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Similarity effects in language contact

Taking the speakers’ perceptions of congruence seriously

1. Introduction

One of the assumptions in contact linguistics is that typological congruence should be taken seriously when it comes to model borrowing, transfer or copying processes (Weinreich 1953; Johanson 2002; Siegel 2008; Matras 2009). We approach this issue through case studies involving contact-induced grammatical change between American Spanish and various Amerindian languages (cf. Palacios 2010, 2012; Pfänder et al. 2012). In the following we will present data from two intense contact scenarios; Spanish-Quechua in Ecuador and Spanish-Guarani in Paraguay. By intense, we refer to the fact that everyday life is constantly marked by the presence of two languages for the speakers in our sample.

The three-fold aim of our contribution can be summarized as follows: Firstly, we will replicate the study by Babel and Pfänder (this volume), both for new grammatical subsystems and new contact situations (Spanish/Guarani). Secondly, we will show that the similarity principle not only holds for cases of pattern replication, i.e. selective copies, but also for matter replication, i.e. global copies. Finally, we aim to contribute to the growing body of knowledge concerning the effects of similarity in contact-induced change; that is, how speakers match a new pattern to available constructions.

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The speaker aims at pursuing a particular communicative goal, embedded into a particular communicative context. This is transposed into a concrete linguistic task for which an appropriate task-schema (...) needs to be assembled from within the linguistic repertoire. Scanning through the entire repertoire, the speaker identifies a construction that would serve this particular task most effectively (Matras 2009: 241).

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In order to fulfill the linguistic task at hand, the speaker aims at identifying a construction that could best serve their communicative need. The choice of a grammatical construction to a communicative goal is determined accord-
ing to a multitude of factors (cf. Diaz et al. 2002). Most crucially, speakers draw on linguistic structures from the whole range of their (multilingual) linguistic repertoire. Their choice of linguistic structure may thus reflect the recency of its acquisition and hence prominence and ease of retrieval, or its suitability in terms of capturing inter-personal aspects of communication (Godenzzi et al. 2003). Inter-personal aspects of communication are crucial in the sense that speakers need to constantly monitor their (multilingual) interlocutors’ expectations and reactions, and adjust their communicative goal and means of achieving it accordingly. It is essential that the choice of linguistic items is contextually appropriate, stylistically unmarked and, above all, intelligible to the interlocutor.

One interactional requirement is the perception of this congruence by a speaker in the contact situation. We could not agree more with de Smet when he writes that grammatical representations are interconnected in multiple ways, including via superficial formal resemblances (Smet 2012). The analysis of a feature congruence thus acquires a “participant” component: going beyond structural congruence as described by linguists, we shall focus on cases of congruence between certain elements of language A and language B as perceived by participants of the respective bilingual communities. As such, we draw L2 acquisition literature, in particular Jarvis and Pavlenko’s concept of “perceived similarity” (2008). In doing so, we ascribe a prominent role to grammar as an open system (Hartmann 1959; Auer and Günthner 2003; Jacob 2003; Steels 2009; Ehmer and Pfänder 2009; Breyer, Ehmer and Pfänder 2011); an emergent and emerging (Auer and Pfänder 2011), online and locally managed complex system of potentialities with which to improvise (Ehmer and Pfänder 2009; Franceschini 2011; Martínez in print). In other words, we propose that spoken grammar in language contact situations can be modeled as a set of highly adaptive resources for interaction.

In this contribution, we will provide two sets of empirical data to support our thesis and find answers to the then crucial question of how speakers perceive structural and/or functional equivalence. After explaining in greater detail what “perceived similarity” is (§ 2), we shall analyze two phenomena in sections 3 and 4. In § 3, we will demonstrate how speakers adopt and identify “gerund constructions” as linguistic equivalents to converbs, then in § 4, we will discuss particular concepts speakers of Guarani assume exists in Spanish.

1 Cf. Andersen as early as in 1983 for a similar concept, and the application of his approach in the domain of contact in Siegel 2008; in cross-linguistic research cf. Cuttler et al. 2003 on prosody.
namely the concept of attributed quote and the concept of non-attributed hearsay.

Finally, and in the light of these empirical findings, we will discuss the place that a theory of language contact should attribute to similarity and its effects on contact induced language change.

2. Assumed and perceived similarities as driving forces

Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008: 179) differentiate between two strategies:

Firstly, a speaker assumes that the language with which he is in contact (let's say for convenience the L2), has categories and/or patterns which are similar to the resources of his L1:

An assumed similarity [...] is a conscious or unconscious hypothesis that a form, structure, meaning, function, or pattern that exists in a source language has a counterpart in the recipient language, regardless of whether the L2 user has yet encountered anything like it in the input of the recipient language, and regardless of whether it actually does exist in the recipient language. (Jarvis and Pavlenko 2008: 179)

A good example of the first principle (assumed similarity) is the well-known tendency to massively develop aspect marking in Creole languages. This is due to the greater importance of the category aspect in the substrate languages, whereas the European superstrates expresses aspect only marginally. Speakers of (African) substrate languages assume that aspect is to be marked in language anyway, so they will refunctionalize and later grammaticalize lexical items like be at/finish etc. into aspect markers.

Secondly, a speaker perceives categories and/or patterns in the L2 in a different way than a L1 speaker of that language, or a linguist:

A perceived similarity is a conscious or unconscious judgment that a form, structure, meaning, function, or pattern that an L2 user has encountered in the input of the recipient language is similar to a corresponding feature of the source language. (Jarvis and Pavlenko 2008: 179)

A well-known example of the second principle (perceived similarity) is L2-German learners' tendency to express the fact that one shivers because of low temperatures by saying "er ist kalt" instead of "ihm ist kalt", thus putting the suffering person in the subject position instead of the regular German dative object construction. This is found in those speakers whose L1 has a similar structure (as for example in English: be is cold). The crucial point here is that speakers not only assume that a congruent construction should be possible in German too, but that they perceive evidence for this assumption in similar
constructions such as *he is old* (in German: *er ist alt*) or *the white wine is cold* (in German: *der Weißwein ist kalt*).

We can apply this concept to research on language contact in general and use it to model “convergence” in the following way:

Jarvis and Pavlenko’s definition is in line with the assumption concerning monolingual language change – common in the recent cognitive literature – that speakers must be considered pattern seekers (cf. Rens Bod 2006).

When applying the notion of perceived similarity to early, distant stages of language contact (the first phases of creolisation, for instance), the following problem arises: unlike in L2 research, the prototypical speaker in language contact can at the most be reconstructed for the early years of the genesis of contact languages (if he ever existed, that is). However, with the help of demographic studies and sociohistorical interpretations of the demographic data, one can at least come close to what language competence and everyday language use must have been like in these early scenarios.

The concept of “perceived similarity” consequently implies that we play increased attention to the speaker’s cognition when shaping convergence and thus to a subjective factor which may perhaps be a universally cognitive one. For this reason, we can introduce two observations which indicate varying behaviour of different linguistic levels and different system areas.

We might view the copy or replication of patterns as a kind of compromise strategy that allows speakers to continue and flag language loyalty through a more or less rigid choice of word-forms and at the same time to reduce the load on the selection and inhibition mechanism by allowing patterns to converge, thus maximising the efficiency of speech production in a bilingual situation “constraints on the distribution of matter and pattern replication are not just social; structural factors may play a role too. As we shall see, the replication of patterns depends on the ability to match a new pattern to available word-forms” (Matras 2009: 235).

If we include the concept of perceived similarity in the definition of convergence, this reinforces the idea that the speaker plays a key role in interaction (cf. Diaz et al. 2002). However, this brings us back to the question regarding the relationship between copy, convergence and contact-induced change. According to our concept, a convergence process based on perceived similarity can be compatible with copying from A to B and thus does not coincide with other definitions of contact-induced change. The research group led by Shana Poplack (cf. Poplack et al. 2011), for instance, would only regard phenomena as contact-induced that did not exist in language B prior to language contact.
3. Converbs in contact: gerund constructions from Quechua to Spanish

The non-periphrastic gerund constructions in Spanish show great typological variability. Presently, however, we will limit our discussion to the temporal gerund constructions that constitute clauses. The simple gerund is, in terms of aspect, generally considered an imperfective or progressive form that expresses a developing or rather, incomplete action or process denoted by the verb, in contrast to the perfect gerund that indicates a completed action or verbal process (Fernández Lagunilla 1999: 3457). Consider the following examples:

(1) a. Me dio la noticia saliendo de la universidad.  
   'He gave me the news leaving the university.'

   b. Me dio la noticia habiendo salido de la universidad.  
   'He gave me the news having left the university.'

In (1a), the simple gerund conveys simultaneity and coexistence, whilst the perfect gerund in (1b) indicates anteriority. This is further proven by the construction of the following two sentences:

(2) a. Me dio la noticia mientras salía de la universidad.  
   'He gave me the news whilst he left the university.'

   b. Me dio la noticia después de que saliéramos de la universidad.  
   'He gave me the news after we had left the university.'

Since the gerund does not have specific flexive morphology, the concepts of time and aspect are slightly ambiguous. Thus, we may confirm that, as a general rule, the simple gerund expresses simultaneity and the perfect gerund anteriority. Consider the following examples with respect to the simple gerund:

(3) a. *Recogiendo los platos, se sentaron a tomar café.  
   'Collecting the plates, they sat down to have coffee.'

   b. Habiendo recogido los platos, se sentaron a tomar café.  
   'Having collected the plates, they sat down to have coffee.'

In (3a), the temporal meaning of the simple gerund requires simultaneity with the main clause, which results in ungrammaticality, since in this context it would be impossible to sit down and have coffee without already having
collected the plates. In (3b), the perfect gerund allows for a temporal reading of anteriority with regard to the event denoted by the main clause *sentarse a tomar café*, which makes the sentence perfectly grammatical.

Nevertheless, in certain, exceptional contexts, the simple gerund can express anteriority, as shown in the grammaticality of (4a), in which one expects the two actions denoted by the verbs to immediately succeed one other. However, the presence of a perfect gerund in (4b) allows for what we will call a “mediated” anteriority reading:

(4) a. *El profesor salió llevándose los exámenes.*
   ‘The professor left, taking the exams with him.’
   b. *El profesor salió habiendo recogido los exámenes.*
   ‘The professor left, having collected the exams.’

In varieties of Mexican Spanish, one can observe uses of the simple gerund with a mediated anteriority reading, such as in sentence (5). However, these are ungrammatical in Peninsular Spanish and generally infrequent:

(5) a. *El profesor salió recogiendo los exámenes.*
   The professor left collecting the exams.
   b. *Y argumentar a ustedes, recogiendo del diario de los debates lo que ustedes mismos argumentaron …*²
   [And to argue against you, collecting what you yourself argued from the diary of the debates …]

The gerund construction in Spanish can also express posteriority with regard to the action or process denoted by the main verb, as (6) demonstrates:

(6) a. *La policía llegó al lugar de los hechos deteniendo a los ladrones que habían asaltado el banco.*
   [*The police arrived at the scene of the crime, arresting the thieves that had held up the bank.*
   ‘The police arrived at the scene of the crime and (then) arrested the thieves that had held up the bank.’
   b. *El autobús se estrelló muriendo dos pasajeros.*
   [*The bus crashed, dying two passengers.* ‘The bus crashed and (then) two passengers died.’

It must be said that the gerund of posteriority is generally not prestigious and normativist grammarians advise against its use, labeling it vulgar, erroneous and of low prestige.

Nevertheless, it appears fairly frequently, especially in journalistic and juridical-administrative written language, which proves its vitality. The most important aspect of the temporal simple gerund constructions is undoubtedly the fact that in Spanish, they express simultaneity, posteriority and immediate anteriority (with many restrictions, given that the perfect gerund expresses this value in a prototypical manner, as has been shown). In Andean Spanish, the temporal gerund constructions can express immediate anteriority, simultaneity or posteriority to an equal extent. Such variety enables the expression of mediated temporality with the help of simple rather than perfect gerunds. This is demonstrated in the following examples of Ecuadorian Andean Spanish, taken from Haboud (1998: 204):

(7) a. *Siempre regresa comiendo, por eso no quiere nada.*
*[He/She always returns eating, that is why he/she does not want anything.]*

b. *Viene durmiendo, por eso está tranquilo.*
*[He comes sleeping, that is why he is relaxed.]*

Examples (7a) and (7b) are perfectly acceptable in non-Andean Spanish and express simultaneous temporality. This may be clarified in by a simplified restatement of these phrases: “while he returns, he eats” and “while he comes, he sleeps” (during a train journey, for example). In these cases, the gerund has an imperfective aspect that shows simultaneity regarding the action expressed by the main verb. Due to the gerund's perfective aspect, this reading coexists with one of mediated anterior temporality in Ecuadorian Andean Spanish. A grammatical presentation of these examples in English would be: “he/she always returns after having eaten” or “he comes after having slept”. Interestingly enough, this perfective reading is absolutely ungrammatical in non-Andean varieties of Spanish. One may observe how the following sentences (also taken from Haboud 1998: 204–205) can only have a temporal anteriority reading:

(8) a. *Arreglando todos los problemas, vuelves.*
*[Sorting out all of the problems, you return.]*

‘When you have sorted out all the problems, you return.’
b. *Solo durmiendo trabaja.*
   ['Only sleeping does he/she work.]
   "Only after sleeping/having slept does he/she work."

In both sentences in (8), the only possible interpretation of the gerund is a perfective one, which results in an inevitable temporal anteriority reading of the following type:

(9) a. *Después de arreglar todos los problemas, vuelves/*vuelves mientras arreglas todos los problemas.*
   'After sorting out all of the problems, you return/*you return whilst you sort out all the problems.'
   b. *Solo después de dormir, trabaja/* solo mientras duerme trabaja.*
   ['Only after sleeping, he/she works'] 'Only after sleeping does he/she work.'/ ['Only while he/she sleeps he/she works.] **'Only while he/she sleeps does he/she work.'

These same constructions with the same temporal mediated anteriority reading are documented in the speech of Andean Ecuadorian migrants who have been living in Spain for over ten years:

(10) a. *No hay problema, regresando me pagan los zapatos.*
   ['There is no problem, returning they pay the shoes for me.]
   'It's no problem, when they return they will pay for my shoes.'
   ['After returning, they will pay for my shoes.]
   When I return, they will pay for my shoes /* Whilst they return, they will pay for my shoes.
   b. *De Quito vine haciendo la primera comunión, pero no vine haciendo la confirmación; por eso mi madrina es española.*
   ['From Quito I came doing the first communion, but I didn't come doing the confirmation; that is why my godmother is Spanish.]
   'I came from Quito when I had made my first communion, but I didn't come having made my confirmation/ *I came from Quito whilst I was making my first communion, but I didn't come whilst I was making my confirmation.'

In Andean Bolivian Spanish, Pfänder et al. (2010: 142) also document this same construction with a temporal mediated anteriority reading:
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(11)  
a. Comiendo viene.  
[*Eating, he comes]  
‘He comes after eating / He eats on his way.’  
b. Lavando el recipiente, colcas la carne que compré.  
[*Washing the pot, you put in the meat I bought]  
‘After washing the pot, you put in the meat I bought.’ / *You put in the meat I bought whilst you wash the pot.

Note that the construction in (11a) can also have a temporal simultaneity reading, which is verified by the meaning of the verbs ‘to eat’ and ‘to come’ (one can complete the action of eating while already going from one place to another), unlike (11b), which only expresses mediated anterior temporality.

In these constructions, the temporal expression of anteriority is attributed to the gerund that we interpret as perfective. Yet, in non-Andean Spanish it is the composed gerund that is perfective; the simple gerund is mostly imperfective and very rarely results in a perfective reading, as was proven at the beginning of this chapter. Further proof is in the fact that in non-Andean Spanish, all of these constructions would be perfectly grammatical by replacing the simple gerund with a perfect gerund, as we will do in (12):

(12)  
a. Siempre regresa habiendo comido, por eso no quiere nada.  
[*He/she always returns having eaten, that is why he/she doesn’t want anything]  
‘He/she always returns after having eaten, that is why he/she doesn’t want anything.’  
b. Viene habiendo dormido, por eso está tranquilo.  
[*He comes having slept, therefore he is relaxed]  
‘He comes after having slept, therefore he is relaxed.’  
c. Habiendo arreglado todos los problemas, vuelves.  
[*Having sorted out all the problems, you return]  
‘After having sorted out all the problems, you return.’  
d. Solo habiendo dormido trabaja.  
[*Only having slept he/she works]  
‘Only after having slept he/she works.’  
e. No hay problema, habiendo regresado me pagan los zapatos.  
[*There is no problem, having returned they pay the shoes for me]  
‘It’s no problem, when they have returned they will pay for my shoes.’  
f. De Quito vine habiendo hecho la primera comunión, pero no vine habiendo hecho la confirmación; por eso mi madrina es española.
[\text{*From Quito I came having done my first communion, but I didn’t come having done my confirmation; that is why my Godmother is Spanish}\]

‘When I came from Quito I had done my first communion, but when I came I hadn’t done my confirmation; that is why my Godmother is Spanish.’

g. \textit{Habiendo comido, viene.}

[\text{*Having eaten, he/she comes}]

‘He/She comes after eating.’

h. \textit{Habiendo lavado el recipiente, colocas la carne que compré.}

[\text{*Having washed the pot, you put the meat in that I bought}]

‘After you have washed the pot, you put the meat in that I bought.’

In short, a linguistic change seems to have occurred in Andean Spanish: the normally imperfective simple gerund has adopted values of perfectivity which assign temporal readings of mediated anteriority to the construction. In other words, the simple gerund has implemented uses and values that are usually ascribed almost exclusively to the perfect gerund. The question that arises at this point is: Why has this change happened only in Andean Spanish and not in other Spanish varieties? And, more importantly: How did the change occur?

With regard to the first question, Toscano Mateus (1953), Grimm (1986), Haboud (1998), Lee (1997) and Pfänder et al. (2010) demonstrate that the perfective gerund reading is a result of the direct influence of the Quechuan suffix \textit{shpa/spa} on the Andean Spanish language. This Quechuan suffix is an adverbial subjunction used to indicate the perfective aspect of the subordinate clause in constructions that express the temporal continuity of two closely linked events, as demonstrated in (13), taken from Pfänder et al. (2010: 140):

\begin{equation}
(13) \textit{Mikhu-spajamu-sa-n.} \\
\text{To eat-SADVto come-progressive-3sg.not fut.}
\end{equation}

\begin{verbatim}
Viene después de haber comido/ Habiendo comido, viene (non-Andean Spanish). He/she comes after having eaten/ *Having eaten, he/she comes. Literally: Comiendo viene / Castellano andino: comiendo viene.
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
= [*Eating, he/she comes.] He/she eats on the way. Andean Spanish: [*Eating, he/she comes.] He/she eats on the way.
\end{verbatim}

Indeed, it seems that the suffix \textit{shpa/spa} transmits the idea of aspectual perfectivity to the gerund simple, as occurs in Quechua in the temporal succes-
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...ision of two consecutive events that can only take place due to the fact that one of them has a perfective aspect (the one expressed by means of the gerund in Spanish and the suffix *shpa/*spa in Quechua). The explanation for this construction given by a speaker of Ecuadorian Andean Spanish, documented in Haboud (1998: 209), is highly revealing in this respect, as it coincides with the values and meanings expressed by *shpa/*spa in Quechua. There is a definite difference between the phrases “limpio la casa antes de venir” and “limpiando vengo.” The first phrase implies two separate, independent actions. However, in the second sentence, the two actions are combined, as if they were continuously enacted within a “circular” time period, rather than situated on a linear continuum. There is no break between one action and the other.

Are we dealing with a semantic copy from Quechua to Spanish or a contact-induced change in which, thanks to Quechuan influence, the simple gerund adopts the composed gerund’s perfective values?

In order to resolve this question, one must remember that the Spanish simple gerund was able to express temporality of immediate anteriority, as shown in (4), and even mediated anteriority, as shown in (5), albeit with many restrictions. If this is true, we cannot claim to be dealing with a semantic copy, since the simple gerund in Spanish can express perfectivity in certain contexts. It could instead be a selective copy (or a contact-induced, indirect copy), a process of approximation from Spanish to Quechuan structures. We may also define it as an individualized process of adjustment and readjustment that allows the bilingual speaker to more effectively express the temporal and aspectual aspects of a construction that points to some of these possibilities (simultaneity and posteriority), but does not fully develop.

As we have seen, the bilingual speaker disposes of different means in both languages to exploit the relations of temporality and aspectuality, our object of study. The temporal simple gerund constructions enable the speaker to express actions that occur at the same time as or after the action expressed by the main verb. This implies that there are certain similarities in both languages that the speaker in some way assumes and/or perceives, between -nd- in Spanish and *shpa/*spa in Quechua. The speaker assumes that both languages have routines that allow the expression of the temporal and aspectual relationships connecting two events, even though the mechanisms that develop between the two are not exactly similar. He also perceives a certain similarity in the materialization of these assumed similarities, between the gerund and the morpheme *shpa/*spa - the temporal relationship between the two events and the perfectivity of the event that denotes the adverbial subordinate clause, either by means of *shpa/*spa, or by means of the gerund.
The similarities perceived by the speaker are real, however, the resemblance between the Quechuan morpheme and the perfect gerund is stronger than between the morpheme and the simple gerund. Why then does the speaker not use this category in the first place, seeing as it already exists in the language with a similar meaning? Why does he produce a construction with new values instead? In our view, there are various reasons why this does not happen: a) because the perfect gerund is assigned to a formal context and to a written register, which distances it from everyday linguistic practise, and b) because the copies are not automatic but manual, i.e. the speaker copies whilst adapting, reorganizing, bringing the structures of one language closer to those of the other language according to the possibilities offered by both, i.e. they do not “copy” from one language to the other, just for the sake of copying, if they do not find where to copy something to.

Therefore, we believe that the bilingual speaker causes the simple gerund construction (which is the one he uses) to converge with the Quechuan construction, thereby eliminating the restrictions that the first uses to express temporality of anteriority. It exploits the possibilities that Spanish has to offer and orients them towards Quechuan strategies, which enables the exploitation of routines that until now have been restricted in Spanish. In this way, the simple gerund invades the uses of the perfect gerund in a process of indirect change, induced by contact with Quechua, precisely because the speaker translates the characteristics of the Quechuan morpheme (i.e. the perfectivity) to the Spanish gerund construction because the he perceives these same characteristics in his own Spanish construction (or at least their possible realization). In other words, he causes a new Spanish construction to emerge on the basis of both the Quechuan characteristics and the Spanish characteristics themselves.

We have attempted to explain how the emergence of the perfective gerund construction or that of the gerund of anteriority has occurred in Andean Spanish. We think that this contact-induced change originally took place between bilingual Quechuan and Spanish speakers. At present, it has been documented as a highly productive construction that prevails in the speech of both bilingual and Spanish monolingual speakers.

4. Hearsay – an obligatory concept in Guarani, but (no) concept in Spanish?

When looking at a Paraguayan daily journal written in Spanish, the Diario Popular published online (www.popular.com), one comes across a certain number of global, i.e. direct copies from Guarani (Palacios 2008). The two by
far most frequent global copies are the quotative marker he'i (‘s/he says’) and the hearsay marker ndaje (‘it has been said that, people say that’) – both with past and present reference, depending on the context.

Let us first discuss the attributed quotes with he'i (ex. 14–19), then the non-attributed quotes ndaje, ex. 20–27, before comparing these internet findings with spoken data (ex. 14 ss.).

The quotative marker he'i can introduce direct and indirect speech. In indirect speech, he'i is often postponed (ex. 14):

(14)  
Estaba drogado he'i

‘He was drugged she said’

The postposition is one of the options in direct speech as well (as in ex. 15 and 16):

(15)  
“Las palabras de mi hija me pesan”, he'i.

“The words of my daughter are hard for me to hear”, he said.’

(16)  
“... soy inocente de todo lo que se me acusa”, he'i el detenido.

“... I am innocent of everything I am being accused of”, said the arrested.’

If the marker precedes the indirect speech, it merges with the Spanish complementizer que as he'i que as in ex. (17), (18) and (19):

(17)  
Raúl ... he'i que estaba sentado en su sillón.

‘Raúl ... said that he was sitting in his armchair.’

(18)  
El acusado, tras llegar al país he'i que no tenía nada que ver con la muerte del artista.

‘The accused, after arriving in the country, said that he had nothing to do with the death of the artist.’

He'i can also be separated from que (ex. 19):

(19)  
Un testigo he'i a los investigadores que R. habría mandado matar a R.V.

‘A witness said to the investigators that R. had had R.V killed’

The hearsay marker ndaje could be translated into European Spanish as se dice que or dicen que (3rd person plural; as Spanish is a prodrop language, the pronoun ellos/ellas is not overtly expressed). Sometimes, when ndaje has a more evidential meaning, it can be translated as parece que ‘it seems that’ or al parecer ‘seemingly’. In some cases, both Guarani ndaje and Spanish al parecer are combined, as in ex. (20):

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\( \text{Al parecer se puso celosa \textit{ndaje}} \)

'It seems she was jealous''

\( \text{\textit{ndaje}} \) is mostly postponed, as in ex. (21):

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Llevó libros \textit{ndaje}} \\
& \text{‘They allegedly took books’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{Querían robar \textit{ndaje}} \\
& \text{‘They allegedly planned to steal’} \\
\text{c. } & \text{Médico violó a yyi \textit{ndaje}} \\
& \text{‘Doctor allegedly raped girl’}
\end{align*} \]

However, we also find instances of \textit{ndaje} introducing the hearsay content as in ex. (22):

\[ \text{\textit{Ndaje} ... inventó historia} \]

‘He is said to have invented the story’

The examples in (23) show that \textit{ndaje} is quite flexible with regard to its syntactic position:

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Estaba \textit{ndaje} mirando, cuando ...} \\
& \text{‘He is said to have been watching, when ...’} \\
\text{b. } & \text{Le “sedó” \textit{ndaje} a su hijastro} \\
& \text{‘She allegedly “sedated” her stepson’} \\
\text{c. } & \text{Denunció a su concu ... por haber intoxicado \textit{ndaje} a su hijo} \\
& \text{‘She reported her concu ... for having allegedly poisoned her son’}
\end{align*} \]

\textit{Ndaje} can be combined with Spanish verbs of saying as in (24) and with the Guarani quotative marker \textit{be’i}, as in (25):

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{24) } & \text{\textit{Denuncia} por chat \textit{ndaje}} \\
& \text{‘He is said to report via chat’}. \\
\text{25) } & \text{\textit{Upéi \textit{he’i ndaje} chupe que no cuente a nadie lo ocurrido}} \\
& \text{‘Then it is said that they told her not to tell anybody what happened’}
\end{align*} \]

\textit{Ndaje} is not combined with the Spanish complementizer \textit{que} (as is \textit{be’i}, see above, ex. 17), but can function as a matrix clause as in ex. (26):
(26) **Ndaje una denuncia por supuesto acoso sexual fue presentada contra el pelotero Marco Lazaga, quien chuta en el club Everton de Chile.**

‘An accusation of alleged sexual harassment was presented against the player Marco Lazaga, who plays football in the Chilean club Everton.’

Whereas – as we have just seen – in our written internet press corpus, the global copies *be’i* and *ndaje* replace Spanish expressions most of the time, this is not true for our corpus of oral narrations. The following examples were taken from María Isabel Guillán’s doctoral thesis *Procesos de cambio lingüístico inducidos por contacto en el español del nordeste argentino: el sistema pronominal átono*, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, which was supervised by Azucena Palacios and defended on the 20th February 2012.

In spoken language, the solutions speakers find are mostly in Spanish. What is striking, however, is the high frequency of quotative marking (ex. 27), which has also been documented for other indigenized varieties of Spanish (cf. Pfändler et al. 2010):

> *Salía, supongo que esa planta y de ahí salía una luz redonda así, poquito, se cruzaba y se caía una así y otra allá, me dice, … nos decía, estábamos en una casa ajena y me dice “vamos abí a ve” me dijo un señor. Y vamo le digo, y esa luz cuando vo te va al lado de él, se apaga. Si vo ve bien de donde sale esa luz, vo tení marca y tení que pone una cruz, una cruz dice, para que no se pierda.* (H, 11: 293–304)

‘I suppose it was this plant that shot up and a light came out of it that was this round, small, they crossed each other and one fell like this and the other over there, one tells me … one tells us, we were in a house far away and apparently a man said to me “let’s go and see”. Let’s go I tell him, and this light when you go to his side it goes off. If you look where this light comes from exactly, you mark it and draw a cross, a cross apparently, so as not to lose it.’ (H, 11: 293–304)

As for the quotation, one constantly comes across *dice* or *dice que*. However, language contact effects appear in the category of hearsay/evidentiality. There are two types of solutions speakers choose to express these concepts in Spanish that are not grammaticalized. Seemingly, the choice between the two possible solutions does not depend on the speakers’ linguistic competence in one or two languages, but rather on the communicative genre. In more formal, interview-like data, the speakers opt for codified normative Spanish form *se dice que* (ex. 28) and *dicen que* (ex. 29).

(28) **P:** Si uno ve el fuego o la luz ¿puede ir y sacar el entierro o no?

**R:** *Se dice que depende de la persona; si e para vo, se te va a da o si no, no. (…)*. (H, 10: 242–245)

P: ‘If one sees fire or light, can one go and dig up the valuable objects buried in the ground or not?’
R: ‘One says that it depends on the person; if it’s for you, if he will give it to you or not, right?’

(29) **Dicen que a los perros negros no le (sic!) quiere el espíritu**

‘One says that the spirit does not like black dogs’

In less formal parts of the interview, and especially in ongoing narratives, speakers tend to choose indirect, i.e. selective copies from Guarani, for example the third singular form *dice* *(que)*, used here in the impersonal sense of ‘one says’ (see ex. 30 with *dice* and 31 with *dice* *(que)*):

(30) **Él le pega, dice**

‘One says that he hits him/her’

(31) **Como curaba, dice que hacía payé**

‘Since he/she heals, one says that he/she did magic’

Seeing as these forms could be misinterpreted by the interviewer from Spain, the interviewees tend to rephrase the items, producing a normative, almost completely Spanish construction like in ex. (32):

(32) **Y dice ... suele contar que ... cuando hay mal tiempo ...**

‘And one says ... one generally says that ... when the weather is bad ...’

If we take a closer look at the hearsay marking in oral narrative, we are again struck by the enormous frequency of marking, just as we were in the quotative (see above ex. 27). In example (33), *dice que* occurs as an introduction of the subordinate clauses:

> Y ese *dice que* era así también escarbaban y alcanzó [el entierro], alcanzó *dice que* así un ... dice y era pesado; entonces ello largaron una soga, hizo así un agujero y le ataron abi y cuando le etaban por levanta *dice que* le vió a ... su papá (...)) (H, 10: 252–254).

‘And he **apparently** was like that and they looked around and he reached [the buried valuables], he **apparently** reached a ... **apparently** and it was heavy; so they got a rope and this way he made a hole and they tied him to it and when they were just about to pull him up **apparently** he saw his ... his Dad (…)’ (H, 10: 252–254).

However, we also find occurrences of *dice que* that are inserted in the ongoing syntactic project (ex. 34):

> [Al Pombero] No, el trapo está por la frente nomá, por dentro de la pierna del perro, del perro negro, y *dice que* el perro negro también le ve, otro perro no le ve, pero el perro negro *dice que* le ve. Nosotros *dice que* ... nosotros que nos bautizarnos, *dice que* tenemos una estrella que brilla para el Pombero acá nosotros ... Nosotros tenemos una luz *dice que* ... por eso *dice que* no le podemos ver. (H, 11: 176–180).
‘[To the Pombero] No, the cloth is just in front, between the dog's legs, the black dog's, and apparently the black dog sees him/her too, another dog doesn't see him/her, but the black dog, he apparently saw him/her. We are said to ... we who are christened, we are said to have a star that shines for the Pombero here ... we are said to have a light ... that is why one says that we can't see him/her' (H, 10: 252–254).

The concept of *quote* and *hearsay* is grammaticalized to different extents in different languages. In Spanish, it is expressed by means of impersonal expressions such as *dicen que* or *se dice que*. What is important about this category is that something was said without the speaker specifying who it was that said it. In other words: it's not the personalized voice that counts, but the speech act itself.

In Spanish, hearsay is a category that is not used as rarely as, for instance, the category of tense. In the pre-Columbian languages however, tense is employed far less commonly than hearsay.

Hearsay belongs to a family of categories, one of which is evidentiality. The speaker uses this category to demonstrate that there are indications which prove the correctness of the proposition. However, he only takes limited responsibility for what has been said because he has no more than indications. From a grammatical point of view, the same goes for this neighboring category in Spanish as it does for hearsay: the option is partly grammaticalized (*parece que* and *habrá + PARTICIPLE*) but does not belong to the most common options offered by the Spanish grammar system.

Spanish in America that is in intensive contact with the pre-Columbian languages has turned the rather infrequently used option of expressing hearsay into a highly frequent one.

If the speaker knows something because someone else has said it, this will be expressed much more often than in European Spanish. Very clear distinctions can be drawn between at least two subcategories:

- The first option corresponds formally and functionally to the supranational norm. In Paraguay, a global copy from Guarani has been integrated as a further marker (additionally, i.e. as a doublet): *be'i* ("he/she says/said").
- A second marker has been reported that functions as a global copy in Paraguay: *ndaje* ("it has been said, people seem to say"). The speaker is not identified, either because he can't be identified or because this is not intended. This subcategory could be expressed with *dicen* or *se dice* in supranational Spanish but is generally expressed as an impersonally used *dice* or *dice que* in Paraguay and some other Latin American countries (cf. Babel 2009; Pfänder et al. 2010).
5. Conclusions

This contribution’s central claim is that what “counts” in contact-related language variation and change is not typological convergence or congruence between languages, it is rather perceived similarity. In language contact, it is the bilingual speakers’ perception of similarities in form, function, or relating to the categorical status of a form-function unit, which leads to language change. One of the main assumptions in contact linguistics is that typological congruence facilitates borrowing, transfer or copying processes (Weinreich 1976; Siegel 2008; Matras 2009; Johanson 2002, 2011). There are many different terms for this assumed constraint: congruence constraint, congruent lexicalization, interlanguage similarity, structural convergence, typological parallels or source and target language equivalence. Although contact linguistics is a rather heterogeneous discipline that brings together scholars of quite different backgrounds such as anthropology, historical linguistics or discourse analysis, there is general support the aforementioned constraint. The current contribution challenges this view.

Instead, we propose a different motivation for replication or copying, namely perceived similarity. Most authors admit that sometimes speakers perceive similarities between languages where typologists would not see any parallels at all. Nevertheless, these cases are usually treated as exceptions that only confirm the rule of typological congruence, rather than as an important principle in its own right. An in-depth analysis of different Romance contact settings has led us to the innovative hypothesis that speakers systematically draw on their perception of similarity (and not only from time to time, as suggested by other theorists). Thus, we are the first to claim that one of the main forces motivating contact-induced language change can best be described in terms of similarity effects (Cutler et al. 2003).

Finally, the overall importance of similarity effects in the emergence of new linguistic constructions leads us to reconceptualize grammar as an open, fluid system (Steels 2009), which holds for both bilingual and monolingual speakers. Consequently, we would subscribe to a model of grammar as an open system consisting of subsystems as well as of macro- and micro-constitutional schemes and patterns that are highly adaptive resources for ongoing interaction.

Acknowledgements

Portions of this research were supported by the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies and the German Science Foundation (DFG), Pf699/4-1, RomWeb.
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