying language is used more and more in a casual style (Dressler 1996, 207). This shift towards a casual sociolinguistic domain is directly linked to subjunctive usage. As it can be attested in Latin American dialects, the subjunctive mood can be replaced by the indicative in informal or 'spontaneous' styles (Benjamin and Butt 1995, 239). Therefore, the lower percentages of subjunctive usage in LKJS, in comparison to MJS and SJS, could be a reflection of monostylism. However, we would need same-style data sets in order to rule out the effect of style on subjunctive variation. In any instance, the fact that so many language death characteristics are present in Judeo-Spanish and the possibility that this directly affects subjunctive usage matches T. Harris's scenario that a dying language undergoes structural changes throughout its syntax (T. Harris 1994, 257).

**5.5. Critique.** In this section I try to point out some of the methodological problems of this study in light of syntactic variation. Lavandera (1996) concluded that there are two conditions that must be met in order for alternating syntactic constructions to be considered sociolinguistic variables. First, they must be proven to be the carriers of some non referential information and to have social, stylistic, or other significance. And second, they must be elements whose defining property can be quantified, and the relationship between the defining property and the elements' frequency determine the syntactic alternation (Lavandera 1996, 29). I believe that this study meets both conditions. First, the subjunctive presence or absence (substitution by the indicative) proved to exist in all of the environments where subjunctive occurs, thus usage is determined by the speakers, rather than the context. Lavandera's second condition suggests a scenario similar to phonological variation. This study does not look at subjunctive forms, but rather at *subjunctive-triggering environments*, which

function just like phonological environments. Thus, the presence or absence of the subjunctive in these quantifiable environments mirrors phonological variation according to context.

This study, however, makes the initial assumption that Modern Castilian Spanish subjunctive-triggering environments are the same in Judeo-Spanish. As we recall, the nine subjunctive environments POSS, INF, EMO, DEN, FUT, COND, IMP, WISH and UNID were taken directly from a Modern Spanish grammar (Benjamin and Butt 1995, 242-272). J. Harris (1996) warns against treating standard and vernacular forms merely as distinct surface realizations of the same underlying structure (J. Harris 1996, 31-32). Furthermore, recent research on nonstandard syntax has showed that much of dialectal diversity can be attributed to deep-seated structural divergences, thus contradicting the traditional panlectal identity hypothesis, which considers dialects of a single language as low-level realizations of a common grammatical core (J. Harris 1996, 32). Therefore, perhaps the variation of the Judeo-Spanish subjunctive should be seen as intrinsic to Judeo-Spanish, and not in comparison to Modern Castilian Spanish. If that is the case, then the Monastir and Salonika dialects, as well as the Ladinokomunitá data, which reflects a mixture of Judeo-Spanish dialects, need to be analyzed separately. Syntactic variation, therefore, poses questions central to sociolinguistic validity and dialectal origin.

In terms of data collection, it is almost impossible to collect comparable sets of data from a very restricted and moribund language. Dialects such as Monastir, Sarajevo, and Bucharest are almost extinct, and most of the literary work of these communities was destroyed during World War II. Our three sets of data, a collection of stories part of a sociolinguistic interview (MJS from Luria 1930), a selection of newspaper columns (SJS from Bunis 1999), and an internet-based list serve (LKJS), are not in the same format, nevertheless, the fact that each set of data yielded similar results reveals a common general pattern in the language itself.

**6. Conclusion.** The Judeo-Spanish subjunctive displays variation controlled by several factors. Some of this variation may be inherent to the independent grammar of the dialect, such as preservation of the Old Spanish system or innovation, while some variation may be due to influence from surrounding languages. On top of these dialect-specific developments, there is also variation caused by language death, such as an overall low presence of the subjunctive in all environments (disappearing in POSS). Further research is necessary with more comparable sets of data; however, this study has given evidence of subjunctive variation in Judeo-Spanish and expounded several interpretations for such variation.

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