Language contact

Introduction
Language contact

The study of languages in contact, once relegated to the periphery of linguistic inquiry, has recently come to be recognized as a subdiscipline with robust explanatory power. (Drinka 2010: 325)

The most cursory glance at linguistic publications in the past few decades reveals a wealth of literature on language contact: articles, monographs, edited volumes, special issues of journals (Hickey 2010: 1)

(...) there can be no doubt that discussion of the mechanisms underlying contact-induced change ought properly to occupy a central role in any model of language change which aims at completeness. (Lucas 2014: 520)
Language contact

Manifestations of language contact are found in a great variety of domains, including language acquisition, language processing and production, conversation and discourse, social functions of language and language policy, typology and language change, and more. (Matras 2009:1)

Since then [Schuchardt] the field has diversified tremendously, so as to become part of a number of separate sub-disciplines: sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and historical linguistics (Muysken 2013: 709)

Contact linguistics today is a broad interdisciplinary area of research. (Oksaar 1996: 1)
Language contact

- Structural linguistics
- Psycholinguistics
- Language acquisition
- Linguistic anthropology
- Typology
- Geography/ecology
- Dialectology
- Historical linguistics
- Creole Studies
- Sociolinguistics
Historical linguistics

State A at time $t_1$

And then a miracle happens!

State B at time $t_2$

(Informal characterisation by a colleague who shall remain anonymous)
Language contact

Language A and B come into contact

And then a miracle happens!

C is the result
Language contact

Simplest model (unfortunately unacceptably inaccurate):

If two languages X and Y come into contact, Z happens.

>> Need for a list of factors influencing outcomes
Language contact

- Individual bilingual
- Bilingual conversation
- Bilingual community (propagation)
- Contact-induced change
bilingual individual

- Competence in each language
- Language and identity
- Age, gender, personality, etc.
- Attitude towards languages
Outcomes

- Borrowing
- Code switching
- Contact languages
- Linguistic areas
- Simplification
- Substrate effects
- Attrition
Focus of this course

• Potential predictor variables
• Differential results of language contact
• Traces of contact
A brief discussion of three milestones (by way of background)

• Weinreich (1953)
• Van Coetsem (1988)
• Thomason & Kaufman (1988)
Weinreich (1953)

- Locus of language contact is the language-using individual.
- Interference: Instances of deviations from the norms of a language as the result of language contact
- Additions imply rearrangement of patterns
- Mechanisms are the same irrespective of distance between varieties (but the greater the distance the greater the potential for interference)
"In linguistic interference, the problem of major interest is the interplay of structural and non-structural factors that promote or impede such interference.

The structural factors are those which stem from the organization of linguistic forms in a definite system (...).

The non-structural factors are derived from the contact of the system with the outer world, from given individuals’ familiarity with the system, and from the symbolic value which the system as a whole is capable of acquiring and the emotions it can evoke."

p. 5
Weinreich (1953)

- Language contact can best be understood in a broad psychological and socio-cultural setting.

- Individual’s facility of expression, ability to keep languages apart
- Relative proficiency in each language
- Specialization in use of each language
- Manner of learning each language
- Attitudes towards each language

- Size of bilingual group and its socio-cultural homogeneity
- Prevalence of bilingual individuals
- Stereotypes attitudes towards languages
- Attitudes towards the culture of each language community
- Attitudes towards bilingualism as such
- Tolerance wrt mixing languages
- Relation between bilingual group and each of the larger language communities
Weinreich (1953)

• Identification (+ relative proficiency) as source of interference

under-differentiation
(2 phon > 1 phon), e.g. /i/, /y/ → /i/

over-differentiation
(1 phon > 2 phon) , e.g. /a/ → /a/, /a:/
(or [a] [a:]

reinterpretation of distinctions
e.g. gemination → vowel quality
change of preceding vowel
Romansh [mɛs:a] ‘mass’

substitution
e.g. [ɛ]R → [æ]S
Weinreich (1953)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal properties</th>
<th>Content-related properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bondedness</td>
<td>Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>form</td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>variance</td>
<td>Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tight</td>
<td>Obligatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced</td>
<td>Grammatical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexive</td>
<td>Non-affective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robust</td>
<td>lexical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonflexive</td>
<td>affective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likelihood of transfer

- 
+
Loans imply transfer of material from a **source language** to a **recipient language**

- imitation (of the sl)
- adaptation (into the rl)

- rl agentivity (rl dominant bilingual)
- sl agentivity (sl dominant bilingual)
- linguistic dominance, not social

- imitation+ rl agentivity = borrowing (adaptation is secondary chronologically)
- adaptation + sl agentivity = **imposition** (imitation is secondary chronologically)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RL AGENTIVITY:</th>
<th>imitation (total or partial)</th>
<th>adaptation (total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>deviation from ( rl )</td>
<td></td>
<td>no deviation from ( rl )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL AGENTIVITY:</td>
<td>no deviation from ( rl ), unless imitation is partial</td>
<td>deviation from ( rl )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Van Coetsem (1988)

(8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inherent characteristic:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$RL$ Agentivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>borrowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$SL$ Agentivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$rl$ linguistically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$sl$ linguistically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dominant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Motivation of occurrence of the two transfer types:

- Broad (prestige and/or need): $sl$ socially dominant, $rl$ socially dominant
- Restricted (need): $rl$ socially dominant, $sl$ socially dominant
TABLE 3
LINGUISTIC RESULTS OF LANGUAGE CONTACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTACT-INDUCED LANGUAGE CHANGE</th>
<th>PIDGINS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>in LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>casual contact = little bilingualism among borrowing-language speakers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONLY (nonbasic) VOCABULARY BORROWED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intensive contact, including much bilingualism among borrowing-language speakers over a long period of time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUCH LEXICAL BORROWING; MODERATE TO HEAVY STRUCTURAL BORROWING, especially phonology and syntax</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overwhelming long-term cultural pressure from source-language speaker group</td>
<td>nativization →</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASSIVE GRAMMATICAL REPLACEMENT (LANGUAGE DEATH)</td>
<td>ONLY VOCABULARY SUCCESSFULLY ACQUIRED → ABRUPT CREOLIZATION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Zurich language contact variables

Chalet Waldegg

The Zurich language contact variables

2.1 Factors mediating contact (overall situation)

2.1.1 Geography
• distance
• natural landscape
• administrative borders
• ecological risk (how easy it is to survive without other societies)
• gravitational centers

2.1.2 Economy
• type: Wirtschaftsweise (subsistence strategy)
• the size of income
• communication technology
• work & space
The Zurich language contact variables

2.1 Factors mediating contact (overall situation)

2.1.3 Society / culture

• mobility
• cultural landscape (taboos, hostile populations etc.)
• language policy
• stratification
• demography
• ideology / attitude
• identity builders (religion)
• literacy, education
• relationship with other communities
The Zurich language contact variables

2.2 Characteristics of the interaction between speakers and communities

• hierarchy between speakers (social)
• difference in competence
• interaction between context and identity
• channel modality
• formality
• purpose
• topic
• language choice, in a long run can lead to shift vs. maintenance
• shared space
• the number of participants in interaction
• history (orthogonal to the other categories)
  • frequency and length of the contact
  • time depth (what is the time span that we are talking about)
The Zurich language contact variables

2.3 Varieties
- typology (language profile)
- standardisation
- area of grammar
- number of speakers
- salience
- variability
- coverage (Ausbau)
- (Uberdachung) having or not having a higher variety that serves in communication

----two place relations----
- linguistic distance
- genetic relatedness
- salience
The Zurich language contact variables

2.4 Speakers
* sex
* gender
* age
* education
* profession
* religion
* sexual orientation
* political attitude (left vs. right)
* ethnic/national/regional/social/racial identity
* physical and mental state
* language competence
* multilingualism
* personality (e.g. extrovert)
* social class
* mobility
* impairments
* family history
## Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24-2</td>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-4</td>
<td>Structural linguistic factors</td>
<td>Myers-Scotton (2008), Meakins &amp; O’Shanessy (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>Traces of contact</td>
<td>Parkvall (2008), Bickel (in press)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Set-up

Roles per class

2 Presenters (1 paper each, ca. 10 mins)
2 Protocol persons
Rest responsible for discussion topics, questions etc.
Final written assignment

Write a summary about one of the 6 topics (both papers), and comment on them (in terms of an evaluation or simply further considerations) on the basis of at least two of the other papers.

(ca. 5 pages, deadline)
References


