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A New Look at Language Contact in Amerindian Languages

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Introduction

This volume contains nine chapters, each of them investigating distinct aspects of the linguistic consequences of language contact, among them those that result from the differences in the typology of the languages involved. The central scientific question that inspires the authors is: Are there particular constraints in regard to the different structures that can be transferred from one language to another when the donor and recipient languages differ considerably in their typology?

On the one hand, for Meillet (1982 [1912], Jakobson (1962 [1938]: 241) Weinreich (1953: 25) and Winford (2003), grammatical features are borrowed only when both the donor and the recipient languages coincide typologically. According to Jakobson, "a language accepts foreign structural elements only when they correspond to its own tendencies of development" (1962 [1938]: 241). Winford remarks that "the greater the congruence between morphological structures across languages in contact, the greater the ease of borrowing" (2003: 91). In other words, this research on contact-induced language change has emphasized restrictions due to the recipient language (Moravcsik, 1978).

On the other hand, Smith (1981), Faarlund (1990), Hawkins (1990, 1995) and Field (2002) consider that the characteristics of both languages have to be taken into account. According to Field (2002), the complexity of morphological processes of synthetic languages prevents the borrowing of verbal roots.

A third point of view is that exemplified by Thomason and Kaufinan (1988), Thomason (2001), Curnow (2001), Zimmermann (2001), Heinc and Kuteva (2003, 2005), Chamoreau and Lastra (2005), Aikhenvald and Dixon (2007), and Matras and Sakel (2007), among others; potentially, any linguistic feature can be transferred.

All the contributions in this volume deal with languages spoken in America. In the cases presented in this volume, the comparison of the typological characteristics of the languages is a prerequisite for the study of contact in different sociolinguistic situations. The papers illustrate different types of contact-induced changes, analyzing consequences of linguistic contact at morphosyntactic and prosodic levels, taking into account a cross-linguistic typological perspective. They show that although any linguistic feature can be transferred, some hierarchies may be drawn and that typological aspects of the languages involved in a contact situation put certain constraints on the type of what may be borrowed. Some contributions also point out the relevance of sociolinguistic and pragmatic factors in linguistic changes in settings involving contact. In other words, the contributors reinforce the final point of view outlined above, although with certain nuances.

Brody examines borrowed discourse markers in a situation of language contact between unrelated languages through a case study of Tojolab'al Mayan and Spanish, two languages for which patterns of use of discourse markers in discourse structure have been documented. In examining discourse markers borrowed from Spanish into Tojolab'al, she takes into account both the language ideology of the contact communities and the discourse structures and markers of each language. Brody presents an analysis from the perspective of Tojolab'al, providing evidence that the borrowed discourse markers function in combination(s) with, but effectively external to, a robust and complex indigenous system of discourse marking. Brody shows that it is common for both indigenous and borrowed discourse markers to co-occur in use: repetition is a pervasive feature of Tojolab'al discourse, language practice, and cultural practice as well. The

use of these elements in Tojolab'al discourse **periphery** represents one way in which speakers avail themselves of **opportunities** provided by language contact to reinforce indigenous discourse structure, by **making** discourse junctures more **salient**, and by fine-tuning discourse-level phenomena; this occurs **especially** in the temporal sequences. Brody emphasizes that **Spanish-origin** discourse markers in Tojolab'al represent an addition to the indigenous inventory for **structuring** Tojolab'al discourse, rather than a means for its reorganization (see Heine and Kuteva, 2005 and Matras, 1998).

Buenrostro focuses on the study of contact between Chuj and Tojolabal, two genetically related Mayan languages. Tojolabal is **basically** spoken in the area of Altos de Chiapas (municipalities of Las Margaritas and Altamirano) and Chuj is mostly spoken in the northeastern side of the section of Huehuetenango (San Mateo Ixtatán, San Sebastián Coatán and Nentón) in Guatemala (there are Chuj speakers on the **Mexican** side, but they are not representative). This does not mean that there is no **evidence** of contact between both languages. On one side we have the **romerías** (religious festivities) that Tojolabales (even to this day) hold in the Chuj area and, on the other, we find a toponymy in the Tojolabal area that can only be explained through Chuj. This distance has caused Chuj and Tojolabal to take **typologically** different routes. Buenrostro shows the differences between Chuj and Tojolabal within some **grammatical** aspects and assumes there are many similarities at several levels. She **underlines** some **important** aspects in which Chuj and Tojolabal appear to be different, focusing on the **current** conditions that have made these languages evolve on different paths, both showing a marked influence from their neighboring languages.

Canger gives an account of Nahuatl word prosody that has changed over the last 500 years, a change which has gone further in some dialects than in others. **Careful** reading and a detailed analysis of descriptions from the 16th and 17th centuries by Spanish friars, have lead her to claim that vowel quantity was the basic characteristic of Nahuatl spoken before the Spanish invasion, and that the Spanish friars **recognized** no phonetic stress accent. Subsequently, in many present-day dialects, the quantity distinction has weakened, and in these dialects stress falls predictably on the penultimate syllable. In at least one dialect the quantity distinction has disappeared completely, and stress has become part of the morphological system, thereby becoming more like Spanish. The hypothesis is further supported by an analysis of **early** Nahuatl loan words in Spanish which have word-final stress and a long vowel in the penultimate syllable. The extent to which this process of change is due to Spanish influence or reflects universal prosodic tendencies is discussed. Taking into account that Nahuatl is a **rare** language with no dominant stress (Hyman, 1977), it enters a **numerous** group of languages with a more perceptible stress on the **penultimate** syllable, and another step brings it close to Spanish with no vowel quantity and a stress **pattern** like that of Spanish.

Chamoreau's **contribution** deals with the development of analytic constructions in Purepecha. The analytic constructions do not **replace** the traditional **synthetic** ones, but rather add to the expressive power of the overall verbal system. She analyzes the development of analytic constructions in Purepecha using two verbs: *xa*, 'be there', and *xinte*, 'be', as **auxiliaries** and copulas. In Purepecha, the evolution towards more analytical constructions operates in various **construction types**; this is not an isolated phenomenon. She shows that the development of analytic constructions seems to be the **result** of internal reorganization that was accelerated by contact with Spanish. Even if contact could appear to be the **primary** motivation, it is not possible to **characterize** the evolution towards analyticity as an entirely contact-induced change (also see Bisang, 1998; Heine and Kuteva, 2003, 2005, and Thomason, 2001, 2002). In its

current state, Purepecha has both analytic and synthetic constructions for expressing passive constructions on one hand, and nominal predicate constructions with specific pragmatic and sociolinguistic particularities on the other hand. Purepecha and Spanish have acquired closer structural approximation in two aspects of their grammar, which are assumed to have been different at the onset of contact. Therefore, the principal motivation seems to be linguistic contact, but it would be inaccurate to think that internal evolution played no role in this process. Both domains showed instability and internal evolution before the development of the analytic constructions, which have nonetheless facilitated the evolution towards analyticity.

In their contribution, Estrada Fernández and Félix Armendáriz compare the encoding of the middle domain for four Uto-Aztecan languages: Yaqui and Warihio (Taracahitan) and Pima Bajo and Southern Tepehuan (Tepiman). First a general characterization of the middle domain is given, mainly based on the work of Kemmer (1993, 1994). Then some typological characteristics of the four Uto-Aztecan languages are described, aiming mainly at a general scenario of the range of typological diversity that they represent. Finally the middle domain is analyzed. It is shown that in Pima Bajo and Southern Tepehuan the semantic domain of the middle is encoded as middle, middle-reflexive, and rarely as intransitive; in Yaqui it is encoded by means of either reflexives or intransitives, and finally, in Warihio all the middle domains are encoded as intransitives. The final remarks emphasize the semantic value of passive as the one that may be leading for the typological diversity observed in this group of Uto-Aztecan languages. Estrada Fernández and Félix Armendáriz point out that recent research on linguistic change (Heine and Kuteva, 2005, 2008) suggests that grammaticalization and language contact should not be considered to be mutually exclusive forces of change. In the particular case of middle constructions, Pima Bajo and Southern Tepehuan lack passive morphology and both languages have developed a new specific paradigm to express the middle domain: contact with Spanish may be considered an indirect force which is pushing the grammars of these two languages to express the semantic domain of the middle.

Hekking, Bakker and Gómez Rendón's contribution explores the role of typological differences between languages when explaining their borrowing behavior. This is done by selecting three typologically different languages from the Americas (Otomi, Quichua and Guarani), which are in more or less intensive contact with one donor language (Spanish). For each of these three Amerindian languages, spoken data were locally collected by interviewing a total of 122 native speakers. These recorded interviews were transcribed and put into a computer-readable database. The Spanish borrowings in the database were marked for their parts of speech and their functions in the sentence. With the help of a computer program especially developed for this purpose, quantitative and qualitative differences in borrowing were detected between the three languages which may be traced back to typological differences between them. This concerns the relative amount of borrowing of the major parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs) and of elements of a grammatical and pragmatical nature, such as adpositions, articles, and discourse markers. The authors conclude that, although the motivation for borrowing should be sought outside the grammar, structural and typological aspects of the languages involved in a contact situation put clear constraints on the amount and type of what may be borrowed, and on the principle that in borrowing between languages, 'anything goes.'

In her contribution, Herzfeld evaluates the linguistic vitality of contact languages, exploring the case of the English-based Lemonese Creole in Spanish-speaking Costa Rica. Her paper will focus on the case of a minority of English-based Lemonesc Creole (LC) speakers in

contact with Spanish-speaking(S) Costa Ricans. It will be apparent that LC speakers frequently make use of LC<S code-switching and imported loans, thus incorporating Spanish into Lemonese Creole. Even though it is risky to predict the future of that relationship, the vitality of this fusion can be evaluated based on certain extra-linguistic considerations which show that rather than the extinction of the Creole, it will prevail if, among other factors, its speakers consider their language an important element of their identity. A qualitative interpretation seems to indicate that code-switching as well as loans are a basic resource of LC and S communication used to mark important discourse and sociolinguistic functions. The 'prestigious' (S) language acts here as a unidirectional force which contributes to the social upward mobility of an individual. As Thomason (2001: 230) also points out, the majority of the linguistic processes that take place in situations in which a language dies are also common in situations where there are languages in contact. For instance, loans are very common in contact situations, not just in cases of language death. However, if the people who introduce interferences are fluent speakers of the language which is on 'death row,' these interferences may be considered loans. If, on the other hand, they are introduced by speakers who learned this language in danger of extinction as a second language, then these interferences can be considered as agents of the 'killing squad.'

Lastra introduces some of the ongoing changes which Jonaz Chichimec, an Oto-Pamean language spoken in Misión de Chichimecas, San Luis de la Paz, Guanajuato is undergoing. Given a brief sketch of the structure of the language, she mentions contact-induced changes, such as subordinating conjunctions that have been borrowed from Spanish. Other loans are generally avoided in the 52 texts examined, even though the majority of speakers are bilingual. For example, a noticeable grammatical change is that the classifier used for possessing things (not falling into the categories of animals, clothes or food) is falling out of use. Some changes seem to correspond to bilingual speakers' quest for harmony among the two (or more) systems that constitute their linguistic repertoire. This seems to point to a certain fondness for the native language; nevertheless the proportionate number of speakers is diminishing and children in general don't learn the language. There doesn't seem to be a correlation between the scantiness of Spanish loans and obsolescence.

In her contribution, Zajicová compares the insertion of Spanish elements in Guarani texts and Guarani elements in Spanish texts in Paraguayan newspapers, pointing out their differences. It aims at distinguishing between differences that have social, cultural, and pragmatic causes and those that are due to structural (typological) differences between the two languages. The examples from both corpora confirm the thesis that, besides content and function items, agglutinating affixes are borrowable, but fusional ones are not. This is most evident in the different treatment of verbal items: while the Spanish ones receive all kinds of Guarani affixes, the Guarani ones are inserted into Spanish in their inflected Guarani form. As for the differences in lexical borrowings, those are mainly due to social and pragmatic factors: Spanish stems in Guarani text are all content items supplying vocabulary about politics and economics that is missing in Guarani and Guarani stems in Spanish text are both content and function words with primarily pragmatic functions. Typological differences between the two languages show a one-way possibility of the borrowing of morphology: from agglutinating to flexional language, but not viceversa.

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