Language contact as a trigger for language change: Grammaticalization pathways of the Spanish Present Perfect

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Abstract: The semantic trajectories of contact-induced grammatical change are still not well understood (cf. Heine & Kuteva 2005; Kuteva et al. 2019). This presentation examines the development of the Spanish Present Perfect (PP) in an ex-colonial region where Spanish is in contact with Indigenous languages and argues for the inclusion of linguistic factors connected to subjectivity and information structure in the study of the PP, alongside the traditional temporal and aspectual factors.

Perfec\text{s} in the world's languages derive from three main sources (\textit{be/have, come, finish}, Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994), but \textit{have} perfects (e.g., Spanish) are considered the least common pattern (WALS, Dahl & Velupillai 2013; Drinka 2017). Bybee et al. (1994) posit that only the stative source branches into two distinct grammaticalization pathways of the PP: the temporal (towards past/perfective) or the evidential (leading to (in)direct evidential). Although Romance languages are described as following the temporal pathway (Harris 1982; Squartini & Bertinetto 2000, de Acosta 2011), there are exceptions. Daca-Romanian (Drinka 2017), Judeo-Spanish (Varol 2006), and Andean Spanish varieties (Escobar & Crespo 2020) are argued to follow the evidential path, in each case triggered by contact with a language or languages of families (Turkic or Quechua-Aymaran) that have evidential markers. Through grammatical analyses of data from collected interviews, the effect of subjectivity and information structure on the grammaticalization pathway of the PP in Andean Spanish varieties is established.

References


de Acosta, Diego. 2011 Rethinking the genesis of the Romance periphrastic perfect. \textit{Diachronica} 28 (2), 143-185.


