

## Labialization of word-final nasals in Spanish

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In this talk, I discuss the phenomenon of labialization of word-final nasals in Yucatecan Spanish (Mexico) against the background of data obtained on the occasion of a semi-spontaneous elicitation experiment on focus realization.

In Yucatecan Spanish (Mexico), a nasal consonant is often pronounced as [m] if placed at the end of a word. For example, instead of saying *Quiero comer [pan]* ('I want to eat bread'), the speakers say *Quiero comer [pam]*. This phenomenon is extremely widespread at the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico, and Yucatecan Spanish speakers both are renowned for, and self-identify with this feature, to the degree that it is even used for merchandising purposes by local labels or souvenir shops (¡*Vaya biem!*). Since this phenomenon is largely unknown in other Spanish-speaking regions, it is often linked to the influence of the indigenous language Yucatec Maya in the literature. However, recent research has shown that it is even more widespread among monolingual speakers of Yucatecan Spanish than among bilingual (Maya/Spanish) speakers.

From a phonetic point of view, it is interesting that, in our data, the rate of labialization of word final nasals is highest after [-anterior] vowels ([a,o]), as in [pam], whereas labialized nasals are extremely rare after [e,i]. Secondly, the labialization rate significantly increases with the length of the subsequent pause, reaching its maximum in utterance-final position. Thus, even if it is plausible to assume that the feature was originally transferred from Yucatec Maya to Spanish, it seems to have taken on a life of its own in Yucatecan Spanish which is crucially determined by its function as a linguistic marker of right-edge prosodic prominence.