Folk perceptions of variation among the Chabacano creoles

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This study provides the first account of the perceptual dialectology of the Chabacano creoles, focusing on the three varieties spoken in Cavite City, Ternate, and Zamboanga, Philippines. It examines Chabacano speakers’ metalinguistic awareness and attitudes about each other’s varieties based on qualitative analysis of sociolinguistic interviews, interviews from a perceptual map task, and an online survey. The results show that the speakers consider the three varieties to be separate but mutually intelligible languages, differing mainly in terms of lexical and phonological differences. These linguistic differences are attributed to each variety’s perceived closeness to Spanish or the adstrate Philippine languages. The responses also show that local and traditional identities are important in shaping perceptions about language use. These findings contribute to research on language attitudes and ideologies in the Chabacano-speaking communities, and more generally, demonstrate the potential of using perceptual dialectology (Preston 1999, Preston 2002) to explore the social dynamics of creole and other contact situations.

Keywords: Chabacano, perceptual dialectology, variation, folk perception, language attitudes.

1. Introduction

The present study identifies the social and linguistic beliefs commonly held among the Chabacano-speaking communities of Ternate, Cavite City, and Zamboanga in the Philippines. Chabacano is the common name used for several creole varieties that have Spanish as the lexifier and Philippine

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languages as the adstrates. While they are for the most part mutually intelligible, they should not be considered dialects of one language because there are sociohistorical circumstances and linguistic differences that distinguish them (Lesho & Sippola 2013). There has been considerable debate on how the different Chabacano varieties formed and what the historical relationships between them are (e.g. Whinnom 1956, Lipski 1992, Fernández 2011, Grant 2013). However, no study has yet investigated how Chabacano speakers themselves perceive the relationships between their varieties. It has only been in the past few years that much research on the social context of the Chabacano creoles has been done (e.g. Sippola 2010, Fortuno-Genuino 2011, Lesho 2013, Lesho & Sippola 2013).

In this study, we use the methods of perceptual dialectology (Preston 1999, 2002) in order to investigate the folk perception of variation among the Chabacano creoles. The results of this study reveal which linguistic features Chabacano speakers believe to distinguish their varieties. The study also shows some aspects of how this perceived variation is evaluated socially, how speakers conceive of the social or historical relationships between the three varieties, and how they perceive the relationships of each variety to the lexifier Spanish, the adstrate Philippine languages, and the adstrate Philippine English. Such beliefs and attitudes are part of the speakers’ linguistic competence, and studying them is useful because people’s beliefs about language variation have been shown to actually shape their linguistic perception (Niedzielski 1999) and production (Irvine 2008). As linguists continue to debate on the relationships between the Chabacano varieties, it is valuable to consider the speakers’ perspectives on the matter.

In section 2, we give an overview of perceptual dialectology and discuss previous folk perception and language attitudes research in creole studies. Section 3 focuses on the previously documented sociohistorical and linguistic relationships between the Chabacano varieties to provide a basis of comparison to the folk perceptions recorded in this study. Sections 4–6 cover the methods, results, and discussion of the study, and the conclusion follows in section 7.

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2 The term adstrate is also used to cover possible substrate languages, as in the Asian contexts, the substrate often continues to be spoken as an adstrate alongside the creole.
2. Folk perception and language attitude studies on creoles

Perceptual dialectology is used to elicit folk beliefs about sociolinguistic variation (Preston 1999, 2002; Long & Preston 2002). This methodology includes using techniques such as questionnaires or map labeling tasks to ask participants to identify geographic areas where people talk similarly to or differently from them, which specific linguistic features they believe to be different, what kinds of social qualities they associate with these dialects or particular features, or how they rate different dialects based on specific qualities such as correctness or pleasantness (Preston 2002). While the speakers’ folk perception does not always align with their documented production, the matches and mismatches between the two yield interesting insights into the ideologies that speakers have about how different language varieties are related to each other, how they define their own community, and which linguistic features carry social meaning. Including this type of information in creole studies is important because speakers’ linguistic performance is in part shaped by their competence, which includes their belief systems about their languages and their identity (Le Page & Tabouret-Keller 1985).

There is a small body of literature on creole language attitudes (e.g. Rickford 1985, Mühleisen 2002), but relatively few studies have focused specifically on the metalinguistic awareness of creole or pidgin speakers, and even fewer have used the methods of perceptual dialectology. Most of the existing studies focusing on metalinguistic awareness and language attitudes in creole societies have been done in the Caribbean (Lefebvre 1974; Winford 1976; Rickford 1985), especially in Jamaica (Irvine 1994, 2004, 2008; Wassink 1999; Farquharson 2007). A number of important insights from these studies can apply to the study of creoles in other regions.

First, attitudes toward creoles are multi-dimensional (Rickford 1985, Wassink 1999). While there is a common view that creoles are generally perceived as “bad” and standard languages as “good”, the researcher should not assume this simplistic position because creole speakers in fact often have positive and negative attitudes toward both. This approach is useful to keep in mind in the study of Chabacano because what is considered “standard” in the Philippines is not a simple matter. In the Philippine creole context, the lexifier Spanish is no longer commonly spoken alongside any of the Chabacano varieties, and the adstrate Filipino and English are the languages with the highest official status. Furthermore, it has been shown that sociolinguistic variation cannot be assumed to fall along the creole continuum typical of
many Caribbean settings; for example, in Jamaican Creole there are pairs of equally basilectal creole forms that have different levels of prestige (Irvine 1994).

One common finding in the Caribbean studies is that speakers tend to have high metalinguistic awareness of phonological and lexical variation. In Wassink’s (1999) study on attitudes toward language variation in Jamaica, she found that most people believe Jamaican Creole to differ from English in terms of accent only, or accent and vocabulary; relatively few people seemed to be aware of grammatical differences. Winford (1976) had similar findings in his study on teachers’ attitudes toward language variation in Trinidad. The salience of phonological and lexical variation seems to be a common finding in folk perception studies in general (e.g Niedzielski & Preston 1999: 111–126, several works in Preston 1999, Suárez Büdenbender 2011). There is also evidence that this folk perception influences speakers’ production. Irvine (2004, 2008) has shown that Jamaican professionals emphasize certain phonological features to distinguish Creole from standard English, arguing that “the form English takes in the Jamaican social context, particularly its pronunciation, is shaped in part by speakers’ idea of what Creole is” (2008: 22).

In order to better understand the social history of creole languages, as well as their linguistic structure, it is useful to take language attitudes into account. Roberts (2004) showed that Hawaiian-born teenagers’ language attitudes towards English and their ancestral languages, as documented in early 1900s autobiographical texts, played an important role in shaping Hawaiian Creole as they aimed to form a distinct group identity. Using a perceptual dialectology map task, Drager & Grama (2014) found that participants identified certain areas of Oahu, Hawaii as having “heavier” or “lighter” pidgin and associated different ways of speaking with different ethnicities. The perceived regional and ethnic variation was related to the historical settlement patterns of the island.

Focusing on Chabacano, Lesho (2013) used a similar map task to investigate dialectal variation among the different districts and neighborhoods of Cavite City, and to document where speakers thought that this highly endangered language was still spoken. She found that different neighborhoods were associated with a punto, tono, or “intonation”, meaning ‘accent’. These terms referred to perceived differences in vowel pronunciation and speech rate or other prosodic features, as well as to lexical differences and the use of different second person singular pronouns. On the basis of these differences, neighborhoods in the Caridad district were described as sounding more
Tagalog and evaluated more poorly, and neighborhoods in the San Roque district were described as sounding more Spanish and evaluated more positively. However, some of the vowel and lexical features associated with Caridad are actually closer to standard Spanish, while San Roque retains some features that are closer to Old Tagalog. The study showed the value of perceptual dialectology as a tool for language documentation and for investigating the language ideologies that can shape the history and structure of a creole. Expanding on these findings, the present study focuses on the folk perception of Chabacano speakers on a broader level, among the communities in Zamboanga and Ternate as well as Cavite City.

Finally, in the study of metalinguistic awareness and language attitudes, it is important to consider the concept of authenticity and the role of the researcher. Ideas about “authenticity” have often been imposed by sociolinguists and creolists onto the language varieties under study, with the most vernacular or basilectal varieties assumed to represent the most authentic or natural speech patterns of the community (see Bucholtz 2003, Irvine 2008, Lacoste & Mair 2012). It has also been noted that researchers often bring their own metalinguistic systems and ideologies into their analyses of languages that they do not speak natively (Mühlhäusler 1983, Gal & Irvine 1995). Methodologically, these practices have led to problems when, for example, creolists have discarded data because they thought it was not basilectal, “traditional”, or really “creole” enough (Irvine 2008, Patrick 1999). Aside from these theoretical concerns, Mühlhäusler (1983: 102) has also pointed out that information about what speakers believe about their own languages is useful for language planning.

For these reasons, authenticity should be considered from the perspective of the language user (Bucholtz 2003, Irvine 2008, Lacoste & Mair 2012), through ethnographically informed study of what the speakers themselves consider to constitute their language variety, how it differs from other language varieties, what is authentic, and what is prestigious. Folk linguistic methods, especially when combined with long-term fieldwork as in the present study, are a valuable tool to access these perspectives.
3. Relationships between the Chabacano varieties

3.1. Sociohistorical background

Chabacano varieties have historically been spoken in several locations in the Philippines. There is documentation of varieties in Zamboanga, Cotabato, and Davao in Mindanao in the southern Philippines, and in the Ermita district of Manila, Cavite City, and Ternate in the Manila Bay region of the northern island of Luzon (Figure 1). During the Spanish colonial era, Chabacano and other similar contact varieties were also used more generally by the non-European population. To date, there is no conclusive research on the exact number of historical Chabacano varieties and how they are related. In his seminal work, Whinnom (1956) introduced a theory that traced all the varieties to a common ancestor brought to the Philippines from outside the archipelago. However, his theory has been challenged in recent research, and today, local, independent developments are more commonly accepted (Fernández 2011, Lipski 1992).

The historical and linguistic evidence of the interrelationships between the varieties is scarce, but there are notable similarities in the lexicon and grammar. The lexicon of the Chabacano varieties is rather similar, as shown in Riego de Dios’ (1989) comparative dictionary. On a closer look, a comparison based on the 100-word Swadesh list between Cavite, Ternate, and Zamboanga Chabacano results in 95% of shared entries, mainly from Iberoromance sources (Sippola 2011: 27). An overview of 107 grammatical features from the APiCS database (Michaelis et al. 2013) for Cavite, Ternate, and Zamboanga Chabacano points toward similar results. This typological comparison shows that 64% of the value assignments are the same for the three varieties, although some variation can be explained by very broad categories and lectal differences (for example, the Cavite data in APiCS comes mostly from a written lect). Other features are also very similar from a wider typological perspective — a logical result of language contact processes occurring in similar circumstances and contexts, in which Philippine languages and Spanish were involved in the birth of new varieties. Furthermore, the adstrate Tagalog and Visayan languages are also very closely related to each other, which contributes to the similar outcomes.

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3 Chabacano (also known as Kitchen Spanish) was a common code even among educated Filipinos in the 19th century, such as José Rizal and Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, while the Chinese merchants of Manila used a Spanish pidgin (Fernández 2010, Schuchardt 1883).
Today, there are significant differences in the sociolinguistic situations of each Chabacano community. The Philippines is an ethnically diverse and highly multilingual country with over a hundred local languages and two official languages, English and Filipino. There is a concern that many of the local languages are becoming endangered, and this problem affects the Chabacano varieties to different degrees (Lesho & Sippola 2013). The relationships between Chabacano and the adstrate languages differ in each community.

Zamboanga Chabacano has the highest degree of vitality. It is spoken by approximately 300,000 speakers in Zamboanga City, and it is a língua franca of the Zamboanga Peninsula and nearby islands. Subvarieties in Cotabato, Davao, and Semporna (Malaysia) have also been mentioned (Lipski
Zamboanga Chabacano is codified, with an unofficial orthography, and there are several literary works, including dictionaries and Bible translations, written in Chabacano. Both official and popular attitudes towards Zamboanga Chabacano are rather positive, and efforts to promote it are supported by the local government. In addition, Zamboanga Chabacano is used in broadcasting, in popular music, in church, and in school, as part of the Philippines’ new mother tongue education program (Lesho & Sippola 2013). Furthermore, Lipski (2001: 154) describes the complexity of the attitudes toward Zamboanga Chabacano; being a hybrid language, there is a constant negotiation between the categories of ‘native’ Philippine language and ‘foreign colonial’ language (see also Forman 2001).

The situation is quite different in the Manila Bay region. Cavite Chabacano probably has fewer than 4,000 speakers in Cavite City, and it is highly endangered (Lesho & Sippola 2013: 23). There are few speakers under age 50, and a strong shift to Tagalog is evident. Ternate Chabacano is spoken in the town of Ternate about 30 km from Cavite City. There are only around 3,000 Chabacano speakers of Ternate Chabacano, but it is spoken by all generations in several domains with unbroken transmission in a large part of the community, and the situation can be characterized as relatively safe. Despite this, the effects of language shift are noticeable (Lesho & Sippola 2013: 9).

Chabacano is a minority language in Cavite City and Ternate, and the varieties are in competition with the official languages, which both enjoy a high social status in the current climate and are instrumental for social advancement. Cavite and Ternate Chabacano are used primarily in private domains. As in other parts of the Philippines, English dominates the government, education, business, and media, while Filipino is mostly employed for local communication, certain school subjects, and entertainment (Gonzalez 1998: 503, 2003: 3).

Language preservation efforts have been more organized in Cavite City, most likely because the endangerment situation there is more urgent (Lesho & Sippola 2013). However, Chabacano has symbolic value in both communities; it is often used in ceremonial contexts, and speaking it is considered part of being an authentic resident of Cavite City or Ternate. Recent developments show that Cavite and Ternate Chabacano speakers are taking advantage of new social domains and local media, such as the internet, text messaging, local newspapers, and rap music, which further contributes to the preservation efforts, for example, in education.
3.2. Documented linguistic differences between the Chabacano varieties

Overall, the Chabacano varieties are very similar to each other, and speakers often report that they can understand the Chabacano from different areas. However, there are some substantial linguistic differences between them in terms of their lexicon, phonology, and morphosyntax, as summarized below.

3.2.1. Lexical variation

Each of the Chabacano varieties has Spanish as the main lexifier, with substantial influence also from the substrate or adstrate Tagalog and Visayan languages (especially Cebuano and Hiligaynon), minor influence from Hokkien, and more recent influence from American and Philippine English. As said above, the lexicon of each variety is quite similar for the most part. However, there is variation among the creoles in terms of both the Spanish and Philippine components of their lexicons (Molony 1974: 31, Riego de Dios 1989: 180–182), as can be seen in Table 1. Some of this variation can be traced back to different periods or registers of Spanish influence.

There is also input from different adstrate languages in each Chabacano variety. The Manila Bay varieties have lexical influence from Tagalog, whereas the Mindanao creoles have lexical influence from the Visayan languages Hiligaynon and Cebuano. The Mindanao creoles do have some influence from Tagalog, but this development is relatively recent, as Tagalog/Filipino has only been a national language since the 1930s and has not been widely used in Mindanao until the past few decades (Lipski 2013).

Apart from the Tagalog lexical items found in the Manila Bay creoles, Ternate Chabacano also has some vestigial influence from Malay, Bahasa Ternate, and other languages of the Moluccas, which is evidence of substrate influence from before the founders of the creole-speaking community in Ternate, called Mardikas, arrived in the Philippines (Tirona 1924, Molony 1974, Grant 2013). Some examples of these Mardika words include ching ching vinkaru ‘lizard’ and sakaleli ‘war dance and song’. Tirona (1924) identified only 51 of these non-Philippine or Spanish origin words, and only a few of them are still in active use today. These words are not found in other Chabacano varieties.

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4 Visayan is a language family that includes Cebuano and Hiligaynon, among many other languages. Filipinos often use the term as a generic label for the people and languages of the Central Philippines, sometimes interchangeably with the more specific language names.
Table 1: Types of lexical variation across Chabacano varieties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difference</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cavite</th>
<th>Ternate</th>
<th>Mindanao</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Different forms from lexifier or adstrate</td>
<td>‘talk, converse’ (Riego de Dios 1989: 105)</td>
<td>platiká (&lt; Sp. platicar ‘to talk’)</td>
<td>platiká (&lt; Sp. platicar ‘to talk’)</td>
<td>kombersá (&lt; Sp. conversar) ‘to converse’ in Cotabato and Zamboanga Chabacano pronto-pronto (&lt; Sp. pronto ‘quick, soon’) in Cotabato Chabacano matalaw (&lt; Ceb. matalaw) in Cotabato Chabacano; kubardon (&lt; Sp. cobardón ‘coward’) in Zamboanga Chabacano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘quickly’ (Molony 1974: 21)</td>
<td>prehtu-prehtu (&lt; Sp. presto ‘ready, prompt’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘coward’ (Riego de Dios 1989: 120)</td>
<td>kubarde (&lt; Sp. cobarde)</td>
<td>kubarde (&lt; Sp. cobarde)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘proof’ (Molony 1974: 20-21)</td>
<td>prweba (&lt; Sp. prueba)</td>
<td>katunayan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘staring absentmindedly’ (Riego de Dios 1989: 92)</td>
<td>tanga (&lt; Tag. ‘stupid’)</td>
<td>tanga (&lt; Tag. ‘stupid’)</td>
<td>hangak (&lt; Ceb.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘scar’ (Riego de Dios 1989: 129).</td>
<td>pilat (&lt; Tag.)</td>
<td>pilat (&lt; Tag.)</td>
<td>pali (&lt; Hil.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different meanings</td>
<td>Spanish forms, e.g. kuryoso (&lt; Sp. curioso ‘curious, tidy, elegant’)</td>
<td>‘curious’</td>
<td>‘beautiful’</td>
<td>‘curious’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hokkien influence is relatively minor and can mostly be found in the semantic domain of food and cooking terms (Ing 1968, Molony 1974). It is difficult to distinguish whether Hokkien items have come into Chabacano directly or if they have come indirectly through Tagalog. English influence is noticeable in all of the existing Chabacano varieties, as well as other Philippine languages.

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5 Chan-Yap (1980) also identified cooking, along with kinship, as the primary semantic domains of Hokkien loanwords in Tagalog.
Molony (1974) hinted that speakers are aware of some of the lexical variation between and within Chabacano varieties and make social judgments based on it. She mentioned that Caviteños tease Ternateños for using different or more old-fashioned Chabacano words (e.g. Ternate Chabacano *balikocha* ‘taffy’ and *se balistrok*is ‘to cheat, be a credit risk’; 1974: 9). Molony also briefly mentioned that there is class-based variation in Cotabato Chabacano vocabulary, and that Zamboanga Chabacano has greater stylistic variation compared to Ternate Chabacano (1974: 22, 32). However, there is little actual documentation of this sociolinguistic variation in the lexicon.

### 3.2.2. Phonological variation

Phonology is a less studied area of Chabacano, but there are detailed descriptions of the phonology of Zamboanga Chabacano (Ing 1967, 1968, 1976), Cotabato Chabacano (Riego de Dios 1989), Ternate Chabacano (Sippola 2011), and Cavite Chabacano (Ramos 1963, Lesho 2013). There have been few explicit comparisons of the sound systems of the different varieties, apart from research by Riego de Dios (1989), Lipski (1987), and Lesho (2013). Based on all of these sources, this section presents comparisons of the vowels and consonants found in each Chabacano creole.

Each Chabacano variety has a 5-vowel system of /i, e, a, o, u/, as does the Spanish lexifier. However, in unstressed position, Ternate Chabacano and Cavite Chabacano both have a tendency to raise /e/ and /o/ to [i] and [u] (Sippola 2011, Lesho 2013), e.g. *myedo* ‘fear’ as [ˈmjedu] and *ombre* ‘man’ as [ˈombɾi]. The raising can occur in any unstressed position, but it is most noticeable phrase-finally. According to Ing (1967: 27, 1968: 75–77), Zamboanga Chabacano also has some raising of the mid vowels, but the patterns described are not the same as those of Ternate and Cavite Chabacano. For example, Ing (1968: 76) gives some examples of unstressed, word-final /o/ raising to [u], but only as a result of assimilation when there is a preceding /u/ (e.g. *umo* ‘smoke’ [ˈumu]).

The consonant inventories of each Chabacano variety are very similar, as shown in Table 2. Ternate Chabacano is described as having 17 consonants (Sippola 2011), Cavite Chabacano as having either 17 or 20 (Ramos 1963, Lesho 2013), Cotabato Chabacano as having 20 (Riego de Dios 1989), and Zamboanga Chabacano as having 21 (Ing 1968). Sixteen of these consonants occur in all varieties. Seven other phonemes, shown in Table 2 in parentheses, have not been included in descriptions of every variety.
For the most part, it seems that the descriptions vary not so much due to actual phonological differences but rather to differences in the analyses. For example, the Spanish sounds /ʎ/ /ɲ/ and /r/ (as distinct from /ɾ/) are analyzed as phonemes in some descriptions but not in others, even though the distribution of these sounds is basically the same across varieties. There is also inconsistency in the descriptions in how to classify sounds of non-Spanish origin, such as /ʤ/ from English loanwords and /ʔ/ from Philippine words.

However, previous studies do indicate that apart from these possible differences in the analyses, there is some consonant variation in Chabacano. Ternate Chabacano differs from the other varieties in not having /ʎ/ as a phoneme distinct from /j/, although Sippola (2011: 53) observed that [lj] for /j/ can occasionally be heard. Ternate Chabacano also differs from the other varieties in how certain consonants are palatalized before /j/. In all Chabacano varieties, the coronals /d/, /t/, and /s/ palatalize before /j/ (e.g. dyos ‘god’ [ˈʤəs], tyene ‘have’ [ˈtʃene], and syete ‘seven’ [ˈʃete]). However, in Ternate Chabacano, this palatalization before /j/ also extends to /k/, as in kyere ‘want’ [ˈtʃere] (Sippola 2011: 48). Ing (1976: 20) also described some variation within Zamboanga Chabacano; for example, she mentions that [θ] can sometimes be heard as a variant of /s/ among older speakers, although this feature is rare. Presumably, this use of [θ] is a reflex of north-central

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6 Ing (1968) includes /tu/ and /ʣ/ in the Zamboanga Chabacano phoneme inventory, but they are equivalent to /tf/ and /ʤ/ in the descriptions of other varieties.
Peninsular Spanish /θ/ as distinct from /s/. This feature is not found in other Chabacano varieties.

Most of the consonantal variation among the Chabacano varieties likely has to do with differences in the frequency of certain phonological variants. For example, Lipski (1987) showed that while the Spanish dialectal feature of /s/-aspiration and deletion is found in all Chabacano creoles, Ternate Chabacano generally has it at a higher rate compared to Cavite Chabacano. Within Zamboanga Chabacano, rural and older speakers tend to aspirate more than urban and younger speakers (Lipski 1987: 86). Lipski also suggested that while the realization of coda /t/ as [l] can be found across Chabacano varieties, it is most frequent in the Manila Bay varieties, and less common in Zamboanga (1987: 89).

Some previous work has mentioned social judgments that are associated with phonological variation within Chabacano varieties. Lesho (2013) found that Cavite Chabacano speakers have high metalinguistic awareness of unstressed phrase-final mid vowel raising. Furthermore, the dialect that tends to have more mid vowel raising is perceived to be better (i.e. nicer, prettier, richer, and more “Spanish”) than non-raising dialects. For Zamboanga Chabacano, Ing (1968: 75, 1976) described the nasalization of vowels as “affected”, the aspiration of /p/ and /t/ in English loanwords as “OA (overacting or affected)”, and the pronunciation of /ʎ/ as [j] as “infantile”. Lipski (1987: 91) also indicated that Cotabato Chabacano speakers frequently comment on the greater frequency of /s/-aspiration in Zamboanga Chabacano.

3.2.3. Morphosyntactic variation

It is in the area of morphosyntax that the Chabacano varieties have most often been studied and compared to each other. Variation in the pronouns and aspect markers have been commonly mentioned as evidence of how the different varieties might or might not be historically related to each other (e.g. Lipski 1992, Steinkrüger 2006, Fernández 2011). The Chabacano varieties also have other types of grammatical differences, including in how modality, reciprocity, indefinites, and negation are expressed.

Table 3 compares the pronouns used in Zamboanga, Ternate, and Cavite Chabacano. There is substantial variation between them in terms of the plural forms as well as the second person singular forms. The table also indicates some phonological variation within varieties; for example, the 2PL pronoun ustedi can be reduced to tedi in Ternate and Cavite Chabacano.
Table 3. Subject pronouns in Zamboanga (Lipski 2013), Ternate (Sippola 2011), and Cavite Chabacano (Llamado 1972, Lesho 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Zamboanga</th>
<th>Ternate</th>
<th>Cavite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1SG</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>yo</td>
<td>yo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2SG</td>
<td>(e)bos</td>
<td>bo</td>
<td>bo(s) (intimate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(familiar)</td>
<td>(familiar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu</td>
<td>(familiar, formal)</td>
<td>(familiar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uste</td>
<td>(formal)</td>
<td>tedi (formal)</td>
<td>tu (familiar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3SG</td>
<td>(e)le</td>
<td>ele</td>
<td>ele</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1PL</td>
<td>kame (exclusive)</td>
<td>m(ih)otro</td>
<td>niso(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kita</td>
<td>(inclusive)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2PL</td>
<td>kamo (familiar)</td>
<td>(us)tedi</td>
<td>buso(s) (intimate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ustedes</td>
<td>tedi</td>
<td>ustede(s)/(us)tedi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(formal)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3PL</td>
<td>sila</td>
<td>l(oh)otro</td>
<td>ilo(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the plural forms, Zamboanga Chabacano has clear influence from the Visayan adstrates. It is the only Chabacano variety that has the Philippine distinction between the inclusive and exclusive first person plural. Lipski (2013) has argued that this Visayan influence on the Zamboanga Chabacano pronominal system is a shift away from older Spanish-based plural forms. Ternate and Cavite Chabacano, in contrast, both have Spanish-based plural forms, but there are differences between them as well (e.g. 1PL m(ih)otro in Ternate Chabacano and niso(s) in Cavite Chabacano). There are also differences between the Chabacano varieties in how respect is expressed with second person singular pronouns. Ternate Chabacano has the 2SG pronoun bo, and the 2PL form tedi can also be used in the singular to convey respect. Cavite and Zamboanga Chabacano, on the other hand, use the 2SG forms tu, bo(s), and uste(d) for different levels of familiarity or formality. Rubino (2012) and Lipski (2013) also reported that the Tagalog 2SG pronoun ikaw/ka is now also being used by many Zamboanga Chabacano speakers, but this is not the case in Cavite or Ternate Chabacano.

The Chabacano varieties also vary in terms of their TMA markers, including the preverbal aspect particles and the modal verbs and adverbs. The aspect markers of Zamboanga, Ternate, and Cavite Chabacano are shown in Table 4.

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Lipski (2013) listed bujotro as the 2PL pronoun in Ternate Chabacano, with ustedes as a more formal option. However, (us)tedi is the only 2PL form found in Sippola’s (2011) corpus.
Folk perceptions of variation among the Chabacano creoles

Table 4. Aspect markers in Zamboanga, Ternate, and Cavite Chabacano

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Zamboanga</th>
<th>Ternate</th>
<th>Cavite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperfective</td>
<td>ta</td>
<td>ta</td>
<td>ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>ya</td>
<td>(y)a</td>
<td>ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemplative</td>
<td>ay</td>
<td>di</td>
<td>di</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The aspect particles are for the most part similar, but the contemplative marker is *ay* in Zamboanga Chabacano and *di* in Ternate and Cavite Chabacano. *Ay* was once also used in Cavite along with *di* (German 1932: 61), but only *di* is used today. Ternate Chabacano also differs from the other varieties in that for the perfective, *a* is more commonly used than *ya*; it is used for marking the beginning of an event in the past (Sippola 2011: 146–147).

As for modal verbs and adverbs, the Chabacano varieties have typologically very similar systems, but there are some lexical differences between them, as shown in Table 5 (note that this list is not exhaustive). All three varieties have Spanish-based forms (e.g. *pwede* ‘can’ < Sp. *puede*), but Zamboanga Chabacano has some Visayan-based forms, and the Manila Bay varieties have some Tagalog-based forms that are not found in Zamboanga.

Table 5. Lexical variation in Chabacano modals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Zamboanga</th>
<th>Ternate</th>
<th>Cavite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘can’ verbs</td>
<td><em>pwede</em> (&lt; Sp. <em>puede</em>)</td>
<td><em>pwede</em> (&lt; Tag. <em>maaari</em>)</td>
<td><em>pwede</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘should’ verbs</td>
<td><em>debe</em> (&lt; Sp. <em>debe</em>)</td>
<td><em>dabli</em></td>
<td><em>debe</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘maybe, possibly’ adverbs</td>
<td><em>siguro</em> (&lt; Sp. <em>seguro</em> ‘surely’)</td>
<td><em>siguro</em></td>
<td><em>siguro</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>baka</em> (&lt; Tag. <em>baka</em>)</td>
<td><em>baka</em></td>
<td><em>baka</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>gaha</em> (&lt; Ceb. <em>kaha</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counterfactual marker</td>
<td><em>era</em></td>
<td><em>sana</em> (&lt; Tag. <em>sana</em>)</td>
<td><em>sana</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visayan grammatical influence in Zamboanga Chabacano is evident in other ways that distinguish it from the Manila Bay varieties. For example, Zamboanga Chabacano has the numerical classifier particle *bilug* (< Hiligaynon), e.g. *dos bilug webos* ‘two eggs’ (Rubino 2012); this type of particle is not found in Tagalog or the Manila Bay Chabacano varieties. Zamboanga Chabacano also has the emphatic discourse markers *gayod, gale,* and *gane*, which come from Hiligaynon and Cebuano and are not found in the Manila Bay varieties (Vázquez Veiga & Fernández 2006).
There are also differences in terms of the expression of reciprocity and indefinite terms. In Zamboanga and Cavite Chabacano, the most frequent strategy to express reciprocity is to use the circumfix ma(n)-X-han, with the fossilized Spanish construction uno y/a otro as another option (Forman 1972: 116, Sippola 2013a, Steinkrüger 2013b). Although these constructions are occasionally employed in Ternate Chabacano as well, the use of the auxiliary huga (< Sp. jugar ‘play’) is more common (Sippola 2013b: 146). Indefinite terms are expressed in several ways in the Chabacano varieties (Sippola 2012). All the varieties use an existential construction for indefinites, but there are differences in the use of the generic or interrogative words (henti ‘man’/‘people’, kyen ‘who’, and kosa ‘what’/‘thing’) combined with the existential structure. Reduplicated forms of interrogatives are also used in order to express free-choice indefinite meanings. Of the negative series, nada ‘nothing’ and ni(ng)uno(s) ‘nothing’, ‘nobody’ are found in all the varieties with some slight variation.

The expression of the copula in Zamboanga Chabacano interacts with processes of negation and predication in ways which differ from the Manila Bay creoles (Grant 2011: 313–315). First, Zamboanga Chabacano uses the untensed copular from amo (< Hil. amu or Ceb. mau) which can be used before NPs and in pseudo-cleft sentences (Aoto 2002, Grant 2011: 314). This form does not occur in Manila Bay. In all the varieties, nway is used to negate existentials and possession, but in Zamboanga Chabacano it is also used to negate anterior statements, replacing the tense-aspect marker ya (Forman 1972: 165). In Cavite Chabacano and Ternate Chabacano the negative no is used for negation of verbs in perfective aspect.

The list of grammatical differences in this subsection is of course not exhaustive, and further comparative study is needed in many of the areas described above. For example, case marking patterns seem to vary between lects and varieties. However, the description presented here gives an idea of the substantial variation that exists among the Chabacano creoles. While previous studies have hinted that Chabacano speakers are aware of some phonological and lexical differences between or within varieties and have certain attitudes toward the variation (see sections 3.2.1–3.2.2), similar observations have not yet been made in the studies of Chabacano syntax, semantics, or morphology.
Folk perceptions of variation among the Chabacano creoles

4. Methods

The study combines a variety of qualitative sociolinguistic methods, including analysis of sociolinguistic interviews in Cavite and Ternate, interviews from a perceptual map task in Cavite City, and analysis of online surveys carried out with speakers from the three locations. The material collected using these methods has been combined and cross analyzed in order to gain insights into the folk perceptions of the Chabacano speakers.

The sociolinguistic interviews were conducted in Cavite City and Ternate over the past 10 years. In addition, Lesho conducted interviews with five Zamboanga Chabacano speakers who now live in New Jersey, USA. Many teachers, language activists, and other people interested in the histories of the communities participated in the interviews, as well as people of other types of backgrounds.

We interviewed 64 people (aged 11–87) in Ternate and 44 people (aged 20–87) in Cavite City. All participants came from traditionally Chabacano-speaking neighborhoods and were native or near-native speakers of the language. The language endangerment situation made it difficult to balance information from different demographic categories, especially in Cavite. Older speakers are overrepresented due to their competence and interest in matters related to Chabacano, which means that the data have not been evenly distributed by age.

In the sociolinguistic interviews, the speakers were asked explicitly about their language use and attitudes, including questions about their best language, which languages they preferred in different domains, which languages they spoke/understood when listening/reading/writing, the linguistic history of their family, what they thought the future of the Chabacano language would be, etc. In addition to these linguistically oriented questions, participants were asked about a variety of general topics. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Chabacano, with occasional switching to English and Tagalog. Codeswitching between these three languages is common among Cavite and Ternate Chabacano speakers in everyday speech. Typical interviews lasted around 30–45 minutes in both communities.

In addition, a map labeling task was conducted in Cavite City by Lesho with 27 participants, either as part of the interview or as a separate task. Participants were presented with a map of Cavite City and instructed to label where on the map people still speak Chabacano and to comment on how people speak in different areas. Although the task focused primarily on dialectal variation in Cavite Chabacano (see Lesho 2013), they were also
asked questions about their impressions of Zamboanga and Ternate Chabacano. It is this commentary on the other varieties that is analyzed in this paper. Map labeling tasks were not applied in Ternate or in Zamboanga for practical reasons.

The interviews and map labeling tasks were audio-recorded, and in a few cases also video-recorded. The recordings were particularly useful for capturing participants’ vocal imitations of the speech in locations other than their home neighborhood or town.

In Ternate and Cavite City, the self-reported language use and information on language attitudes has generally been checked against participant observation. In addition to the interview sessions, during the fieldwork periods we have collected systematic information on the personal backgrounds, language use, preferred languages, and language attitudes in these two communities (Lesho & Sippola 2013).

As a way to reach the largest Chabacano-speaking community in Zamboanga, we designed a survey with questions about speakers’ perceptions of variation in Chabacano. The survey was conducted on a Google platform and distributed online. It consisted of an online consent and information page and 6 pages of survey, for a total of 31 questions. The survey questions were in English, but the participants were told that they could write answers in English, Chabacano, Tagalog, or Spanish.

The first questionnaire page gathered background information on the language use and skills of the respondents and their parents, as well as personal information (age, sex, location, hometown). The following pages surveyed their perceptions of different varieties. The participants identified locations where Chabacano is spoken and rated the similarity of each variety to their own based on audio samples. They also answered questions about how the varieties are similar and different and which varieties sound most like the adstrate or lexifier languages.

There were 25 participants (aged 18–72) in the online survey, most of them originally from the Zamboanga area (18), and others originally from Cavite City (4), Ternate (1), and other areas (2). Some of the participants currently live outside of the Philippines (e.g. the US and the UAE), but they identified their original hometowns on the survey. Although the age groups were distributed rather evenly, with approximately 5 respondents from each decade (twenties through seventies), the sample is not balanced evenly across geographic areas or socioeconomic backgrounds. The reasons are practical, as recruiting online depends on voluntary input and the interest of the
respondents, and it is challenging to balance the resulting sample, especially when the number of responses is limited.

Due to the variable types of data employed in this study, we aim at transparency in the treatment and the presentation of the analyzed material. Consequently, we indicate the age, sex, community, language history, and material types when presenting examples or referring to information.8

5. Results

Combining data from the three tasks, the analysis here focuses on the following themes: the number of Chabacano varieties identified by the participants; how they believe the varieties are related to Spanish, the Philippine adstrates, and English; perceived linguistic similarities and differences between the varieties; and their social evaluations of the different varieties.

5.1. Perceived number of Chabacano varieties

For the online survey question about the number of Chabacano varieties, answers ranged between one and six, but the most common response was three. The six documented varieties of Zamboanga, Davao, Cotabato, Cavite, Ternate, and Ermita Chabacano were all mentioned by the participants in the survey. These results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Number of Chabacano varieties reported by participants in the online survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant region</th>
<th>Number of varieties</th>
<th>Identified varieties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cavite City</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cavite, Ternate, Zamboanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ternate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>unspecified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamboanga region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamboanga City</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Zamboanga, Cavite, Ternate, Ermita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basilan</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Ermita, Davao, Cotabato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Samar)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cavite, Zamboanga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 Example codes are constructed as follows: [Variety (C=Cavite, T=Ternate, Z=Zamboanga) - gender F/M – age – given language fluency (NS=native speaker, FS=fluent speaker) - material type (int=interview, map=map task, sur=online survey).
The four Cavite City participants, the one Terna participant, and three of the 18 participants from the Zamboanga region identified three varieties of Chabacano, spoken in Cavite, Ternate, and Zamboanga. Three of the participants from the Zamboanga region recognized no other Chabacano varieties beside their own. For the five Zamboanga participants who identified two varieties, Cavite and Ternate Chabacano were both identified.

Six Zamboanga region participants identified more than three varieties of Chabacano. These other varieties included Davao, Cotabato, and Ermita Chabacano in addition to Ternate, Cavite, and Zamboanga Chabacano. Some participants mentioned variation in the Chabacano spoken in Zamboanga, but still counted only one local variety. For example, one participant wrote that “the Chavacano varies even in Zamboanga although the difference is minimal” [Z-M69-NS-sur]. The non-native Chabacano-speaking participant from Samar identified only two varieties, Zamboanga and Cavite Chabacano.

These results indicate that there is some asymmetry in how aware the speakers from different regions are of the Chabacano varieties in other locations. Chabacano speakers from Ternate and Cavite City are consistently aware that there is a different Chabacano variety spoken in Zamboanga, but some Zamboanga Chabacano speakers are unaware that there are other Chabacano varieties spoken outside of their region. Given the endangered status of Cavite and Ternate Chabacano, the lack of some Zamboangueños’ awareness of them is not surprising. Zamboanga Chabacano has a higher profile in the Philippines because Zamboanga City is one of the country’s major cities, and the language has some occasional presence in the national media and official status in the education system (Lesho & Sippola 2013). Cavite City, in contrast, is not a very large city, and Ternate is a small rural town that has been quite isolated. However, there are some Zamboanga Chabacano speakers who are aware of the Manila Bay varieties, especially those who seem to have an interest in history. For example, one Zamboanga participant responded that there are six Chabacano dialects, “though 1 dialect is already extinct, the one once spoken by Dr. Jose Rizal and use in his Novel like No Li Me Tangere y El Filibusterismo” [Z-M29-NS-sur].

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9 One Zamboanga region participant did not answer the question.
10 This generalization is made not only on the basis of the responses of the few Ternate and Cavite Chabacano participants in this survey, but also the extensive fieldwork conducted by the authors in each community.
11 Rizal is a Philippine national hero who included some Chabacano dialogue in his Spanish novels, Noli Me Tangere and El Filibusterismo. He also used Chabacano in some of his personal correspondence (Fernández 2011).
5.2. Perceived relationships to Spanish

Both the interviews and the survey results show that Chabacano speakers are aware of the Spanish element in their languages and that closeness to Spanish is often mentioned as a reference for establishing differences, with regard to geographical location, register, social class, and age. In Cavite and Zamboanga, most of the speakers see their own variety as closest to Spanish, while in Ternate, the local variety is generally seen as further away from Spanish than Cavite or Zamboanga Chabacano.

In the Ternate interviews, Cavite Chabacano is often mentioned as closer to Spanish than the local variety, as in Medyu serka na Spanish el palabra di Samboanga i Kabite Siti ‘The speech of Zamboanga and Cavite City is rather close to Spanish’ [T-F34-NS-int]. Zamboanga Chabacano is also occasionally perceived to be similar to Spanish, but not as often as Cavite Chabacano, probably because it is not as well known to Ternateños. The closeness to Spanish is sometimes connected to the idea of more correct grammar. In addition, Cavite Chabacano sounds softly spoken to Ternateños, which is also associated with Spanish-like pronunciation.

An often employed characterization for Chabacano which is close or similar to Spanish is hondu (< Sp. ‘deep’). This characterization is also given of the speech of the neighborhoods where Chabacano is prominent. One feature associated with hondu speech is metathesis, e.g. embranka instead of embarka ‘to embark’. Furthermore, Spanish is seen as the origin of Chabacano in Ternate, and people often refer to their grandparents as true Espanyol or Kastila, with both ethnic or racial and linguistic characterizations.

In Cavite, Zamboanga Chabacano is occasionally mentioned to have a greater Spanish component, in addition to the Visayan one, as in (1). It is rarer for Caviteños to describe Ternate Chabacano as sounding Spanish.

(1) Si, otro. Tiene ilo halo Bisaya, no ba? Pero mas kwan el Espanyol alla na Zamboanga. Kon niso kasi halo Tagalog. [C-F57-NS-int]

‘Yes, it’s different. They are mixed with Visayan, right? But there’s more Spanish there in Zamboanga. With us it’s a Tagalog mix.’

Pronoun use (e.g. Spanish nosotros ‘1PL’) and “intonation”, or accent, are mentioned as Spanish-sounding features of Zamboanga Chabacano. Example (2) shows one Caviteño describing the Spanish-like intonation of Zamboanga Chabacano as more beautiful.
(2) [...] mas kyere yo Zamboanga porkasa bonito no ma el intonation. Komo Espanyol. [C-M56-NS-int]

‘[…] I like Zamboanga more because their intonation is just beautiful. Like Spanish.’

Many Caviteños also believe that their own variety sounds like Spanish; as in Ternate, it was common for Caviteño interviewees to proudly describe their Spanish-speaking parents and grandparents. Interviewees in both places also occasionally made reference to studying Spanish as a school subject. In Cavite City, however, there is a common belief that neighborhoods in the Caridad district have a more Tagalog Chabacano and those in the San Roque district have a more Spanish Chabacano (Lesho 2013).

In the online survey answers, most of the Zamboanga Chabacano speakers perceived their own variety to sound the most like Spanish. The only survey respondent from Ternate perceived Cavite Chabacano to sound the most like Spanish. One Cavite Chabacano speaker answered that it depends on the speaker, but in general, Cavite Chabacano speakers chose their own variety. However, there were some mentions about Zamboanga Chabacano sounding like Spanish by Caviteños in different parts of the survey, for example, when describing how different varieties sounded, as in (3).

(3) Zamboanga sounds more formal spanish than Cavite City's version of chabacano. [C-M67-NS-sur]

When discussing their own variety in the survey answers, Zamboanga Chabacano speakers mentioned that it is close to Spanish. Some even think that Chabacano and Spanish are the same language, as in “Chavacano in Zamboanga sounds like Spanish, which it is anyway” [Z-M69-NS-sur]. However, speakers are aware of the differences between the lexifier and the creole. The differences they identify are grammatical (e.g. the lack of conjugation compared to Spanish), and lexical, as described in a detailed manner in example (4):

(4) About 80 percent of all Chavacano words are Spanish perse, with a dozen or so of Portuguese origin. The remaining 20 percent of the Chavacano vocabulary are adoption of native dialects like Visayan. [Z-F31-NS-sur]
The responses from Zamboanga Chabacano speakers also include occasional mentions of generational and areal differences, as in (5). The survey answers from Zamboangaños occasionally identify Chabacano families with Spanish/Castilian backgrounds in Zamboanga. Also, the Chabacano spoken by older and rural people is described as more akin to Spanish, and in one answer, to Mexican Spanish (see example (16)).

(5) Depending on age of the person; my generation spoke Spanish words. younger generation or transients, those who grew up in other regions, use a mix of Visayan w/ Spanish words. I grew up w/ a grandmother who spoke Castillian Spanish. [Z-F72-NS-sur]

Root words, lexicon, and some prepositions are perceived to be typically Spanish elements in Chabacano. Regarding the pronunciation, lisping and softness are mentioned, as in (6). (6)

(6) Growing up in a traditional Chavacano - old rich family, relatives speak with a lisp making it sound really authentic like how our abuelito and abuelita used to converse with us way back. [Z-M30-FS-sur]

There are also comments about other Filipinos’ impressions of Chabacano sounding like Spanish. The response in (7), from a Chabacano learner from the Central Philippines, exemplifies the Spanish association clearly.

(7) chabacano language's diction is like a foreign thing to non-chabacano speakers because it's like you're in Spain when we're communicating with Chabacano speakers! :) [F18-LL-sur]

The terms “bastardized Spanish” or “broken Spanish” are occasionally mentioned in the survey answers, and they are connected to the Philippine influence on Spanish (see 5.3 and 5.7). This characterization is common for creole languages all over the world and reflects earlier ungrounded understandings of the status of these languages as deviant versions of their lexifiers (Migge et al. 2010: 3–4).

5.3. Perceived relationships to the Philippine adstrates

In general, the survey results and the interview data show that Chabacano speakers from all three communities are aware of the Visayan influence in Mindanao and the Tagalog influence in the Manila Bay region as one of the
main differences between the varieties. The “Visayan” influence in Zamboanga was sometimes more specifically identified as Ilonggo (Hiligaynon) and/or Cebuano.

On the survey, three Zamboangueños identified Zamboanga and Cotabato as sounding the most Tagalog. However, it was much more common for Zamboangueños to identify Cavite and/or Ternate Chabacano as the most Tagalog variety, and their own variety as the most Visayan, as in example (8).

(8) Ternate Chabacano and Cavite Chabacano uses words and phrases from Tagalog while Zamboanga Chabacano uses words and phrases from Cebuano and Ilonggo dialects. [Z-M67-NS-sur]

As mentioned in 5.2, some of the Zamboangueño survey participants described internal variation in Zamboanga Chabacano, with rural or otherwise “pure” dialects sounding more like Spanish, and urban dialects being more influenced by the Visayan languages, Tagalog, and/or English. In example (9), the participant distinguished between “street” Chabacano, “pure” Chabacano, and written Chabacano, with pure and written Chabacano having a higher percentage of Spanish influence and street Chabacano having a higher percentage of adstrate Philippine and English influence. In this case, Tagalog is mentioned along with Ilonggo (Hiligaynon) and Bisaya (Cebuano) as an influence on Zamboanga Chabacano.

(9) Nowadays there are 3 types of Chavacano spoken in the City of Zamboanga. One spoken in the streets which is around 40 percent spanish and around 60 percent ilonggo, bisaya, tagalog and english. another is spoken at homes of pure chavacanos which around 70% spanish and 30% ilonggo, bisaya, tagalog and English. Another form is one used in written form which is around 80% spanish and 20% ilonggo, bisaya and tagalog. [Z-M54-NS-sur]

As quoted in example (5), one Zamboangueño survey participant said that younger people and “transients, those who grew up in other regions” [Z-F72-NS-sur] mix in Visayan words. This seems to be a common sentiment. In the interviews conducted with Zamboangueños in New Jersey, one speaker reported that “few people can really speak the deeper Chabacano” [Z-M30s-NS-int] because so many Visayans are in Zamboanga now. Like the survey participants, they also believe that rural and urban Zamboanga Chabacano are different; they described the intonation of rural people as sounding like birds.
The Ternateño and Caviteño survey participants also listed Zamboanga Chabacano as the most Visayan and their own varieties as the most Tagalog, echoing the comments of Ternate and Cavite City residents interviewed in the field. However, many interviewees stressed that despite the Visayan influence in Zamboanga, that kind of Chabacano is still understandable to them, as one Caviteño stated in example (10).


‘They [in Zamboanga] speak mixed with Visaya. We here are mixed with Tagalog, so there is also a difference. But it’s okay. It’s also understandable.’

Similar comments were made in Ternate, as when one participant described conversing with a Zamboangueño, saying “*ta entende motru kosa eli kyeri habla*” ‘we understand what he wants to say’ [T-M66-NS-int].

The comments about Visayan influence in Zamboanga Chabacano tend to be very general, focusing on lexical differences within Zamboanga or across Chabacano varieties, with occasional reference made to speech rate. Some Cavite Chabacano speakers seem to believe that while Zamboanga Chabacano has Visayan words, the pronunciation still sounds Spanish. Example (11) shows a typical comment along those lines.

(11) *El diction ilo komo Espanyol. Pero tyene kompanyero Visayan words.* [C-M56-NS-map]

‘Their diction is like Spanish. But it has Visayan words.’

Another comment made by a Caviteño in (12) provides a specific example of a Zamboanga Chabacano/Visayan pronoun, *kanamon* ‘1PL.EXCL’, which is not found in Cavite Chabacano.

(12) *Pero el Chabacano de ilo, halo. Visaya. Tyene ilo kel “kanamon, kanamon”. Niso naman aki, halo Tagalog.* [C-M87-NS-map]

‘But their Chabacano, [it’s] mixed. Visayan. They have that “kanamon, kanamon”. We here on the other hand, [are] mixed Tagalog.’
Zamboangueños’ comments on Visayan influence on their language also tend to focus on vocabulary. For example, comments such as “We have more illonggo and bisayan words than tagalog words” [Z-M54-NS-sur] are typical. The use of Visayan and Tagalog words is sometimes associated with “bastardized Spanish” mentioned in section 5.2.

Although the Zamboanga region is highly multilingual and home to native languages such as Tausug and Yakan, which are not part of the Visayan family, these other languages were only rarely mentioned in the interviews or the surveys. One Caviteño interviewee described Zamboanga Chabacano as having “mixed Tausug and Visaya” [C-F82-NS-int], and one Zamboangueño survey respondent wrote that “The phonetic features are more inclined in Tagalog, Tausug, and Cebuano” [Z-F31-NS-sur]. These were the only two comments about Tausug in any of our data sources.

In contrast to Zamboanga Chabacano, the Manila Bay varieties were more consistently described as being influenced by Tagalog. In the interviews, one Ternateño was not sure which Chabacano variety sounded the most Tagalog, but described his own language as easy for Tagalog speakers to learn. As example (13) shows, he believes that his Tagalog-speaking wife was able to learn Ternate Chabacano quickly because the two languages are similar.

(13) Prestu, prestu prende kel chabakano e, se ba tagalog kelya... Seguru... minggu e, seguro tam, taki yo ta keda yo, de Bahra. Presto, similar...Tyeni paga similar ya tagalog kel aki kon motru. Kasi el mi muher, no tamen maki, ta sabe se, se chabakanu, presto, prestu entede el chabakanu, i tagalog. [T-M35-NS-int]

[She] learned Chabacano quickly, she spoke Tagalog. Maybe… with me, I was living here, [and speaking] Bahra. Fast, similar… there are similarities to Tagalog here with us. That is why my wife, she was not from here, she knew how to [speak] Chabacano, [she] quickly, quickly understood Chabacano and Tagalog.

Some Ternateños and Caviteños discussed Tagalog influence on their languages in terms of language loss, with the younger generations shifting away from Chabacano, as in (14), which refers to the situation in Cavite.

(14) Ojala el lengua de niso Nunca de muri. Un lengua muy hermosa para oir. Cada vez yo ta retira na cavite, poca a poco el hablantes de
idioma chabacana ta quida disminuyendo. Y mas de Tagalog. [C-M56-NS-sur]

‘I hope that our language will never die. It’s a very beautiful language to hear. Every time I go home to Cavite, little by little the speakers of the Chabacano language are diminishing. And there are more Tagalog.’

The language endangerment situation in Ternate is not as dire as it is in Cavite, but the Ternateño in (15) also commented that the present generation is becoming more Tagalog.


‘Because our speech now, today’s generation, they are much more Tagalog, because everyone [uses] the medium of the Tagalog dialect.’

In general, the influence of the Philippine adstrates in all three Chabacano communities seems to be viewed in terms of a shift away from more “pure” or “Spanish” forms. As the examples in this section showed, this attitude seems common even in Zamboanga, where the variety of Chabacano is not endangered.

5.4. Perceived relationship to English

Both in the field and in the surveys, the participants made very few comments about the relationships between the different Chabacano varieties and the adstrate English. When asked which dialect sounded the most like English, the majority of survey participants either said that no Chabacano dialect sounded like it or left the answer blank. Four people chose Zamboanga Chabacano, two chose Cavite Chabacano, and one chose Ternate Chabacano.

Speakers of all three Chabacano varieties commonly codeswitch with English, but there were only two comments made about English influence in the online survey. One Zamboangueño claimed that there is variation within Zamboanga Chabacano in terms of English influence, with rural speakers sounding “correct” and Spanish, and urban speakers mixing in “Anglicism”, as shown in example (16).

(16) the Zamboangueño Speakers from rural sounds like Mexican Spanish while those from the Urban area sounds modern. and sometimes the
Rural and Urban could not even understand each other well. because most of the rural Zamboangueño speakers use and speak correct Zamboangueño while those from the Urban area, they already mix it up with Anglicism. [Z-F29-NS-sur]

One Caviteño survey participant commented that Cavite Chabacano is a “mix with Tagalog and English” [C-M62-NS-sur]. In an interview, another Caviteño also commented on people in the city who mix Chabacano with Tagalog and English, while codeswitching himself (example (17)).

(17) *Tyene kel mga ta meskla ya ilo Tagalog, pag no ilo ta ma-grasp akel word na Chabacano e. Ta meskla ya ilo Tagalog … tyene nga kwan e, insidente minsan, English pa the word ta si kwan e, si no rin ilo ma-grasp na Tagalog e.* [C-M55-NS-int]

‘There are those who mix with Tagalog, when they don’t grasp the word in Chabacano. They mix with Tagalog … indeed there are incidents sometimes, even English is the word they [use], you know, if they also don’t grasp the Tagalog.’

Similarly, one Ternateño commented in an interview that Ternate Chabacano is mixed with Tagalog and English, which he contrasts with the “pure”, more Spanish Chabacano of the lehítimo ‘legitimate’ people of the town.

(18) *Kel lehítimo di Bahra talagang espanyol, puru. Tyeni halo Tagalog i Inglish ta platika aki na Bahra.* [T-M52-NS-int]

‘The legitimate people of Bahra [Ternate] are really Spanish, pure. There is a Tagalog and English mix spoken here in Bahra.’

5.5. Perceived linguistic differences between the Chabacano varieties

In the interviews conducted in Cavite City and Ternate, perceived linguistic differences focused mostly on lexical differences and pronunciation. In (19), the speaker mentions style in connection with the “tone”, which could be a reference to the pronunciation or even to some other kind of stylistic variation.

(19) *Primero ta yama kesti kel manga hente chabakano iguwal na platikada na syudad di Kabite i Samboanga. El dipersensya numa kel tonu i estilo di kel palabra pero ta huga intyende tamyen kosa mang ta platika.* [T-M61-NS-int]
‘First they call these people Chabacano like the speech in Cavite and Zamboanga. The difference is just the tone and style of the words but you can also understand what they’re saying.’

When describing Zamboanga Chabacano, Ternateños mention intonation, slower speech rate, and Visayan elements as the salient differences. Similarly, Cavite Chabacano sounds more mahina ‘slow’ and malamping ‘soft’ to Ternateños than their own variety. Interestingly, there are occasional comments in both Cavite and Ternate about Visayan mixture making the Zamboanga Chabacano speech rate faster. One Ternate interviewee even mentioned that the fast speech rate in Ternate Chabacano makes it sound the most Visayan-like of the Chabacano varieties. On the other hand, Caviteños frequently say that Ternate Chabacano sounds komo ta kanta ‘like singing’ or like birds/parrots, and imitate the “tone” or “intonation”. Ternateños are aware of these characterizations of their variety and frequently mention them and the fast speech rate when asked about the differences:

(20) — Kosa raw ta habla kel manga di otru pweblu pag motru ta platika chabakanu? — Aba, amo raw motru pahr, kasi, pag ta platika, kasi motru ben mabilis ta platika. [T-F48-NS-int]

‘— What do people from other towns say when we speak Chabacano? — Oh! (They say) we are like birds, because when we speak, we speak very fast.’

Examples of specific lexical differences between Cavite and Ternate Chabacano were relatively scarce, but some of the ones mentioned during the interviews are listed below in Table 7. Mentions of Zamboanga Chabacano lexical differences were even rarer, but include, for example, the greeting kosa notisya? instead of Cavite Chabacano ke tal? [C-M56-NS-int].

Caviteños and Ternateños both also frequently mentioned “funny” or “poetic” Ternate Chabacano phrases, such as ta sali el prusisyon (lit. ‘the procession is leaving’) for ‘the rice is boiling’, salipong (lit. ‘leave, boom!’) for ‘firework’, and dominus obispo (lit. ‘bishop’) for ‘a crab that waves its claw like a priest’. However, these expressions are not very commonly used in everyday speech in Ternate Chabacano, and might be repetition of an expert characterization made at some point in time.12

12 Some of the expressions are presented in Romanillos (2006, originally 1999), Medina (1994), and Nigoza (2007).
Table 7. Perceived lexical differences between Cavite and Ternate Chabacano

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentioned by</th>
<th>Cavite Chabacano</th>
<th>Ternate Chabacano</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caviteños</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Sir/Ma’am’</td>
<td>‘bay’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘yes’</td>
<td>‘ee’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘fish sauce’</td>
<td>‘patis’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘stupid’</td>
<td>‘tanga’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘1PL’</td>
<td>‘motru’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘2SG’</td>
<td>‘bo’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ternateños</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘[in] a moment’</td>
<td>‘presto’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘soon’</td>
<td>‘presto’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘yes’</td>
<td>‘ee’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘1PL’</td>
<td>‘motru’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘2SG’</td>
<td>‘bo’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘good evening’</td>
<td>‘-’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding further grammatical elements, interviewees mentioned articles and prepositions, although this was somewhat rare. One example is the use of *sin* ‘without’ in Cavite instead of *nway ma* ‘no more’ in Ternate [T-F53-NS-int]. In addition, pronouns are often mentioned as marking differences between the varieties, as in (21), where a Caviteño describes the pronouns (*nosotros* ‘1PL’, *bosotros* ‘2PL’) that he thinks are used in Zamboanga.

(21) Oo, ta entendi pero el ano, como kel otro, ta abla ilo “nosotros, bosotros”. Iyon. Ta platika ilo ansina. Atsaka mucho ilo platikada, Español. [C-M64-NS-int]

‘Yes, [we] understand, but the… like the others, they [in Zamboanga] say “nosotros, bosotros”. There. They speak like that. And a lot of their speech is Spanish.’

Example (22) is from a situation in which the different pronouns caused a pragmatic problem when meeting speakers from other communities. The Ternate Chabacano-speaking young man had met an old lady from Cavite City, whom he addressed as *bo* without knowing that Caviteños consider it rude to use this form with elders; they consider *tu* to be more respectful in this context (Lesho 2013: 339–341).
"Bo" surprisingly is "tu" in Cavite City. I did not know that! So, the old woman scolded me. I said: "Lola [=grandmother], I did not know that "tu" and "bo" are different, not the same.'

In the survey answers, the most often stated differences between the Chabacano varieties were related to pronunciation. "Intonation", "pronunciation", "accent", "tone", "stress", "diction", and "phonetic features" were all used to express phenomena connected to the differences. It is difficult to conclude exactly what all these characterizations mean, but they seem to be used not only for intonation, but also speech rate or other prosodic differences, vowel quality, and other phonological differences. In example (23), from a Zamboanga Chabacano speaker, examples of both coda [r] ~ [l] alternation and /e/ raising to [i] are mentioned.

I have also met chabacano speaker of Cavite and Ternate in Manila, Filipino words has replaced most old spanish words. The word "Ñor" (short for Señor) is pronounced as “ÑOL”. The letters “E” is pronounced as letter “I”. [Z-M54NS-sur]

In the interview data, a Caviteño also observed that this /e/ raising distinguishes their variety from Zamboanga Chabacano in the word kurri ‘run’ (< Sp. correr): el taga-Zamboanga, “korre, korre”! Aki niso, “kurri” ‘The people from Zamboanga, [they say] “run, run”! Here we [have], “run”’ [C-F61-NS-int].

Lexical variation was also frequently mentioned by the survey respondents, especially with regard to the influence from Philippine languages: Tagalog is mentioned for the Manila Bay region, and Visayan, Ilonggo, and Cebuano for the Zamboanga region (see also 5.3). Both idioms and words are pointed out as differing units. One Zamboanga respondent commented that Cavite Chabacano employs “deeper” words. Pronouns are the only grammatical category mentioned in the answers by both Cavite and Zamboanga respondents.

When describing Zamboanga Chabacano, Cavite Chabacano respondents mentioned pronouns, such as kami ‘1PL.EXCL’, ellos/ellas ‘they [M/F]’, daimon (probably from diamon ‘ours’); the negator jende; and specific lexical items, which are characterized as Visayan words. Some of
these linguistic elements are characteristic of Zamboanga Chabacano and not used in the Manila Bay region, as for example the pronouns expressing the 
inclusive/exclusive distinction, _jutay_ (probably from _diutay_ ‘small’), and _bilog_ 
’a piece’ or ‘CLF’.

Regarding Ternate Chabacano, only a few Caviteños commented on 
differences. They mentioned intonation, Portuguese influence, and similar 
poetic expressions to the ones in the interviews as factors that differentiate 
Ternate Chabacano from their own variety. The mention of Portuguese as 
typical for Ternate Chabacano is also found in one Zamboanga respondent’s 
answer in the survey. There is even a mention that Ternate Chabacano sounds 
like Latin. Other features Zamboangueños find distinctive of Ternate 
Chabacano are Tagalog words and pronunciation features. These include 
raised mid vowels in unstressed final positions, as in “_callenti for callente, 
aprendi for aprende, pudi for puede, comi for come(r)_” [Z-M54-NS-sur]. 
Some lexical items mentioned in the survey answers are _hugá_ ‘play’, _fiesta_ 
‘party’ [Z-F22-NS-sur], and _chikito/a_ ‘little boy/girl’ [Z-F31-NS-sur].

Even though the online survey contained audio samples of each 
variety, nearly half of the respondents answered that they did not remember or 
that they had no idea about how Ternate Chabacano sounds or what kinds of 
things the speakers would say. This type of response was not as common for 
other varieties, and it is probably a reflection of the fact that many 
Zamboangueños are not aware of the smaller Manila Bay communities.

Regarding Cavite Chabacano, Zamboangueños mention Tagalog 
influence, “deeper” words, and different stress as distinguishing it from their 
Chabacano variety. Examples of the specific things that they think Cavite 
Chabacano speakers say are rather scarce, but many of the ones given contain 
pronominal elements, such as _De onde ustedes?_ ‘Where are you from?’ [Z-
M44-NP-sur], _Nisos_ ‘1PL’ [Z-M40-NS-sur], and _De donde tu? Cosa dituyu nombre?_ 
‘Where are you from? What is your name?’ [Z-F31-NS-sur]. In a comment from Ternate, Cavite Chabacano is described as using Spanish 
feminine and masculine articles: “_la muerte, always use LA, EL_” [T-F35-NS-
sur].

When asked to rate the similarity of their own variety with regard to 
the others on the online survey, most Cavite Chabacano speakers considered 
Zamboanga Chabacano to be “a little different” from their own variety, while 
one considered it to be “different”. Similarly, most Cavite Chabacano speakers 
 saw Ternate Chabacano as being “a little different” from their own variety, 
while one Cavite respondent sees it as “the same” language. As the number of 
Zamboanga Chabacano respondents was higher, their answers were also
slightly more varied, including six answers that consider the varieties to be “the same”, four “a little different”, and six “different”. Regarding Ternate Chabacano, the results from Zamboanga show greater variation: one respondent rated Ternate Chabacano as “so different I cannot understand”, one as “the same”, and three as “different”, while the majority (11) selected “a little different”.13

5.6. Perceived linguistic similarities between the Chabacano varieties

When asked to describe the similarities between their own language and the other Chabacano varieties, most of the survey participants said that the creoles were all similar because they share Spanish vocabulary, responding with phrases such as “similar in more basic words” [T-F35-NS-sur], “the use of Spanish root words” [C-M67-NS-sur], and “same words” [Z-F19-NS-sur]. Two survey participants commented more specifically that the verbs in the different Chabacano varieties come from Spanish, and one person mentioned that the varieties share common greetings.

A few participants mentioned syntactic or phonological similarities between the varieties as well. For example, some descriptions included “mostly Spanish verbs and sentence syntax” [Z-M40-NS-sur], “similar sentence construction” [Z-M54-NS-sur], and “no conjugations” [Z-M31-NS-sur]. In example (24), one Zamboanga Chabacano speaker commented specifically that the stress or accent of the words is the same in Cavite Chabacano.

(24) My dialect and Cavite Chabacano is the same. Words, accent, stress on pronunciation is exactly the same. If we were to invite a Cavite Chabacano speaker in one occasion with pure Zamboangaños in it, I bet they won’t know who’s who. [Z-F28-NS-sur]

She also said in a separate comment that although Cavite Chabacano is mixed with Tagalog, she “can even converse with the Caviteños with ease and confidence like one of them” [Z-F28-NS-sur].

In the interviews from Ternate and Cavite, it is commonly said that despite some differences between the Chabacano varieties, they are relatively minor compared to the great similarities between them. In example (25), one Ternate interviewee downplays the differences between Chabacano varieties and said that it was great to speak Chabacano with anybody.

13 The only respondent from Ternate has been left outside the discussion.
(25)  *Ta pey entende di bwenu, parehas din, pero otro lang intoneyson, medyo mabilis motru, rotru medyo maban, pero sabroso platikay chabakano, diha?* [T-M21-N-int]

‘We can understand well, they are similar, but just the intonation is different, we’re a little fast, they’re a little slow, but it’s great to speak Chabacano, isn’t it?’

Similarly, it was common for Cavite Chabacano speakers to list all the funny phrases they thought Ternateños said and comment on their “intonation”, but then add that Ternate Chabacano is “*similar na Chabacano aki*” ‘similar to Chabacano here’ [C-M87-NS-map].

Some participants thought that certain Chabacano varieties seemed closer to their own than others. For example, one interviewee claimed that Caviteños can understand Ternate Chabacano, “but we understand more the Chabacano in Zamboanga”, acknowledging that Zamboanga Chabacano has Visayan words but that “when it’s a pure Chabacano, almost the same” [C-M69-NS-int]. Another example is the comment in (24) stating that Zamboanga and Cavite Chabacano sound the same; the same participant also reported that she had never heard Ternate Chabacano before, and that it was difficult to understand the audio clip on the survey. These opinions were not shared by all speakers, however. There were also Caviteños who found Zamboanga Chabacano *mahirap* ‘difficult’ and Zamboangueños who said they had a hard time telling Cavite and Ternate Chabacano apart.

5.7. Social evaluations of perceived differences and similarities

Perceived differences and influence from other languages received both direct and indirect social evaluations in the interviews conducted in Cavite and Ternate. Cavite participants describe Ternate Chabacano as funny, poetic, and figurative (some examples were given in 5.5), which seems to build a rustic, folksy image of Ternateños.

(26)  *Tyene ilos ano, uh, palabras poéticas.* When they describe things they’re very poetic. Very- they use a lot of metaphor. *Metafóricas.* So. I don’t know if you encountered it already. It’s very strange. [C-M49-NS-int/map]

‘They have, uh, poetic words […] Metaphoric […]’
Some Caviteños and Zamboangaños said that listening to Ternate Chabacano makes them laugh, as in *Di pudi tu ri* ‘It would make you laugh’ [C-M87-NS-map]. One Zamboangaño mentioned that the high number of Tagalog words in Ternate Chabacano is *macarisa* ‘funny’ [Z-M69-NS-sur].

Regarding social differences, Ternateños often mentioned that Chabacano in Cavite City is becoming lost and that only *manga byeha byeho* ‘old people’ speak it. However, no comments were made directly about the characteristics of old folks’ speech. In Ternate, people often associate Cavite Chabacano with being closer to Spanish and more softly spoken than their own variety (see 5.2 and 5.5). This Spanishness of Cavite Chabacano has both positive and negative associations. Generally, the Spanish origin of the language is known and appreciated, but when contrasting with local identities, it is backgrounded. As example (27) shows, “we” are pure Chabacanos, and “they” are Spanish.

(27) *Aya na Kabite... Spanish. Motru, motru talaga pure chabakano.* [T-F25-FS-int]

‘There in Cavite… Spanish. We, we really are pure Chabacano.’

However, Spanish is more often mentioned in positive contexts. These include, for example, several stories about working abroad and being able to converse with speakers of Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. Being able to speak Chabacano even saved someone’s life in a robbery by Spanish speakers, during which he was able to beg for his life in this “Spanish-like” language. Chabacano speakers are proud of their linguistic skills, which are also appreciated among fellow Filipinos.

In both Cavite and Ternate, the Visayan mixture of Zamboanga Chabacano is perceived as a negative factor, making the variety difficult to understand, and “not true/real” Chabacano”, as in (28). As the examples in 5.1 and 5.2 showed, some Zamboanga Chabacano speakers hold similar attitudes about Visayan-influenced speech being less “pure” than more Spanish-sounding speech.

(28) *Pero el platikada, guna bes, ta pwede entendi, guna bes naman no. Tyene halo Visaya nga. No komo de niso, talagang Chabacano, Chabacano talaga.* [C-F67-NS-int/map]
'But the speech, sometimes, it can be understood, sometimes not. There is really a Visayan mixture. Not like ours, [which is] truly Chabacano, Chabacano truly.'

In the survey answers, social evaluations made directly of the varieties included both positive and negative attitudes. On one hand, Zamboanga respondents thought that Cavite and Ternate Chabacano sound “quite familiar and strange at the same time” [Z-F39-NS-sur]. The strangeness is probably connected to the Tagalog element, which was occasionally mentioned. The Manila Bay varieties are also characterized as sounding funny and naïve. The few Caviteños who expressed social evaluations in their survey answers were generally more disapproving of the other varieties, as in (29). When considered to differ from Cavite Chabacano, the variety in Ternate was described as crude.

(29) It was awkward [to hear Zamboanga Chabacano] because I grew up speaking in much better chabacano. [C-M49-NS-sur]

On a more general level, the survey answers from Zamboanga respondents indicated that surprise and positive emotions are connected to hearing Chabacano outside the local community and everyday settings. Some respondents commented that it feels “strange” or “awkward”, or that they were “surprised” when hearing Chabacano abroad or in other places in the Philippines. However, many also feel “proud”, “happy”, and “good” when hearing their native tongue. Nostalgia and “feeling at home” was also expressed, especially among the overseas workers, who often spend several years away from their homes.

Furthermore, as shown in 5.2 and 5.3, there seems to be a common preoccupation with language shift and Philippine influence affecting the “purity” of the language. Comments like (30) are typical in all three communities.

(30) Peligroso el porvenir del Zamboanga Chabacano cay maga jóvenes na ciudad quiere quiere mezcla maga palabra tagalog na di ila chabacano cay queda sila mas “social” si ta usa sila tagalog. [Z-M67-NS-sur]

‘The future of Zamboanga Chabacano is in danger because the youth in the city want to mix Tagalog words in their Chabacano and this way become more “high class” if they use Tagalog.’
However, many Zamboanga survey respondents were proud that they have preserved the language, contrary to what they perceived to be happening in other locations in the Philippines.

6. Discussion

6.1. Perceived linguistic differences and documented variation

The results of our analysis show that Chabacano speakers’ folk perceptions and linguists’ observations match in some cases, while there are also considerable mismatches in others. When comparing the data gathered from the interviews, the map task, and the online survey, the outcomes were very similar. In all data types phonological and lexical variation are highlighted, with the latter explained by adstrate influence. Minor attention is drawn to grammatical elements, such as pronouns and prepositions. The survey data seem to present more examples of variation matching up with linguists’ observations, which can probably be explained by the respondents’ interest in language issues and in taking the survey.

Some lexical variation has been documented in previous studies (see 3.2.1), but further studies are needed to determine if some of the differences could be linked to stylistic variation. Studies about dialectal or stylistic variation in Chabacano are rare (for exceptions, see Lesho 2013 and Sippola 2009), and could explain, for example, some of the differences regarding greetings and responses in the Manila Bay varieties. One area that stands out as attested by both speakers and linguists is the Visayan adstrate influence in the Zamboanga Chabacano lexicon. Interestingly, Visayan influence is also attached to other features in the perception of Chabacano speakers, for example, speech rate or intonation. Reasons for this remain unexplained, and could be partially socially motivated and possibly connected with broader stereotypes about Visayan languages in the Philippine context. Other phonological matches between the perception of native speakers and the descriptions of linguists include variation in mid vowel raising and coda [r] ~ [I] in Cavite.

Other documented phonological differences within or between the varieties, such as the variation between palatal /ʎ/ and /j/, and aspiration of [s]

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14 To date, there is no perceptual dialectology or attitudes research about the Philippine language situation more generally.
in coda, were not commented on at all. However, ‘softness’ and the lisp mentioned for Zamboanga Chabacano, and especially its older speakers, could be related to the use of [θ], which was observed as a rare feature by Ing (1976: 20).

Phonological variation is a relatively underexplored area of creole studies in general and Chabacano studies in particular. Interestingly, it is highly salient to Chabacano speakers, and intonation, speech rate, and characterizations such as ‘slow’, ‘soft’, and ‘singing’ were regularly mentioned in all data types. These findings emphasize the fact that more production studies are needed at both the segmental and prosodic levels to determine specifically which kind of phenomena are actually perceived, and what the consequences are for dialectal groupings. Because phonological variation has been found to be salient in other creoles (Winford 1976, Wassink 1999, Irvine 2004) and in other languages more generally, further creole research should focus along these lines, especially where prosody is concerned. In general, although there is extensive research on prosodic variation in Romance (Prieto et al. 2010-2014), it seems to be relatively understudied in dialectology despite its importance in folk perception across languages (Daan 1999, Preston 2002).

Regarding grammatical differences, native speakers and linguistic studies have pointed out similar variation in pronouns. However, some examples given by the speakers include items which have not been attested for the varieties in question. For example, the pronouns nosotros ‘1PL’ and vosotros ‘2PL’ are only registered as older forms in regional dialects of Zamboanga Chabacano (Lipski 2013: 458). Other attested grammatical differences were only rarely commented on in any of the tasks. TMA marker variation, which is frequently mentioned in linguistic studies on Chabacano, was not salient in the speakers’ perceptions. Other grammatical differences, such as the Zamboanga Chabacano negator jende, or the numerical classifier bilug, appear rarely in the speakers’ perception results as lexical entries.

Why are the grammatical differences less salient for speakers than the phonological or lexical differences? One explanation might be that speakers are more focused on understanding and can partly rely on their multilingual repertoires, including one or more Philippine languages and English. For example, Zamboanga Chabacano jende is not likely to be misunderstood by Manila Bay speakers because they use the negator hindi in Tagalog, if not in their Chabacano varieties. The divergent items differ mainly in form, and less in function, and these functions are significantly influenced by the adstrate. In addition, in multilingual situations local pragmatics and the cultural context
gain importance, and these are often shared knowledge by the speakers of different languages in the Philippines. This explains also why the pronouns are the most frequently mentioned type of grammatical variation, as their use is constrained by different pragmatics across Chabacano varieties; the variation is noteworthy to the speakers because it causes confusion in their social interactions (see example (22)), whereas the use of different negators or prepositions does not. Interestingly, the Spanish element is seen as a unifying factor among the varieties, but the shared cultural knowledge and the linguistic similarities between the Philippine adstrates likely facilitate communication as well.

Creolists have often focused on theoretical discussions or historical problems, largely motivated by the explanation of the creolization process and centered on morphosyntactic phenomena, rather than the types of perceptually salient phonological or lexical features described above. In addition, as discussed in section 2, the perspectives of native speakers have often been lost as creolists impose their own metalinguistic systems onto their analyses. There are some notable exceptions involving Caribbean creoles, particularly Jamaican Creole, which has benefited from extensive study by native speaker linguists (Patrick 1999: 66). Long-term fieldwork including participant observation, together with elicitation methods from perceptual dialectology, is another way to minimize researcher bias.

6.2. Social attitudes in the multilingual creole settings

The historical relationships and documented connections between the three communities were rarely directly commented on in the interviews or the survey answers. The speakers referred to each other’s varieties as “Chabacano” but called them separate languages or dialects,15 and they seemed to think of their communities as culturally distinct.

Regarding the formation histories of the communities, the interviewed speakers mainly claimed to be aware of their respective local histories. In several interviews conducted in Ternate and Cavite, speakers mentioned their Spanish background and that their grandparents could speak good Spanish. Lipski (2001: 121) has noted that the notion of Chabacano as a dialect of Spanish prevails in some groups, and is further supported by a historical confusion about the different language varieties and the low numbers of Spanish speakers in the Philippines. The possible Portuguese connection in Ternate surfaces from time to time in the comparative work by linguists, and

15 In the Philippines, it is common to use “dialect” for all Philippine languages.
there is some degree of awareness of it among the speakers (see example (4) and section 5.7). People from Ternate and Cavite especially refer to the Portuguese background of the community in Ternate when discussing the history of the community, but actual examples of Portuguese items are not given. Instead, references to the Spanish background, and to the Mardikas in Ternate, are more prominent. Moreover, speaker perceptions do not offer insights to phenomena that could be connected with different periods of Spanish influence.

Speakers in Cavite and Ternate are aware of each other’s communities due to their geographical proximity, and there seems to have been some degree of contact between the two locations, especially during the 20th century. Many older Ternateños have studied or worked in Cavite City, which used to be the commercial and administrative center of the province. Some also have family from the city and other coastal areas of the Manila Bay, such as Corregidor Island. Nowadays it seems to be more common to have contact with Zamboanga Chabacano speakers, but these connections are often created due to work, studies, or some family member marrying a person from Zamboanga. The increasing importance of Zamboanga in interpersonal contacts and the diminishing contact with Cavite Chabacano speakers can be explained by the drastically low numbers of speakers in Cavite City. Another reason for increased contact between Chabacano speakers is migration to find work, either within the Philippines or abroad. Zamboanga Chabacano speakers, many of whom indicated little awareness of Ternate or Cavite Chabacano on the survey (see 5.1), reported feeling surprised when they meet speakers of these varieties in Manila or overseas.

Chabacano speakers are aware of the generational differences and language shift situations in the three communities. In the Manila Bay region, speakers are aware of the severe endangerment situation in Cavite City. However, the awareness of this situation among the speakers of Zamboanga Chabacano is not as common. Claims about where “pure” or “deep” Chabacano is spoken is another notion which shows considerable variation and links linguistic features with social evaluations. Speakers see the “deep” Chabacano spoken by older and rural people as more akin to Spanish, which has also been documented in linguistic studies (Lipski 2010: 137). The concept of “deep” language seems to be common in the Philippines. For example, in Tagalog, *malalim* ‘deep’ is used to describe archaic or formal words that are not borrowings from Spanish or English. In addition, people in all three communities codeswitch extensively, but only influence from the
local languages is perceived as salient. There are very few comments about English influence in Chabacano.

Speakers from all three communities discuss Visayan influence in connection with language shift. There is significant Visayan immigration to Zamboanga, which is one of the major cities of the Southern Philippines, but the immigration is also noticeable in both communities in the Cavite province. However, there Tagalog influence is seen as something more dangerous, probably because it is one of the languages speakers are fully bilingual in besides Chabacano. Lipski (2001: 157) connects the purist attitudes to political and social ideologies, claiming that promoters of local ethnic culture and supporters of increased political autonomy for Zamboanga often express dissatisfaction towards the influence of English and Philippine languages on Chabacano. Other community members, however, particularly the younger generations, see English and Filipino as the languages of socioeconomic advancement, even while expressing nostalgia for Chabacano (Lesho & Sippola 2013). Due to these different types of attitudes, the meanings attributed to different features can vary from place to place, and there is a complex network of connections to the perceived relationships between the different languages present in each community.

These types of language attitudes are clearly multi-dimensional, echoing the findings in Caribbean settings (Rickford 1985, Wassink 1999). In the Philippines, several historical and prestige dimensions are at play. While Spanish does still hold some prestige, as indicated by comments referring to Chabacano as “broken Spanish” and indicating pride in Spanish heritage, it clearly represents the past. In contrast, while there are some negative attitudes toward the influence of Tagalog/Filipino in Chabacano, it can also be viewed as prestigious in its own right. At the same time, the Chabacano varieties in all three communities are also seen as distinct languages with standards of “purity” and as something worth saving.

7. Conclusion

Chabacano speakers consider the three varieties to be separate but mutually intelligible languages. The similarities are associated with the Spanish component in the varieties, and the speakers identify different varieties based mostly on lexical and phonological differences. These linguistic differences are attributed to each variety’s perceived closeness to Spanish or the Philippine languages. Language shift to Philippine languages is perceived as a
threat, even in the most vital community of Zamboanga. The prestige of English seems to protect it from negative perceptions. For historical reasons, Spanish is perceived as a prestige variety, with several positive linguistic and ethnic connotations. However, ‘pure’ or ‘legitimate’ Chabacano is distinct from Spanish, and it is tied to the local identities and contexts.

The social and linguistic beliefs commonly held among the Chabacano-speaking communities in the Philippines have been shown to align partially with the observations made by linguists. However, speakers are more focused on today’s linguistic situation in the communities with preoccupations about the purity of their languages, while linguists often focus on descriptions and comparisons that could shed light on the historical connections between the varieties. The linguistic descriptions also tend to focus on morphology and syntax, whereas the speakers generally have greater metalinguistic awareness of phonological and lexical variation within and across the Chabacano varieties.

Complex networks of power and prestige are formed in the multilingual realities of the Chabacano-speaking communities, where the creoles are spoken and influenced by other languages, attitudes, and their respective histories. These findings have shown the significance of speaker perceptions for gaining insights into these complex sociolinguistic dynamics of creole situations in general and Philippine minority language situations in particular.

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