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2024 Hispanic Linguistics Symposium

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**Are Young Miko, Villano Antillano, and Tokischa reflecting their queer Caribbean Latina identity in their sociophonetics? A study of their spontaneous speech and their artistic performance speech**

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## **Are Young Miko, Villano Antillano, and Tokischa reflecting their queer Caribbean Latina identity in their sociophonetics? A study of their spontaneous speech and their artistic performance speech**

American consumption of Latin Music is at an all-time high (Billboard Charts, 2024; YouTube Music Charts, n.d.), and its popularity in the U.S. has allowed young, queer Caribbean Latina artists like Young Miko, Villano Antillano, and Tokischa to become more well known. These artists' large platforms mean that their speech has the potential of influencing the speech of their listeners, both Spanish speakers and learners. But what is that speech?

The goal of the study is to determine whether Young Miko, Villano Antillano, and Tokischa reflect their queer Caribbean Latina identity in their sociophonetics, both in their spontaneous speech and in their artistic performance speech (see Hayes, 2023). Young Miko is Puerto Rican and lesbian, Villano Antillano is Puerto Rican and a trans woman, and Tokischa is Dominican and bisexual. The study will look for sociophonetic trends and identity markers in their interviews (spontaneous speech), and in their top songs (artistic performance speech - APS). If these trends are present, it will show “how a speaker’s accent, speech patterns, intonation, etc. can serve as markers” that are indexical of the speaker’s behavior, personality, social status, and character (Lindvall-Östling, 2019, p. 211). These artists were chosen because they are from the same part of the Spanish speaking world, the Caribbean, they present as feminine, and they are openly queer.

To address our research questions, we will use four recordings per artist of their spontaneous speech and their APS as a corpus which will be downloaded from YouTube Premium and will be analyzed in Praat (phonetics software). We seek to determine if there are any sociophonetic trends and identity markers in their spontaneous speech and in their APS. Text grids will be created for each recording. We will then review the results and consider all the outcomes.

This research is beneficial as there is a very limited number of studies on the sociophonetics of queer women and femmes, especially as they pertain to music, and they are underrepresented, understudied, and not visible in academia. It is crucial that queer artists are included in our academic research to provide visibility.

347 words

Keywords: language and gender, sociolinguistics, queer linguistics, identity

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