On the similarities and differences between diachronic & contact-induced syntactic change

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Introduction

- What is the relation between syntactic change in contact (CIC) and diachronic change (CID)?

- CIC and CID are essentially the same (Kupisch and Polinsky 2022)

  "Based on the example of article use, we show that heritage languages undergo the same processes of grammaticalization and degrammaticalization as (other) natural languages do. Therefore, GRAMMATICAL PATTERNS IN HERITAGE LANGUAGES CAN BE PREDICTED ON THE BASIS OF DIACHRONIC CHANGE, and heritage languages can AMPLIFY and foreground developments that are known to take place in language diachrony and are potentially already taking place in the homeland variety"
  (Kupisch and Polinsky 2022, 2)

In this talk

- ▶ CIC and CID are the same in some cases, but not in all
- ▶ CIC cannot always be straightforwardly reduced to accelerated diachronic change in all instances and environments

- ▶ Change is the result to 2 different 3rd factor strategies to organize conflicting structures:
  - Monotonicity bias when dealing with phi features $\rightarrow$ predictable
  - Topicality and linking when dealing with discourse $\rightarrow$ less predictable

Roadmap

1. Indexicals: contact = diachrony

2. DOM: contact = & $\neq$ diachrony

3. Auxiliary selection: contact $\approx$ diachrony

4. Subject clitics: contact $\neq$ diachrony

mostly from D'Alessandro (2022)

Indexicals

▶ Two classes of indexicals:
  - **personal pronouns**
  - (ternary) **demonstrative systems**

▶ **How many semantic oppositions** are encoded in each system?

▶ Assumption: oppositions encoded by means of person features = syntactically

From Terenghi 2021a, In prep.

Pronominal paradigms: Diachrony

▶ Stable in diachrony (Nichols 1992; a.o.)

(1) Pronominal paradigms in diachrony (Terenghi In prep., D.1)

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL	2PL	3PL
Latin	ego	tu	ille	nos	vos	illi
Corsican	eiu	tu	ellu	no	voi	elli

▶ No significant change in contact contexts (Heine and Kuteva 2005; Matras 2009; a.o.), barring occasional borrowings

(2)   Pronominal paradigms in contact

	1SG	2SG	3SG	1PL	2PL	3PL
Portuguese	eu	tu	ele	nós	vós	eles
Korlai (APiCS 40)	yo	ʋɔ	el	nɔ	udzo	elo

Pronominal paradigms: Contact

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▶ **Contact = diachrony**
▶ (Possessive paradigms are likewise stable)

Ternary demonstrative systems

- **Three-way person opposition**: 'this near me', 'that near you', 'that far from us'
- **Unstable** in diachrony & in contact (heritage varieties, creoles): parallel changes (Terenghi 2021b)
- **Simplification**: loss of the hearer-oriented semantics ('that near you'), assimilated to one of the other forms in the paradigm

Demonstratives: contact = diachrony

(3) a. **Diachrony**

	near 1	near 2	far
Occitan (old)	aqueste	aiceste	aquel
Occitan (new)	aqueste	aquel	

b. **Contact: Creoles**

	near 1	near 2	far
Portuguese	este	esse	aquele
Batavia Creole	iste	akel	

(from Terenghi 2021b, Terenghi In prep., ch. 2)

Interim conclusion

Indexicals: contact = diachrony

(regardless of their (in)stability)

Differential Object Marking

▶ Differential object marking (DOM): is the morphological marking of a class of direct objects

▶ Typically: animate, definite, and/or specific objects are marked (Diez 1882; Bossong 1985)

Diachrony: emergence in topic contexts

▶ Diachronic and typological studies: DOM starts out in topic contexts (Ledgeway 2009; Iemmolo 2009, 2010, 2020)

(4) 12th century Spanish: *Cantar del mio Cid* (adapted from Iemmolo 2020, 26)

    a. En braços tenedes **mis fijas** tan blancas commo
       in arms hold.2PL.PRS my daughters so white as
       el sol
       the sun

       'In your arms you hold my daughters as white as sun'

    b. **A la sus fijas** en braços las prendia
       DOM the his daughters in arms them= take.3SG.PFV

       'His daughters, he took them in his arms'

Contact: loss

▶ Contact studies: DOM reported to weaken or even disappear
▶ E.g. heritage Spanish in the US: Montrul and Bowles 2009
▶ Andriani et al. 2022, 17

(5) a. Vo'   canosciàre **ɸ u pecceriɖɖu**   [HSic/NYC]
       want.1SG know.INF   DOM the child
       'I want to know the child'

    b. Io conosciuto **ɸ   tuttəquandə**   [HCil/NYC]
       I met   DOM everyone
       'I've met everyone'

▶ Challenge for the equation of CID to CIC.

More from contact

- ▶ Additional data from contact situations complicate this picture
- ▶ DOM emerges in topic contexts in some contact varieties and gradually extends to *in situ* objects, paralleling the diachronic evolution
    - ▶ Creole varieties (e.g. Afrikaans)
    - ▶ Moribund heritage varieties of German in the US and Argentina (Yager et al. 2015)
    - ▶ Heritage Italo-Romance varieties spoken in Argentina and Brazil in *micro*contact (D'Alessandro 2021 ff.):
- ▶ Heritage Friulian data from Andriani et al. 2022, 19

(6) a. An   clamat **a   me mari**   [HFri, Argentina]
        have.PRS.3PL called DOM my mother
        'They've called my mother'
    b. an clamat **(*a) me mari**   [Friulian, Italy]

Interim conclusion

DOM: contact ≠ diachrony (loss)

DOM: microcontact & creoles = diachrony (emergence)

Auxiliary selection

▶ Varieties that display split-auxiliary systems: (*be* vs. *have*)
▶ of three kinds:
  - BE or HAVE depending on the verb class (e.g., Italian)
  - BE or HAVE depending on the subject (e.g., Abruzzese)
  - BE or HAVE depending on both the subject and the verb class (e.g., Apulian)

Diachrony: Have

In Romance, HAVE is the auxiliary that spreads the most

▶ HAVE is generalized in stative/unaccusative syntax (at the expense of the selection of BE) in old Spanish (Stolova 2006), old Catalan (Mateu 2009), old Portuguese (Huber 1933:221), old French (Nordhal 1977), old Neapolitan (Formentin 2001:94-99; Cennamo 2002:198; Ledgeway 2009:§15.1.1.6), old Sicilian (La Fauci 1992: 202ff.) (see Ledgeway 2003, 2012: 334-335; Loporcaro 2016: 803; cf. also McFadden & Alexiadou 2006, 2010 for old English).

Contact: Have

▶ Same trend in heritage upper-Southern Italo-Romance spoken in NYC (grey indicates that HAVE replaced BE, Andriani & D'Alessandro 2022):

(7) Heritage Barese

	1	2	3	4	5	6
U_bar_JC_009 [Casamassima]	B	H	H (≈B)	B	—	H
U_bar_B_011 [Bitetto]	B	B	H (≈B)	H	—	H
U_bar_B_012 [Bitetto]	B	B	H (≈B)	H	—	H
U_bar_B_013 [Bitetto/Grumo Appula]	H	H	H (≈B)	H	—	H

▶ **But**: Barese in Italy shows a different diachronic pattern: *be* as dominant auxiliary (Tuttle 1986; Bentley 2004)

Simplification or complexification?

▶ Diachrony (upper-Southern Italo-Romance in Italy) & contact (Heritage upper-Southern Italo-Romance in NYC): change = simplification → split-auxiliary selection is lost in favour of a single auxiliary

▶ Difference: surviving auxiliary

▶ NB: *have* is structurally more complex than *be* (*have* = preposition + *be*; cf. Kayne 1993)

▶ Despite the overall simplification of the auxiliary system (1 *vs* 2 auxiliaries), the contact varieties of upper-Southern Italo-Romance select the more complex auxiliary *be*.

Interim conclusion

Auxiliary selection: contact ≈ diachrony

Selection lost, but different auxiliaries survive

Subject clitics

▶ Northern Italo-Romance varieties

▶ Subject clitics (SCl) = subject-oriented agreement elements (cf. Rizzi 1986)

▶ Diachrony: SCl originated from a set of full pronouns around the 16th–17th century (Poletto 1995)

Subject clitics in heritage varieties

▶ SCl in heritage varieties (in Argentina and Brazil) first become pronominal and then start getting dropped (Frasson (2021), Frasson, D'Alessandro, and van Osch 2021)

From variation to change

- ▶ Diatopic variation in Venetan & Trentino in Italy as to which auxiliary+SCl precedes unaccusative verbs: *l'è*, *zè*, or *è* (Benincà 2007 a.o.)

- ▶ Heritage varieties: auxiliaries+SCl distributed according to the syntactic context (D'Alessandro and Frasson 2022):

- ▶ *l'è* only occurs with postverbal subjects:

(8) L'=è   (*z'è   / *è) vegnesto la   nona
     scl=BE.3 scl=BE.3 / BE.3 came   the grandmother
     "My grandmother came here"

From variation to change

▶ Diatopic variation in Venetan & Trentino in Italy as to which auxiliary+SCl precedes unaccusative verbs: *l'è*, *zè*, or *è* (Benincà 2007 a.o.)

▶ Heritage varieties: auxiliaries+SCl distributed according to the syntactic context (D'Alessandro and Frasson 2022):

▶ *zè* only occurs with preverbal subjects:

(9)   La so mare   zè   (*l'è   / *è)   nasesta in Italia
      the his mother scl.BE.3 scl.BE.3 / scl.BE.3 born   in Italy
      "His mother was born in Italy"

From variation to change

▶ Diatopic variation in Venetan & Trentino in Italy as to which auxiliary+SCl precedes unaccusative verbs: *l'è*, *zè*, or *è* (Benincà 2007 a.o.)

▶ Heritage varieties: auxiliaries+SCl distributed according to the syntactic context (D'Alessandro and Frasson 2022):

▶ *è* is mostly restricted to preverbal 3PL subjects:

(10) I   noni   è   (*l'è   / *zè)   vegnesti de navio
      the grandparents BE.3 scl.BE.3 / scl.BE.3 come   of boat
      "The grandparents have come by boat"

From variation to change

▶ Diatopic variation in Venetan & Trentino in Italy as to which auxiliary+SCl precedes unaccusative verbs: *l'è, zè,* or *è* (Benincà 2007 a.o.)

▶ Heritage varieties: auxiliaries+SCl distributed according to the syntactic context (D'Alessandro and Frasson 2022):

l'è	↔	postverbal subjects
zè	↔	preverbal subjects
è	↔	3PL subjects

▶ Auxiliary+SCl reanalyzed for specific syntactic contexts in contact: complexification of the system

Interim conclusion

SCls: contact (loss) ≠ diachrony (emergence)

& reanalysis of SCls in contact

CIC and diachrony: A first typology

1. Indexicals: contact = diachrony

2. DOM: contact = & $\neq$ diachrony

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Let's make some order!

Why these conflicting results?
We might be wrong! Or: There are two different strategies at work for the resolution of conflicting structures:

Some order in the chaos

- It is not possible to interpret *all* instances of these changes as accelerated versions of what is observed in diachrony
- Two 3rd factor strategies at work. Which strategy we choose depends on the nature of the given syntactic phenomena
  - purely grammatical items tend to evolve in the same way across diachrony and contact (see indexicals)
  - syntax-discourse interface phenomena (in particular, DOM and SCls/pronouns; cf. role of topicality) may change significantly across diachrony and contact — in line with the Interface Hypothesis (Hulk and Müller 2000, Müller and Hulk 2001; Sorace and Serratrice 2009, Sorace 2011)

Why?

▶ Feature sequences obey a monotonicity bias (Terenghi 2021a, Terenghi In prep.) [Pronouns/demonstratives/some auxiliary selection patterns]

▶ Use of linkers to organize sentence structure (topicality)[DOM, SCL]

▶ What about verb-class driven auxiliary selection?
  ● Still without an answer

Conclusions

▶ We can't talk of a path, of simplification, of complexification *tout court* when discussing language change

▶ There do seem to be some common cognitive strategies underlying language change, at work both in CIC and in CID

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Thank you!