Creole/Spanish contact and the acquisition of clitics on the Dominican-Haitian border

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Abstract

In this paper we investigate language contact between Haitian Creole and Dominican Spanish. We focus particularly on the acquisition of clitic pronouns (dative and accusative) in relation to their morpho-syntactic properties in the interlanguage of L2 Spanish speakers (Haitians and their bilingual descendants, whose first language is Creole) and we compare them with bilingual speakers of Creole and Spanish (Dominican-Haitians and Arayanos) and monolingual Spanish speakers (Dominicans), residents near the Dominican-Haitian border. Although the acquisition of clitic pronouns of L2 Spanish has been the object of multiple studies (Montrul, 2004; Sánchez, 2004), no study to date has referred to the case of native speakers of a Creole language, in this case of Haitian Creole. In Spanish, clitics can be heads of their own functional categories (AgrOP and AgrIOP) (Franco, 1993; Uriagereka, 1995), while acting as affixes of morphological agreement. For the purposes of this paper, we interviewed (semi) spontaneously, 11 informants, belonging to three groups of border speakers, whom we classified according to the variables of ethnicity and degree of bilingualism: 5 Haitians (Hs), 3 Arayanos (AYs) and 3 Dominicans (Ds); these latter were monolingual non-standard Spanish speakers that formed the control group. According to the results, there are significant differences or cases of divergence between the properties of the participants’ grammar that could be due to the properties of their L1. The differences occur fundamentally in speakers of interlanguage, in relation to morphology (i.e. agreement – gender and number), rather than syntax. In the light of these results, it could be argued that Creole speakers with Spanish as an interlanguage do not seem to converge with monolingual speakers in their morpho-syntactic terms of the object pronouns (i.e. clitics), or they simply display an “incomplete” grammar.

Key words
clitics
language contact
morpho-syntax

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1 Introduction

In this study, we investigate the language contact between Haitian Creole and Dominican Spanish. Our focus is primarily on the acquisition of clitic pronouns (dative and accusative) in the third person in relation to their morpho-syntactic properties in the interlanguage of Spanish speakers as L2 (Haitians, whose first language is Creole) and we compare it with bilingual speakers in Creole/Spanish (Arayanos) and monolingual Spanish speakers (Dominicans), who reside on the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

Firstly, it is important to review some of the research conducted to date about the acquisition of Spanish as a first (L1) and as a second language (L2) and in bilingual situations where Spanish is in contact with another language. Results from studies of L1 Spanish all seem to indicate that clitics appear productively around the age of three years (López Ornat, Fernández, Gallo & Marsical, 1994). Before that age, María, the girl who was object of a seminal study produced as many morphological mistakes (gender and number: use of ‘lo’ (masc. singular) for ‘la’ and ‘los’) as syntactical errors in double clitic constructions. More recently Domínguez (2003) has re-analyzed the same corpus, concluding that there are no placement errors: María placed the pronominal clitics correctly in front of conjugated verbs, suffixed them to infinitives and imperatives and raised them between the auxiliaries and the infinitives. Keeping the results of both studies in mind in addition to Torrens and Wexler’s findings (1996), we can affirm that from a very early age María acquired the syntactical properties of clitics in Spanish, while she acquired morphological properties later. María’s gender errors could be due to performance problems or to the fact that, as in the case with Spanish from the Andes (Sánchez, 1999; Camacho and Sánchez, 2002) and from other parts of the Spanish-speaking world (Fernández Ordoñez, 1999), her grammar is characterized precisely by the non-agreement of gender. In this respect, Camacho and Sánchez (2002) document cases in Andean Spanish where the masculine ‘lo’ is used to replace the masculine as well as the feminine in all contexts, independently of whether the referent is animated or not (lo, vie la mesa).

Domínguez (2003) accounts for such mistakes by highlighting complexities in the referential properties of clitics. For example, the first and second person clitics (i.e., me, te, se) are acquired before those of the third person (i.e., lo, la, le). In this respect, it should be borne in mind that clitics in the first and second person only encode the feature of person, while the third encodes both person and gender, which could involve greater problems of production and processing. However, in a different study on the acquisition of clitics by L1 Spanish children, Eisenchlas (2003) reports on the results of a cross-sectional experiment with 71 children acquiring Argentinean Spanish with the use of an Elicited Imitation task and spontaneous data. Participants were divided into seven developmental groups: 3;0–3;6, 3;7–4;0, 4;1–4;6, 4;8–5;0, 5;2–5;6, 5;7–6;0, 6;1–6;4. Results of this study indicate that children from very testable age (i.e., 3;0) demonstrate to have grammatical competence for both syntax (i.e., placement of clitics, although the preverbal clitics are easier to acquire that the postverbal ones) and morphology (i.e., phi-features such as gender, number and person) despite performance limitations.

Due to space limitations we are not able to review all the research studies with direct or indirect implications for ours; however for those interested readers, please see Mondul (2004) and any other references cited therein.
Cases of null clitics are rare in Spanish child language in general. Fujino and Sano (2000) examine data from CHILDES, in particular the transitive sentences of three children: María, Koki and Juan. These researchers considered lexicalized direct objects, clitic pronouns and those cases in which either the object or the clitic was null. According to the results, the omission of objects was substantial early on but diminished progressively with age. According to the researchers, childhood Spanish in its first stages is characterized by the omission of the object (Spanish is not a language that generally allows null objects) due to grammatical errors rather than processing constraints. Reglero and Ticio (2003), on the contrary, argue that direct object omission is due to the fact that children do not have the knowledge of the features encoded by clitics.

Similar acquisition problems are faced by bilingual children (one of whose language is Spanish). According to Ezeizabarrena (1996), Basque-Spanish bilingual children experience more difficulties with the acquisition of the gender and number properties of clitics than with the codification of person in clitics. The syntactic properties of clitics, however, are learned without any problems.

We then asked what happens in the acquisition of Spanish as a second language (L2). In contrast to what occurs in the acquisition of Spanish as L1 (or bilingualism), in Spanish as L2 different acquisition models can be observed; learners in the initial stages of the development of their interlanguage have problems with the placement of clitics with conjugated verbs and infinitives. Liceras (1985) studied the acquisition of clitic pronouns in Spanish in a sample of 60 learners of high intermediate level (3–4 years of formal study) whose first language was English (a language that does not have pronominal clitics), and French (a language that does have pronominal clitics, but that differs from Spanish in their placement with infinitives). To obtain the data, Liceras used an oral task based on drawings through which participants had to tell a story, as well as two written production tasks. According to the results, the participants were generally able to place the clitics in their proper syntactic position, although there were some errors in some cases, among which the following stand out: the placement of clitics after a conjugated verb and the placement of clitics between a verb and an infinitive (as is the case in French). The participants whose first language was English, however, made mistakes of omission in those constructions that required the presence of double clitics.

More recently, Bruhn de Garavito and Montrul (1996) conducted a study in which they compared the acquisition of Spanish by a sample of 20 French speakers at the intermediate level, in relation to a control group, made up of 15 native Spanish speakers (L1). The participants were asked to complete a written task through which the substitution of a NP by a clitic was elicited, as well as a grammaticality judgment task in which different syntactic structures with clitics were included. According to the results, the Spanish learners did the written task without any problems (with 97% right answers). In the grammaticality judgment task, the group of French learners of Spanish did not have major problems with the placement of clitics, except in the structures where the clitic is raised.

Research is required to analyze the occurrence of null objects in spontaneous speech data, focusing on the possibility of pragmatic contexts in which speakers prefer null objects (Schwenter, 2006).
In a study similar to the one referred above, but with intermediate level French L1 of Spanish learners (29 total) and advanced English L1 learners of Spanish (26 total), Duffield and White (1999) designed two tests: one involving grammatical judgments and another one in which the participants had to match two sentences. The tests focused on three areas: the position of clitics with conjugated verbs, the raising of clitics and the use of clitics with causative constructions. For purpose of comparison, a group of 15 native Spanish speakers also took the same tests. Independently of the native language of the participants, all the groups had mastered the order of clitics before conjugated verbs. However, problems were encountered with both the raising of clitics as well as with the use of clitics in causative constructions. These problems reflected the transfer of certain parameters from L1 in the learning of Spanish as L2.

Montrul (1999) also studied the acquisition of some of the properties associated with dative clitics in a sample of 12 English L1 speakers and 12 French L1 speakers of intermediate level Spanish, in relation to a control group of 12 native Spanish speakers. French as well as Spanish possesses AgrIOP, while English does not. To gather data a grammaticality judgment task was designed. No significant differences were found between native speakers and the French learners of Spanish, but marked differences were found between the native speakers and the English learners. The French subjects were different from the English ones in a significant way, a fact that supports the direct effect of L1 in the acquisition of an L2.

In summary, when we compare all three contexts of Spanish acquisition (L1, simultaneous bilingualism and L2), we can conclude that the syntactic properties associated with clitics (for instance, movement) are learned with no major difficulties. Instead it is the morphological properties of clitics that seem to pose the most problems for learners of Spanish. That is, monolingual and bilingual children and adult speakers of Spanish as L2, in general, seem to converge towards the properties of Spanish grammar, following the trajectories established by Universal Grammar, as well as by the features that are specific to Spanish. In the case of Spanish as L2, we also observe that there are transfer effects (e.g., from French to Spanish). However, we do not know what acquisition models adult speakers follow in a natural setting of language contact where the languages involved are typologically different (Dominican Spanish and Haitian Creole), which is the main focus of this research paper.

We have organized this paper in the following way. Section two describes both linguistic systems under consideration (Dominican Spanish and Haitian Creole) and the framework for linguistic analysis used in the current study. Section three outlines the research methodology (sample, instrument and data analysis). Section four offers a summary of the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data. Finally, the fifth section presents the conclusions of the research and some suggestions are proposed for future study.

2 Language contact: Clitics in Spanish and Creole

To understand the nature of the interlanguage that develops between speakers of two different languages in a contact situation, it is important first to investigate the typological differences between the languages involved in contact. In the following pages, we examine the typological differences between Spanish and Haitian Creole, considering the distribution of clitic pronouns in each language.
Both languages have strong pronouns and weak or clitic pronouns. The latter can be of two classes: syntactic or phonological (Lefebvre, 1998). Syntactic clitics, generally, are lexical items that are different from strong pronouns because they are the head of their corresponding functional categories. Phonological clitics, on the contrary, do not constitute distinct lexical items, because they are reduced phonological forms of strong pronouns. Haitian Creole only possesses phonological clitics, while in Spanish clitics are differentiated strong pronouns both in their syntactic and their morphological properties. The non-syntactic nature of clitics in Haitian Creole is illustrated in (1a–c) (Deprez, 1992; Lefebvre, 1998):

\[(1)\]

a. Jan te bay Mari *liv la.*
   Juan ANT entregar María libro el.
   ‘John gave the book to Mary.’

b. Jan te bay Mari *liv la.*
   Juan ANT entregar María libro el.
   ‘John gave it to Mary.’

c. Se Mari Jan te bay *liv la.*
   María Juan ANT entregar libro el.
   ‘John gave Mary it’.

As shown in Table 1, clitic object pronouns in Haitian Creole are phonological, and encode features of person and number, but not of gender. In this respect we also need to point out that in Haitian Creole there is only one paradigm that is used for all object pronoun forms (that is, for the accusative and the dative) (Lefebvre, 1998). Haitian Creole, like other Creole languages, has a morphological and verbal system that may be considered to be fairly ‘reduced’ (Muysken & Law, 2001, p.51).

Haitian Creole has fixed SVO order and does not permit the movement of clitics. Consequently, it is not possible to raise clitics in Creole, while such raising or climbing is common in Spanish.

**Table 1**

**Pronominal clitic system of Haitian Creole**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accusative/dative</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} person sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u/w</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd} person sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd} person sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} person pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd} person pl.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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3 DeGraff (1990, 1993) argues that the clitics in Haitian Creole are syntactic. However, we accept the problematic status of the clitics in Haitian Creole and hence, we will revise both positions later on when we discuss the main findings of the present paper. Our findings call into questions whether DeGraff’s position is more tenable and, therefore, whether clitics in Haitian Creole should be syntactical and not phonological as Lefebvre argues.

4 Here and elsewhere we highlight the features that we are focusing on in bold.
Table 2 provides an overview of the system of object pronoun clitics in Spanish. Clitics in Spanish are marked for person, number and gender – and politeness – (third person in the singular as well as the plural). In informal terms, clitics in Spanish always appear with conjugated verb forms replacing the missing direct object as shown in (2a and b); (2b) will be ungrammatical without the clitic.

(2) a. María compró esa casa;  
   ‘María bought that house.’

   b. María la compró.  
   ‘María CL-DO bought.’

Table 2
Pronominal clitic system of Spanish

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te</td>
<td>Te</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lo</td>
<td>Le</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La</td>
<td>Nos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nos</td>
<td>Os</td>
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<tr>
<td>Os</td>
<td>Les</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los</td>
<td>Se</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Las</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person sing.</td>
<td>1st person sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person sing.</td>
<td>2nd person sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person masc. sing</td>
<td>3rd person sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person fem. sing</td>
<td>1st person pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person pl.</td>
<td>2nd person pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person pl.</td>
<td>3rd person pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person masc. pl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person fem. pl.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The syntactic and morphological properties of clitics have been the object of intense theoretical debate in Romance languages. Considering some of the linguistics formalism regarding the constraints ordering of both full-phrase complements (as in 2a) and cliticized complements (as in 2b) in Spanish, we assume that Spanish is a head-initial language, a verb theta-marks a DP complements to its right (Zagona, 2002). The derivation of (2a) involves the movement of V-to-INFL and its complement DP moves to the right of the verb as illustrated in (3).

On the other hand, in the derivation of (2b) whose surface form has no overt DP in its complement position, the verb is taken as transitive and the clitic has person and number features which correspond to the missing DP complement, namely, third person feminine singular. In order to account for the position to which the clitic moves, the most
recent linguistic analysis has proposed that the clitic joins to the verb when it undergoes movement\textsuperscript{6} as shown in (4).

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (v) {v'}
  child {node (v) {v}
    child {node (lv) {la}
      edge from parent node [left] {compró}}
    child {node (dp) {DP}}
    child {node (cl1) {v}}
    child {node (ti) {ti}}
  }
  child {node (dp) {DP}};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

The attachment of the clitic, \textit{la}, to the verb, \textit{compró}, is due to the fact that the verb is the clitic ‘host’, which is to say, the constituent on which the clitic is phonologically dependent (Zagona, 2002, p.186). Once the clitic joins to \textit{V}, the complex verb would then move to INFL. Moreover, for the present investigation we adopt the most recent generative linguistic analysis that assumes that clitics in Spanish have syntactic status by virtue of their being the head of their own functional categories. This proposal is very much in accordance with the movement analysis aforementioned according to which clitics originate in argument positions. Clitics therefore are considered to be the head of DP. Furthermore, it has been assumed that there is an object-related AGR\textsuperscript{7} head that checks Case and other features of the objects, and that object clitics are generated in that head (AgrOP and AgrIOP) (Franco, 1993; Uriagereka, 1995). They act as affixes of morphological agreement. It is Uriageraka (1995) who proposes that clitics move from their position as object (AgrO) to a functional category FP, that is above AgrS some place in CP, where they check their referential features. Clitics are assumed to instantiate the AgrO whose features include gender and number. The movement to F occurs due to the morpho-phonological and prosodic properties that allow the association with a null or \textit{pro} element, as show in (5)

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (fp) {FP}
  child {node (agrsp) {AgrSP}
    child {node (agr) {Agr}
      child {node (tp) {T}}
      child {node (agrop) {AgrOP}}
      child {node (agro) {AgrO}}
      child {node (v) {V}}
      child {node (dp) {DP clitic}}
    }
  }
  child {node (f) {F}};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{6} There have been three linguistic approaches to the derivation of clitics at the spell-out: the movement approach according to which clitics are originated in the canonical position and then undergoes movement to its surface position associated with the verb (Belletti, 1990; Cardinaletti, 1994). The other approach is the ‘base-generation’ which proposes that clitics initiate in a clitic position connected with the verb (Jaeggli, 1982; Borer, 1984). And the third one is the most recent one which is based on the hypothesis that clitics are functional categories (Uriagereka, 1992, 1995) and the movement of the clitics is triggered by the strength of the morphological features encompassed in the clitics. For the purpose of the present study, we adopt the last one.

\textsuperscript{7} As Agr-S or Agreement-subject involves subject agreement features, the AgrO would involve object agreement features in the form of a clitic. This clitic would be the spell-out of the features for number, gender and case copied from a complement onto its governing head.
As illustrated in (5), clitics move to an abstract AgrO constituent in order to satisfy the D-feature checking of that head, and movement, is accounted on the basis of D-feature checking.

In Spanish, clitics appear in preverbal position when the verb on which they depend is conjugated (6a). However, with infinitives (non-conjugated verbal forms), the clitics must appear in a post-verbal position, joined to the infinitive (6b):

(6) a. Juan los_i vio (a los niños_i).

John los-CL-DO see-past (the children).

‘John saw them.’

b. Juan comprende el alemán, pero hablarlo no le es fácil.

John understands German, but speak-it-CL-DO not him-clitic is easy.

‘John understands German, but it is not easy for him to speak it.’

Clitics pronoun may be raised on constructions containing two verbs (7a–c):

(7) a. Carmen quiere comprarlo vs. Carmen lo quiere comprar.

Carmen wants buy-it-CL-DO vs. Carmen it-CL-DO wants buy.

‘Carmen wants to buy it.’

b. Carmen está viéndola vs. Carmen la está viendo.

Carmen is watching-it-CL-DO vs. Carmen it-CL-DO is watching.

‘Carmen is watching it.’

c. Carmen puede visitarlo vs. Carmen lo puede visitar.

Carmen can visit-him-CL-DO vs. Carmen him-CL-DO can visit.

‘Carmen can visit him.’

The examples in (7) show that clitics in Spanish can remain in the lowest position (attached to the infinitive or gerund) (that is, enclitic to the non-finite verb) or be elevated over a series of verbs until they occupy a pre-verbal position (that is, proclitic to the higher finite verb).

Likewise, in Spanish, syntactic constructions with a clitic are possible, when the direct or indirect object is a strong pronoun or with a NP (8a–c):

(8) a. Lo_i vi a él_i.

Him-CL-DO saw to him.

‘I saw him.’

b. Le_i dieron un premio a él_i.

Him-CL-IO gave a prize to him.

‘They gave him a prize.’

c. Pedro le_i habló a Carmen_i.

Peter her-CL-DO talked to Carmen.

‘Peter talked to Carmen.’
While the clitic pronouns are obligatory in (8a) and (8b), it is optional in (8c). However, an object clitic is obligatory in constructions in which the object appears in the position of the topic (9):

(9) **Las cartas, las, dejé en mi despacho.**
    The letters them-CL-DO left on my desk.
    ‘I left the letters on my desk.’

Finally, clitics in Spanish cannot appear in nominal or prepositional constructions where the obligatory presence of a strong pronoun is required. Lastly, the facts presented so far would support the syntactic status of clitics in Spanish.

An additional phenomenon that is proper to the Spanish language is the possibility of omitting the direct object when it is indefinite (Campos, 1986). Spanish does not allow null direct objects (pronominals or lexicals) when they are definite (10a), while it is possible if the object has an indefinite reference (10b):

(10) a. *Maite vio Ø en la universidad.
    Maite saw at the university.
    ‘Maite saw him at the university.’

    b. ¿Compraste café? Sí, compré Øi.
    Bought coffee? Yes, bought.
    ‘Did you buy coffee? Yes, I bought some.’

As shown in (10b), in order for null objects to be licensed and identified in Spanish, Campos (1986) following Huang’s (1984) analysis for Chinese proposes that there is a topic operator in Spec of DP which must agree with [-definite, -specific] features in the D head of the object.

Up to this point we have presented and analyzed the properties of clitics in Creole as well as in Spanish. The aforementioned brief review of the literature on the acquisition of Spanish clitic pronouns by both L1, L2 and bilingual speakers lays the ground for the following case study of the acquisition of clitics on the border between Haiti and Santo Domingo where Haitian Creole comes into contact with Spanish.

3 **Language contact: A case study**

Despite the fact that the acquisition of Spanish clitic pronouns for L1, L2 and bilingual speakers has been the object of multiple studies (see section 1), no study to date has examined the acquisition of Spanish clitic pronouns by native speakers of Haitian Creole. This study addresses this absence.

Haitian Creole is a French based lexifier language. Haitian Creole comes into contact with Spanish at the border between Haiti and Santo Domingo. In addition to linguistic contact, the border constitutes a zone of constant social and economic contact resulting in frequent L2 acquisition and bilingualism. This has forced a great number of Creole speakers to learn Spanish. We postulate that the need to learn Spanish by L1 Haitian Creole speakers constitutes a case of language creation rather than second language learning (L2) because Creole speakers must both learn and use the L2 simultaneously.
This study proposes that the development of a language leads to language change through interlanguage and L1 convergence. In numerous cases of language contact, the linguistic features that belong to the target language and which distinguish the substrate language from the superstrate language, suggest interlanguage processes similar to the known stages of L2 acquisition. This has been seen in the Spanish as L2 in Caribbean territories, such as the bozal speech spoken in Cuba, Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic during the 18th century (Lipski, 2005), hatianized Spanish in Eastern Cuba (Ortiz López, 2001a) and the haitianized Spanish on the Dominican Haitian border (Ortiz López, 2001b, 2006). This modality serves as the object of the present study. Haitian Creole is the common language of all members of the Haitian community.

One of the most controversial issues in the field of language contact revolves around the question of whether one language can influence or interfere with the structure of another. Thomason and Kaufman (1988) proposed that interference between the structures of two languages can occur at all levels of language (lexical, semantic, phonologic and morpho-syntactic) and that any linguistic feature could be transferred from one language to another (1988, p.14). They also asserted that what determines the direction and degree of interference is more due to the social context than to the structure of the languages in contact (1988, p.19). Silva-Corvalán (1993) studied Spanish in Los Angeles, and highlighted that the permeability of grammar to a feature foreign to that language depends to a certain extent on the existence of structures that are superficially parallel in the contact languages (1993, p.20). She affirms that languages in contact are more permeable to the transfer of linguistic features at the pragmatic-discursive level, while not at the syntactic level (1993, p.39). Based upon these insights, the present study raises the following questions:

(a) Are there significant differences between Dominican monolingual Spanish speakers (D) and Arayano L2 Spanish speakers (A) in the acquisition of clitic pronouns? Are there also differences between bilingual Dominicans (BD) and Creole speakers (H)?

(b) If there are significant differences between these groups, do these differences surface in syntactic or morphological features? Are syntactic and morphological features learned independently?

(c) What social factors could explain the acquisition models of the interlanguage and L2 speakers? Do personal variables such as age and length of contact correlate with clear differences between the groups?

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8 L2 Spanish speakers and those of interlanguage would have to show that they know that clitics in Spanish have both properties: syntactic (movement) as well as morphological (remembering that in Spanish, clitics are at the head of their own functional categories whose features involve gender and number). If evidence is found that the syntactic properties are indeed acquired by L2 Haitian speakers, while agreement properties are not, that would constitute evidence that DeGraff’s position is correct and that Haitian clitics are syntactical. These syntactic properties of clitics would be observed in both the possibility of joining them or not to infinitives as in the contexts in which they can be raised, and appear in a pre-verbal position. On the other hand, considering the results found in some of the aforementioned studies in Spanish as L1 as well as L2, we could argue, however, that it is the syntactic properties that are acquired without major problems.

9 For a later study it would be interesting to investigate other pragmatic-discursive aspects to corroborate the hypothesis postulated by Silva-Corvalán (1993).
3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Sample and instrument

The Dominican-Haitian border is shared by two nations: the Dominican Republic and Haiti, two territories that are geographically contiguous but linguistically and culturally distinct. The differences respond to the historical events that molded these nations, the origin of their populations, their social, cultural and economic structure as well as ideological formations (Castor, 1987, p.15). On the border, two typologically different languages co-exist in contact: Dominican Spanish in the east and Haitian Creole in the west. Therefore, this zone is characterized by sustained (ethno) sociolinguistic contact (see map).

The data used in this analysis consist of in situ recordings of members of the border community complemented by participant observation. During our stay at the border, we chose the informants from these two groups at random. We engaged and recorded informants in informal conversation about historical, political, economic and social topics pertaining to border life. These sensitive topics gave rise to great interest and spontaneity and led to detailed descriptions and denunciations of the infrahuman conditions and the ‘neo-slavery’ practices suffered by Haitians and their descendants at the hands of their Dominican hosts. The informants were classified in three groups of speakers according to the variable of ethnicity: (1) Haitians (Hs), (2) Arayanos (AYs) – descendants Haitian and Dominican intermarriage, (3) a control sample of Dominicans (Ds) – speakers of ‘non-standard’ Spanish recorded in ‘semi’ spontaneous conversations lasting from 20–40 minutes each. In total, there were 11 subjects (see Table 3).

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10 This article is framed within the field research that the second author carried out in four of the border provinces: Pedernales, Jimani, Elias Piña and Dajabón.
The H informants have lived from five to 30 years on the border. Their L1 is Creole. Their mastery of Spanish varies, the vast majority speaking an interlanguage (Ortiz López, 2001a). The AY informants are L1 Creole speakers who maintain close contact with both languages because their fathers are Dominican and their mothers Haitian. They are more or less balanced bilinguals despite Creole being the language of the home and the absence of formal education in Spanish. The D informants are monolingual in ‘nonstandard’ Spanish.

3.2 Analysis of the data and results

All the verb forms with accusative and dative third person present or null pronouns were identified in the transcriptions (lexical forms were excluded from the analysis). The data was codified according to the linguistic and extra-linguistic variables to be studied. An SPSS statistical analysis was run to establish correlations between the variables. Because the sample was so small, it was not possible to carry out significant statistical analysis. In the future, we hope to expand the sample to provide for a fruitful SPSS analysis.\(^{11}\)

3.2.1 General results

From the speech of the 11 informants, we obtained a corpus of 478 verb forms that required an object pronoun in the third person.\(^{12}\) Eighty-seven percent of the tokens

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\(^{11}\) One of the reviewers calls into question the methodology and the collection of data in the present study. It is suggested that a different methodology (e.g., use of grammaticality judgment tests) would be more appropriate than oral spontaneous data in order to elicit more tokens. However, given the fact that some of the speakers included in this study have a very low formal education (and in some cases, none) in Spanish, it would have been impossible to carry out a grammaticality judgment task (or a similar task that participants would have to read in order to judge the set of items). However, we acknowledge that that proposed methodology would strengthen the set of data presented and analysed in the present study. A future study would no doubt benefit of the combination of these two methodologies (i.e., combination of oral spontaneous data with a more controlled grammaticality judgments task) that would allow tapping into the grammatical competence of these speakers of Spanish.

\(^{12}\) We need to point out that Haitian and Arayanos speakers never produced any syntactical constructions where feminine object clitics would have been required. However, that might be a confound of the methodology used, and it needs to be explored further with a different methodology in order to assess whether the lack...
included a clitic and 3% a null object. This data shows a similar use of the null and explicit
objects across the three ethnic groups (Table 4). Therefore, the level of bilingualism had
no appreciable effect upon performance.

On the other hand, the distribution of explicit objects differed as illustrated in
Table 5. Accusatives represent 53% of the sample, datives 44% and nulls 3%. It is impor-
tant to note that the Hs produced more accusative pronouns than datives (68% vs. 28%),
distinguishing them from the other two groups.

The data in Tables 4 and 5 show that among the three groups studied, no marked
linguistic differences exist in the syntactic use of third person clitics. The syntactic
features of clitics, placement and movement\(^\text{13}\) were very similar among interlanguage,
bilingual and monolingual speakers following Spanish syntax 98% of the time. Most
atypical cases were produced by H interlanguage speakers (19, compared to 9 for As
and 5 for Ds). Assuming that Haitian Creole clitics are phonological, while they are
syntactic and morphological in Spanish, that is, clitics represent different linguistic

\(^1\) In the following tables we include both proportions and percentages in relation to the group totality
horizontally and vertically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Object NPs</th>
<th>Null objects</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>138 (96%)</td>
<td>5 (4%)</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(30%)</td>
<td>(33%)</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>130 (96%)</td>
<td>6 (4%)</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(28%)</td>
<td>(40%)</td>
<td>(29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>195 (98%)</td>
<td>4 (2%)</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(42%)</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
<td>(42%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>463 (97%)</td>
<td>15 (3%)</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4
Third person objects: explicit and null, according to the linguistic group\(^1\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
<th>Null</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>98 (68%)</td>
<td>40 (28%)</td>
<td>5 (4%)</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(38%)</td>
<td>(19%)</td>
<td>(33%)</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>74 (54%)</td>
<td>56 (42%)</td>
<td>6 (4%)</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(29%)</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
<td>(40%)</td>
<td>(28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>83 (42%)</td>
<td>112 (56%)</td>
<td>4 (2%)</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(33%)</td>
<td>(54%)</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
<td>(42%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>253 (53%)</td>
<td>210 (44%)</td>
<td>15 (3%)</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5
Distribution of clitics: accusatives, datives and null

\(^{13}\) That is, the syntactic process that implies movement of constituents from a base to a surface position.
properties, the data from this study suggests that H and A speakers acquire the Spanish clitics without major difficulty. We will return to this issue in the discussion section.

It is clear then that Creole speakers produce the Spanish third person clitic (both accusative and dative). This is illustrated in the following examples (11a–d) from the H interlanguage speakers.14

(11) a. Aquí trabajamoh con dó gente. Yo he tiene uno (un empleado) que e’tá jalando alante y doh atráh en la carretilla cuando lo calgamoh (la carretilla) pa’ ilnoh en la playa (Haitian).

‘Here we work with two people. I’ve had one (an employee) that’s pulling’ forward and two behind in the cart, when we carry it (the cart) to go in the beach.’

[Here we work with two people. I’ve had one employee who is pulling and two behind the cart when we carry it to go to the beach.]

b. Eh, de de de la gente que ehtán comprando ahí. Compran saco de batata y coco y habichuela, saco de habichuelas y tú lo calga (los sacos en la carretilla (Haitian).

‘Eh, of of the people that are buying there. They buy sacks of yams, they buy sacks of yam and ... and coconuts and bean, sacks of beans and you carry it (the sacks) in the cart.’

[Regarding the people that buy there, they buy sacks of yams, sacks of coconuts, and beans. Then they carry them in the carts.]

c. Sí. Venden. Venden, una cosita ahí, vaina, pero, pero si tú tienes doh buen pan, doh no se venden pan, venga de allá eh chinola, lo venden ahí, pero cuanto tú lo venden, hay día que tú lo vende tú no pué hacel lo cualto de la comida (Haitian).

‘Yeah. They sell, they sell, a lil’ thing there, but, but, if you have two good loaves of bread, two don’t sell bread, come from over there, eh if they don’t sell there, but when you sell you it; there are day that you sell it then it makes for a quarter of the food.’

---

14 When we examine some of the interviews of Haitian interlanguage speakers, there is a tendency towards the lexical object in contexts in which the clitic would be the ‘favorite’ option, as in the following examples:

I: No, porque ahora yo pol medio de’so ya yo cambié el agua. Ya yo no tomo el agua de la llave … pero no tanto como la del rio. Entonceh yo cambié el agua. Elttoy bebiendo de esa agua del pozo. Pero ahí siempre yo le digo a elloh que hierva su agua porque asi eh mejol todavía (Haitian).

(No, because now I changed the water, through that. I don’t drink water from the tap anymore … but not as much as the one from the river. Then I changed the water. I’m drinking from that well water. But I always tell them to boil the water because it’s better that way).

La: Sí, pero eh fijese. El, él, yo le dije a loh padreh que le enseñaran conmigo, pero tienen razón elloh. La, la niña, eh pasó a quinto y yo no imparto ese grado ya. Entonce él le sirve de compañía poque se van a pie allá a a ehcuela donde la tia mia eh director (Dominican).

(Yes, but look. I told the parents to let me teach them, but they’re right. The girl went on to the fifth grade and I don’t teach that grade anymore. Then he acts as her companion and they walk to school, where my aunt is the director.)

Lb: Ajá, allí van a pie.

(Yes, they walk there)

Lc: Entonseh, yo tengo temor de mandá la niña sola de aqui sola para allá bajo (Haitian).

(Then I am afraid of sending the girl alone from here to down there).
[Yeah. They sell little things there, but if you have two good loaves of bread, two won’t sell. Come back from there if you don’t sell them there, but when you sell them, there are days when you sell and you don’t make a quarter of what it takes to buy food.]

d. E: Si no no puede ir. (Haitian).
‘If they no cannot go.’
[If not, you cannot go.]

e. Si no no puedo í. Tú tiene que tener papel bueno. Tu cédola, tu nacimiento dominicano, cédola dominicano, eso si me lo dan (la cédula) así pa’ imme pa’llà, pero yo no voa (voy a) viví aquí en Haiti. (Haitian).
‘If they no cannot go. You have to have good paper. Your documents, your Dominican birth, Dominican passport they sure give me that (the passport) so that that I can go there, but I not go to live here in Haiti.’ (Haitian).
[If not, I cannot go. You need to have the proper documents; your passport or your Dominican birth certificate. The Dominican passport, they surely give me that so that I can go there; but I’m not going to live here in Haiti.]

In other words, only 2% of the cases show any syntactic problem (12a) and when problems do arise they appear mainly in interlanguage speakers. However, (12a) is more acceptable when we consider that in Spanish the clitic may be attached to the non-finite verb.

(12) a. I: Si tú tienes, si tú mandar (a la hija haitiana) a buscar un chin (poco) de agua, él no te va a saber (entender). Si tú mandar (a la hija haitiana) a buscar la comida, él no te va a saber (entender), cuál. Si tú mandar (al hijo): ‘búscame una camisa’, él no te va ... él no te va a saber (entender) qué cosa ...
‘If you have, if you send her to get a bit of water, he will no know (understand) you. If you send her to get the food, he will no know (understand), which one. If you send him: ‘Get me a shirt’, he will no ... he will no know (understand) what thing ...’
[If you have to; if you send her to get a bit of water, she wouldn’t understand you. If you send her to get the food, she will not know which food. If you tell her: ‘Get me a shirt’, she will not know what ...]

E: ¿No va a saber? ¿Verdad? Él no te va saber.
‘He will no know? Really? He will no know.’
[She wouldn’t understand? Right? He will not understand.]

E: A pues no, si no puedo. No puede.
‘Ah then no, if I can’t. He can’t.’
[Well then no, if I can’t. She can’t.]

I: Si tú le di (dices) a él: ‘traime (tráeme) un poquito de agua’, él no te va a saber (entender). Bueno, tú no puedes ni coger una mujer así para trabajando (trabajar). (Haitian).
‘If you tell to him: ‘bring me a little water’, he will not know (understand). Well, you can’t even hire a woman like that for working.’ (Haitian).
[If you tell her: ‘bring me a bit of water’, she will not understand. Well, you cannot even hire a woman like that to work.]
b. y máh luego cambial-la (cambia el agua) bebiendo(la) del río y máh luego volvé (vuelven) y cámbiala, eh mejor (que) él ... eh tóma-la así y elloh fueran, poh ejemplo decí liviano pa’ pa’ jerber (hervir) su agua, pa’ prepará su agua que va a beber y no fuera na’ entonceh que la familia mía lo hace. Coje agua del pozo y véndela y ehtá lejos el pozo de aquí.

‘... and later change it (the water) drinking it from the river and later returns and changes it, and then returns and changes it, eh better (than) him ... eh drink it like that as if they were, for example, let’s say quick at boiling his water, to prepare water for drinking and it wouldn’t mean anything that my family does it. Take water from the well and sell it and the well is far from here.’ [sic]


‘... I went over there to his house. He was asking me: ‘How are you?’ ‘I am’, I tolded him, ‘I am fine’. Not a penny does he give to me. He come from Puerto Rico yes. He don’t give me not even a penny (one cent).’

[... I went to his house. He asked me, ‘How are you?’ He doesn’t even give me a cent. Yes, he comes from Puerto Rico. He does not even give me a cent.]

d. Ni un chelito. Yo gasta tres mil pesos de seguro. Yo estaba enferma. Yo gasta tres mil pesos de seguro. Fue al papá de él, fui allá en mi casa a rogue (rogar), a, a (él) cuando él llegando. Él no dale ni un chelito a mí, ni un chelito.

‘Not a penny. I spend three thousand pesos on insurance. I was sick. I spend three thousand pesos on insurance. Went to his father, went over there to beg to, to (?) when he arriving. He not give me a penny to me, not a penny.’

[Not a penny. I spent three thousand pesos on insurance because I was sick. I went to his father; I went over there to beg when he arrived. He did not give me a penny, not a single penny.]

The data shows very limited production of null objects as (13a–d): only 3% in the entire data sample and 4% in the interlanguage and bilingual speaker data.

(13) a. I: ¿Dónde aprendió español dominicano?

‘Where did you learn Spanish/Dominican?’

E: En Haití. (Haitian)

‘In Haití.’

I: ¿Con quién?

‘From whom?’

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15 In our data, we did not find errors by the insertion of an extra clitic in preverbal position, that is, clitics that would be doubled by a redundant copy. This type of construction would be ungrammatical in Spanish as both clitic landing sites would be filled.
E: Y con otro que Ø sabe hablando (hablarlo/lo sabe hablar).
‘And with another person that knows talking (speak/that knows how to to speak).’

b. I: ¿Y no le quitan las cosas?
‘Don’t they take things away?’
E: Noh quitan las cosah. No Ø quitan. (Haitian)
‘They take things away. They take.’

c. I: Y cuando vengan para acá, ¿van a aprender dominicano (español)?
‘When you get here, will you learn Dominican?’
E: Sí. Cuando vengan del río van llendo ir con dominicano y haitiano a escuela, entonceh ahí Ø aprenden. (Haitian)
‘Yes. When they come from the river going to go with Dominican and Haitian to school, then there learn.’

d. I: ¿Y ella, quién es?
‘And her, ¿who is she?’
E: Yo no sé. (Arayano)
‘I don’t know.’
I: ¿Quién es (ella)?
‘Who is she?’
E: No Ø conoce. (conozco)
‘I don’t know her.’

The null objects, primarily accusative objects, appear infrequently in all three groups, although more frequent in data obtained from interlanguage and bilingual speakers. This would support the hypothesis that associates null objects with language contact (Yépez, 1986; Lipski, 1994; Paredes, 1996; Choi, 2000). However, null objects were also documented in D monolingual Spanish speakers (14a–c), an aspect that has hardly been studied in Hispanic dialectology (Schwenter, 2006).16

(14) a. Entonce, pue, ello pusieron una persona en el pueto (puesto) mío y me dejaron sin trabajo y tampoco me pagaron lah doh semanah; que el médico me dio ... hay personah que lah pagan, hay compañíah que Ø pagan. (Dominican)
‘Then, well, they assigned a person to my position and left me without a job nor did they pay me the two weeks the doctor gave me ... there are persons that do not pay them (sickdays), there are companies that pay Ø (them).’

b. E: Y la licenciatura, ¿a quién se la requerien?
‘And a MA, to whom do they require it?’

16 In relation to direct null objects we are undertaking an investigation with the objective of documenting quantitatively and qualitatively the linguistic and extra-linguistic factors that condition this phenomenon that has hardly been studied and documented in monolingual varieties of Spanish (Ortiz-López and Guijarro-Fuentes, 2008).
The International Journal of Bilingualism

E: También Ø requieren, bueno no así como obligatorio. (Dominican)
‘Ø (they) also require it, well not like if it was obligatory.’

c. E: ¿Le hubiese guhtado enseñarles (a los hijos) créole, desde pequeño? (Dominican)
‘Would you have liked learning Creole since you were young?’
I: Oh, claro sí. Pero elloh pueden aprender Ø todavía
‘Sure, of course. But they can still learn Ø (it).’

3.2.2
Partial results: Position and movement of clitics

In this section the syntactic and morphological properties of clitics will be described. Table 6 shows that clitic placement varies according to the different groups of speakers.

The data in Table 6 shows a clear tendency to place clitics (accusative and dative) in front of a finite verb independently of the speaker’s knowledge of Spanish (71%). The D monolingual speaker shows the highest rate of this pre-finite verb placement (74%), followed by L2 speakers (71%) and interlanguage speakers (65%). Clitics in post-verbal position are rare (8%), and appear in the corpus as follows:

Table 6
Position of the clitics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>(A)</th>
<th>(B)</th>
<th>(C)</th>
<th>(D)</th>
<th>(E)</th>
<th>(F)</th>
<th>(G)</th>
<th>(H)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (A) _V finite (B) (prep) + Vinf _ (C) _ periphrasis Vinf (D) _ periphrasis + Vndo (E) periphrasis Vinf_ (F) reduplication (G) topicalization (H) others, including null objects.

(15) I: Eh, ¿hablar español, para ti es importante o muy importante?
‘Eh, is speaking Spanish important or very important to you?’
E: Muy impoltante. (Arayano)
‘Very important.’
I: ¿Por qué?
‘Why?’
E: Muy impoltante po’que a mí me gu’ta hablal-loi.
‘Very important because I like to speak it.’

Nevertheless, it is the interlanguage speakers who prefer this position in 13% of its uses and in 47% of the totality of subjects, a little far-off from the bilingual ones (6% and 25%) and the monolingual speakers (5.5% and 29%), respectively. In general, the three linguistic groups use verbal periphrasis very little (15%). As we saw in Spanish, clitics also occur in situations where there are two verbs. When we examine these
positions, we find that these were less frequent than the clitic in preverbal position: with infinitives there was 7%, see examples (16a–c); with gerunds, 3%, see sample (14).

(16) a. pa’ quital colol cuando, si tú quiereh un, si el zapato, ehtá colol. blanco, tú quiereh ponel-lo, negro ... (Haitian)
   ‘... to remove the color when, if you want a, if the shoe is the color white, you want to put it black.’

b. Así le va mal poque si comienzan a bebel-la asi cruda ... (Arayano).
   ‘They’re on the wrong track if they start drinking it raw.’

c. Cuando te lo ... cuando te lo, quitan (el dinero), ello van a come(r)lo, (gastar el dinero en comida) en su casa, a come(r)lo (es) que van ello. (Haitian).
   ‘When they ... when they take it away (the money), they are going to eat it at home, eat it is what they’re going to do.’

(17) Muy importante po’que uno si llega a un sitio una gente ‘tá hablando créole, te comprenden lo, que ‘tá hablando. Cuando si tú, un ejemplo: u’té quiere ir a visita’ a Porto Príncipe, cuando u’té llega hay gente que no sa’ (sabe) habla’ español ni inglé’, pero si hablan créole, uhte entiende lo, que hablan ... (Haitian)
   ‘Its very important because if you arrive at place where a group of people are speaking Creole they understand what you are speaking. For example, if you (formal) want to visit Porto Principe, when you arrive there are people that do not know how to speak Spanish or English, but they do speak Creole, then you understand what they’re saying.’

Five percent were produced in the lowest positions or raised above the main verb to a preverbal position:

(18) Pero fíjate que hay una razón de que yo no lo puedo decir, yo sé de mi en mi sentido como soy de lo que soy poque de ehsaminal en sí mi conciencia polque e la conciencia, el, (la) que habla. (Haitian)
   ‘But notice that there is a reason that I can’t say, I know about myself in my own sense; like that I am what I am because I should examine my own conscience because it is my conscience that speaks.’

Reduplication of accusatives (19a–b) and topicalizations (20a–d) made up only 1.6% of the data set, with very little variation across groups.

(19) a. I: Sí, no va a entender loh otroh niñito o va a ser pasivo.
   ‘Yes, he/she will not understand the other children or they will be passive.’

   E: Dehpué que llega a grande lo (los) aprendeh loh doh (créole y español). (Haitian).
   ‘After he/she grows up, he/she will learn both (Creole and Spanish).’

b. Sí, porque ella ela (era) ‘el tiempo ‘e Trujillo y cuando lo, iban a saca (a) lo’ haitiano, ella nació aquí, entonces’ (a) ella lo, (la) tiran pa’ Haití (Haitian)
   ‘Yes, because it was the period of Trujillo and when they were going to remove him, the Haitians, born here, and then they send him to Haiti.’
(20) a. Sí, de ante me quitan como cincuenta peso, o lo me quitan. La goma de la de la carreta, lo (la pierdo) pielde. (Haitian)

‘Yes, before they charge me like fifty pesos or whatever they charge me. The cart’s wheel loses it.’ [sic]

b. El concreto uno lo busca de un material que vende (?) y (el) cemento uno lo liga. (Arayano)

‘You look for concrete in a material that sells (?) and you mix the cement.’ [sic]

c. yo puedo engañame yo mismo, pero a Dios no lo puedo engañar. (Haitian)

‘I can fool myself but God, no I cannot fool Him.’

d. La casa lo hizo Cristóbal Colón cuando lo taba los esclavo forzando. (Haitian)

‘The house, Christopher Columbus made it when he forced the slaves.’

In other words, the monolingual Dominican variety and the border bilingual variety show a clear preference for the clitic in the pre-finite verb position, followed by verbal periphrasis in infinitive or gerund. The position and the movement of clitics (i.e., accusative and dative) respond to the uses of Spanish grammar independently of the fluency of the speaker. In general, interlanguage and bilingual speakers place clitics before the finite verb, attach it to infinitives and gerunds following Spanish syntax and, without major difficulty, raise the clitics between auxiliaries and infinitives. Although infrequent, interlanguage speakers showed some difficulty with clitic movement (12b–c) and raising (12a). This data correlates positively with the data analysis of Spanish L1 speakers (López Ornat, et al. 1994; Domínguez, 2003), Spanish bilingual children who acquire two languages simultaneously (Ezeizabarrena, 1996) and Spanish L2 speakers (Bruhn de Garavito & Montrul, 1996; Duffield & White, 1999; Montrul, 1999). As in the case of bilingual children and L1 speakers, null direct objects are rare (López Ornat, et al. 1994; Domínguez, 2003). However, marked differences do appear in the morphological acquisition patterns (Table 7), especially the accusative.

Table 7
Grammatical, ungrammatical and null uses in the accusative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Grammatical</th>
<th>Ungrammatical</th>
<th>Null</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>49 (49%)</td>
<td>46 (46%)</td>
<td>4 (4%)</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>49 (64%)</td>
<td>26 (34%)</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>80 (94%)</td>
<td>3 (4%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>178 (68%)</td>
<td>75 (29%)</td>
<td>7 (3%)</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contrary to the placement and movement of clitics, clitic morphology acquisition is a major obstacle for some speakers of Spanish. The H interlanguage speakers and the A bilingual speakers indicate morphological problems 46% and 34% of the time, respectively. The monolingual D speakers hardly present grammatical problems (4%). Table 7 shows marked differences in the linguistic mastery of Spanish and the morphological management of objects, especially the accusative, because of its complexity.
(and/or processing), that is, it could represent gender and number. With regard to the dative clitics, the tendency in this corpus is towards the extension of the third person singular ‘le’ over the plural ‘les’. This behavior responds to the general patterns of all speakers and transcends oral production to its way into the written language (‘LéeleØ) a tus niños’ o ‘DileØ) no a las drogas’, as disseminated in TV commercials sponsored by the Government of Puerto Rico). In varieties in which elision of the /-s/ occurs, as in the monolingual and bilingual varieties in this corpus, it is difficult to determine whether the phenomenon responds to phonetic or morphological reduction. We favor the second hypothesis because the same behavior occurs in dialect varieties in which /-s/ is not elided, of which Puerto Rican Spanish is but one example.

3.2.3
Partial results: Morphological properties

The data supports the hypothesis that morphological traits of the accusative are directly linked to acquisition. Haitian interlanguage speakers show the greatest frequency of non-grammatical tokens (46%) and null objects (4%), followed by the bilingual As (34%). It is important to emphasize that clitics in Creole are reduced forms and that at times the same forms appear (see Table 1) carrying the feature of number but not gender. On the other hand, the acquisition of grammatical features (López Ornat et al., 1994; Domínguez, 2003) and simultaneous bilingualism (Ezeizabarrena, 1996) takes time. Faced with this situation, we explored the ungrammatical cases of clitics to understand the acquisition process.

Table 8 reveals minimal clitic placement/movement. Those that do appear correspond to Hs and a few to the A bilingual speakers. Therefore, ungrammatical cases have to do fundamentally with the morphology of the accusative clitic which is directly associated with linguistic fluency. Interlanguage speakers manifest 61% of the grammatical problems of the accusative in comparison to 36% recorded for bilingual speakers.

**Table 8**
Cases on ungrammatical use in the accusative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Syntax</th>
<th>Morphology</th>
<th>Syntax/morphology</th>
<th>Null</th>
<th>Others*</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
<td>36 (72%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>4 (8%)</td>
<td>5 (10%)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(50%)</td>
<td>(61%)</td>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td>(57%)</td>
<td>(83%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>2 (7%)</td>
<td>23 (85%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(33%)</td>
<td>(39%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(14%)</td>
<td>(17%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>1(20%)</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2 (40%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(17%)</td>
<td>(3%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(29%)</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6 (7%)</td>
<td>61 (74%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>7 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (7%)</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In ‘Others’ we include reduplication, unnecessary clitics, etc.

(21) a. Si señor. Tengo que seguí que trabajan, ehtusiar y trabajando, **loh doh trabajoh** Ø tengo que hacer (hacerlos). (Arayano)

‘Yes, sir. I have to keep working, studying and working, I have to do both jobs.’
b. E: ¿Loh alimentoh? (Arayano)
‘The food?’
I: Ajá.
‘Uh huh.’
E: Bueno arroz, a ver, maí molido. Si señor, maí molido, arroz. Una cosa i que se llama también que elloh lo, (la) observan mucho allá. (Arayano)
‘Well, rice, let’s see, and milled corn. Yes, sir, milled corn and rice. A strange thing that it’s called the same as what they do over there also.’ [sic]
c. I: ¿Y por qué ella se fue a Haití?
‘Why did she leave Haiti?’
E: Bueno, po’que ella, (a) ella i como no tiene la cédula, siempre lo i (la recogen) recogen y lo i (la) mandan pa’ Haití; y (a) ella le gu’tó y se quedó en Haiti para siempre. (Arayano)
‘Well, because she, she doesn’t always have her passport with her and they always pick her up and deport her to Haiti; but she liked it and stayed in Haiti forever.’

Table 9 shows that the H interlanguage speakers and the A bilingual speakers have greater problems in the acquisition of gender morphemes (56% and 70%, respectively). This acquisition pattern may be due to L1 transfer, that is to say, in their L1 clitics do not carry gender. The ungrammatical cases of gender respond to a marked preference for the masculine form ‘lo/los’.

Table 9
Ungrammatical morphology in the accusative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gender/number</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>20 (56%)</td>
<td>14 (39%)</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(55%)</td>
<td>(70%)</td>
<td>(40%)</td>
<td>(59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>16 (70%)</td>
<td>4 (17%)</td>
<td>3 (13%)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(44%)</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>(60%)</td>
<td>(38%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(100%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36 (59%)</td>
<td>20 (33%)</td>
<td>5 (8%)</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(22) a. En una buena condición, uno compra una camisa i así, un (¿), una blusa i así en veinte peso (¿) dehpué tú lo (la) lavas y así mihmo eh que ehtá. (Haitian)
‘In good condition, you buy a shirt like that, a (?) blouse like that for twenty pesos (?) then you wash it and that it the way it is.’
b. Bueno, el dominico, dominico haitiano es un como le ehtaba diciendo simplemente lo que crían aquí eh decil que pol lo menoh no son arrayano y crían aquí pol lo menoh la persona que vive aqui, lo (la) declaran ¿uhté me entiende? Y tiene su documento dominicano. Entonse son dominico-haitiano. (Haitian)
‘Well, the Dominican, Dominican-Haitian is like I was telling you, simply that he/she is raised here. It means that at least they’re not Arayano and they are raised here and at least that person that lives here is declared ... do you understand me? And has his Dominican documents. Then they are Dominican-Haitian.’

c. I: Y ¿no va al mercado ella?
‘And, does she go to the marketplace?’
E: No, ella si yo lo (a ella) mando a bu’cai venga (va), pero si yo no lo mando (a ella) a bucai, ella no venga (viene) pa’ casa. (Arayano)
‘No, she, if I send her to fetch me something and return, but if I do not send her to buy, she doesn’t come (home?).’

d. Un ejemplo, un ‘jemplo, aquí hay una fruta que se llama quenepa, velda, allá en la capital lo (la) llama’ romoncillo (pero) no son iguales (Arayano).
‘An example, an example, here there’s a fruit that’s called ‘quenepa’ (honeyberry), green, over there in the capital they call it romoncillo: they are not the same.’ (Arayano).

e. Y se hace una berenjena; machacá molía en maí lo (la) prepara bien prepara’ o lava’ ito con pe’ca’o.
‘And they make a mashed eggplant milled with corn, you prepare it well, prepared and mixed with fish.’ (Arayano)

f. sin nada, con la ropa de trabajo na’ má y no le dan chance de íl a cobla ‘ni na’ y lo (a los haitianos) mandan así pasando hambre, pasando mucha miseria. (Arayano)
‘without anything, with work clothes only and they don’t even give you a chance to go get paid or anything and they send us like that, going very hungry, to go through much misery.’ (Arayano)

Table 10 and examples (22a–f) show a marked preference for the masculine gender by H interlanguage speakers (90%). Bilingual A speakers show a surprising maintenance of the masculine accusative form (81%). This data strongly supports the view that the masculine singular form of the accusative is represented by the unmarked form and is first to be acquired. This conclusion is also supported by the 1994 López Ornat et al.’s study of child production. Therefore, bilingual speakers in the A cohort show a tendency towards less marked forms in relation to gender, and the tendency increases in relation to number, as shown in Table 11. This tendency towards the absence of agreement is a very marked feature of Andean Spanish (Sánchez, 1999; Camacho & Sánchez, 2002) and also found in other varieties of Spanish (Fernández Ordoñez, 1999). In the case of Andean Spanish, according to Camacho and Sánchez, there is

17 Other linguistic frameworks explain the feature hierarchies for pronouns (e.g., Harley & Ritter, 2002) by referring to the internal morphological structures of clitics or their Feature Geometry, Harley and Ritter proposed that clitics are sequenced according to their structural markedness. Although, it was not our purposes to explore this line of enquiry, our findings seem to indicate tentatively that the structural markedness can be directly reflected by the areal distribution of clitics in non-standard variants of Spanish.
a preference for the masculine singular accusative ‘lo’ over the feminine form in all contexts, independently of whether the word is + or – animate: e.g. lo vi la mesa/I saw the table (see similar structure produced by A subject

(23) I: Y ¿cómo la escucha (la música), grabada?
   ‘And, how do you listen to it (music), recorded?’
E: Sí, le compran la cinta, que (?) y lo [i] pone en la radio aquí. (Arayano).
   ‘Yes, they buy the tape that (?) and puts it on the radio here.’

A marked tendency towards an absolute preference for singular forms explains the ungrammatical data of number. This preference is seen in the majority of cases of the masculine singular third person. Compared to the masculine forms los or the plural

Note: ‘Lo’ compared to ‘los’ (in more than 90% of cases) or ‘la’ compared to ‘las’

It would be worth investigating if the generalization of the masculine singular accusative in interlanguage speakers on the border manifests this kind of generalization. In future work we will examine this phenomenon.

---

Table 10
Ungrammatical gender cases of the accusative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Gender: masculine</th>
<th>Gender: feminine</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(90%) (58%)</td>
<td>(10%) (40%)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>18 (90%) 2 (10%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>13 (81%) 3 (19%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31 (86%) 5 (14%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11
Ungrammatical cases of number in the accusative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Number: singular*</th>
<th>Number: plural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>16 (100%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos</td>
<td>7 (100%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25 (100%)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ‘Lo’ compared to ‘los’ (in more than 90% of cases) or ‘la’ compared to ‘las’
feminine form *las*, the masculine singular appears more than 90% of the time. Also, it is important to note that the omission of /s/, a common feature of Dominican Spanish, could contribute to the generalization of the singular while simultaneously converging with the supremacy of the masculine form (Table 10) to reduce the paradigm to *lo*.

In summary, the results of our data analysis show a clear variation among speakers with respect to the syntactic-morphological features of clitics in Spanish. These differences may respond to different models of variation for Spanish and Creole. Only the social variables of ethnicity and degree of bilingualism seem to influence the different acquisition models. Despite the absence of syntactic errors, morphological errors do occur in the data. These errors, however, may correlate with social variables such as limited use of Spanish for some H interlanguage speakers. The bilingual speakers, on the contrary, through greater contact and more frequent use of Spanish do not present such imperfect models. Major difficulties appeared in the Haitian Creole data, especially tokens corresponding to the acquisition of morphological properties. The data supports the view that acquisition is conditioned to some degree by the level of contact, in addition to factors such as the age when learning L2 begins. To explore these factors in depth requires further research. The following section examines in more detail our main conclusions.

4 General discussion

This research was based upon data collected from 11 informants of different ethnic origins. Three questions guided this study. The first question focused on the acquisition of Spanish clitic pronouns across the groups to determine if there were significant differences between them. The results of the data analysis revealed significant differences in the properties of their grammars. These differences suggest L1 interference (e.g. strict SVO order and lack of gender marking). The major differences appear in speakers of the interlanguage and mainly in relation to agreement (morphological) and, to a lesser extent, to syntax (placement).

In the light of these results, we argue that Creole speakers with Spanish as an interlanguage do not converge with monolingual speakers in morph-syntactic properties of the object pronouns (i.e., clitics) or they simply show an ‘incomplete grammar’ acquired through contact or cohabitation. We should not ignore the fact that Spanish in contact with Haitian Creole may be experiencing a change through contact. We must point out that many reduction and generalization processes are associated with learning strategies and to imperfect language acquisition (Appel and Muysken, 1987, p.20). We must also recall that the informants in this study overuse the masculine gender and singular forms; these forms could be considered less marked and also generalized in other contexts of Spanish acquisition (L1, L2 and bilingualism).

As a response to our second question on whether syntactical and morphological features were learned independently, clear differences appeared between speakers along the variable of linguistic fluency. Syntactical properties seem to be learned with greater ease than morphological ones. In general, the data examined shows that Spanish L2 speakers, as well as bilingual speakers, learn the syntactical properties of clitics without
major difficulty. These analyses support results found in other investigations in Spanish L1, in simultaneous bilingualism, as well as in Spanish L2. This finding is significant in light of the fact that we are looking at two typologically different languages (Spanish and Haitian Creole). As mentioned throughout this article, Spanish clitics are of the syntactical type (placement and movement). Creole clitics do not move, therefore raising is blocked. The placement/movement of clitics in Spanish interlanguage is acquired without the speakers facing any major obstacles and independently of the L1 properties. This explains why a direct transfer of properties is not produced. In a subsequent study, these tendencies should be more deeply explored using a variationist perspective. For the moment, the results analyzed here support the hypothesis that syntactical properties are not favorable to permeability when compared to other pragmatic-discursive properties as defined by Silva-Corvalán (1993) and Ocampo and Klee (1995), among others. It is very difficult to limit the effects of one language upon another in a contact situation, especially at the syntactic level as has been our focus in this study. The urgent need for communication between speakers of different languages in contact may determine in great measure the features of its interlanguage as the findings of this study strongly indicate. The acquisition model developed in this study is of great relevance since both languages – Spanish and Creole – are typologically different.

Silva-Corvalán (1990, p.64) defines syntactic convergence as: ‘[...] the achievement of structural similarity in a given aspect of the grammar of two or more languages, assumed to be different at the onset of contact’. Our results can also be explained using the Thomason and Kaufman interference scale (Thomason & Kaufman, 1988; Thomason, 2001). This interference or transfer scale engages with the level of intensity of contact: the greater the level of contact the greater the level of interference. In cases of sporadic contact, that is minor level of contact, syntactic linguistic features are not transferable. However, as the level of contact increases, and if bilingualism is favored due to a positive attitude towards the target language, the linguistic features would be more transferable (Thomason, 2001, p.70). In particular, the syntactic properties of clitics may be observed in the possibility of attaching or not to infinitives, as in contexts where they are raised and appear in a preverbal position.

In that regard, our main findings lead to another question that would have implications for the study of clitic pronouns in Haitian Creole. It is to be noted that in the literature there are two clear positions regarding the status of clitics in Haitian Creole, that is, whether they are syntactical (DeGraff, 1990, 1993) or phonological (Lefebvre, 1998). Haitian Creole is a language with very strict word SVO order as shown in (24a–b), (25a–c) and (26a–c): there is no clitic raising as in Spanish (see section 2 and the examples given thereof for Spanish); likewise, Haitian Creole does not allow omission of definite direct objects (25d), although it does allow object drop when it is an indefinite as shown in (26c).

   Juan ANT entregar María libro el.
   ‘John gave the book to Mary.’

b. Jan te bay Mari liv la.
   Juan ANT entregar María libro el.
   ‘John gave to Mary.’
(25) a. Ou te achte \textit{liv yo} pou klas la?
   (Tú) ANT comprar libros los de clase la?
   ‘Did you buy the textbooks?’
b. Wi, mwen te achte \textit{liv yo} pou klas la.
   Sí, (yo) ANT comprar libros los de clase la.
   ‘Yes, I bought the textbooks.’
c. Wi, mwen te achte \textit{yo} \textit{(liv yo)}.
   Sí, (yo) ANT comprar los.
   Yes, (I) bought los-CL-DO.
   ‘Yes, I bought them.’
d. *Wi mwen te achte \textit{Ø}.
   *Sí, (yo) ANT comprar \textit{Ø}.
   *Sí, compré.
   ‘*Yes, I bought.’

(26) a. Ou te achte \textit{liv} pandan vwayaj la?
   ¿(Tú) ANT comprar libros en viaje el?
   ¿Compraste libros en el viaje?
   ‘Did you buy the traveling books?’
b. Wi, mwen te achte \textit{liv} pandan vwayaj la.
   Sí, (yo) ANT comprar libros en viaje el.
   Sí, compré libros en el viaje.’
   ‘Yes, I bought the books during the trip.’
c. Wi, mwen te achte \textit{Ø}.
   Sí, (yo) Ant comprar.
   Sí, compré.
   ‘Yes, I bought (some).’
d. *Wi, mwen te achte \textit{yo}.
   *Sí, (yo) ANT comprar los.
   *Sí, los compré.
   ‘*Yes, (I) them bought.’

So thus, what we have found in the course of this investigation is that syntactical properties of Spanish clitics can be acquired even by L2 Haitian speakers of Spanish, even though agreement/morphological properties associated with them cannot. These findings have potential significant importance for Second Language Acquisition theories, but more importantly for the two main positions as to whether Haitian clitics are syntactical in nature or not. If we were to assume that Haitian Creole clitics are phonological following Lefebvre’s analysis (1998), we would then assume that L2 Haitian Creole speakers of Spanish would have to acquire a syntactical feature which is not available (represented)
in our participants’ first language (Haitian Creole). In that respect, some L2 researchers have argued that access to UG (or parameter resetting), and in particular, acquisition of features that are absent in their mother tongue, would decay after the offset of the critical period (Hawkins & Chan, 1997; Tsimpli, 2003; Hawkins & Hattori, 2006, among others). Overall however, our findings, do not support those claims about the nature of L2 competence in older learners. However, if we were to assume that Haitian Creole clitics are syntactical (DeGraff, 1990, 1993), the acquisition of the syntactical properties of Spanish clitics by L2 Haitian Creole would not be an insurmountable barrier as our results seem to indicate. That is, our participants seem to have a robust knowledge of syntactical constraints because they are transferring them from Haitian Creole. These insights are solely tentative and need to be verified with the help of more linguistic data with more participants and with the use of other elicitation tasks.

Furthermore, this research has shown that null objects are scarce in the production of interlanguage and bilingual speakers. These findings are supported by Spanish L1 research (Fujino & Sano, 2000; Reglero & Ticio, 2003). However, monolingual speakers, simultaneous bilinguals and adults face obstacles in the acquisition of morphological features of objects, particularly the Spanish accusative. This research found problems associated with the acquisition of morphological properties of the third person clitics, primarily of gender and to a lesser extent of number, in both bilingual and interlanguage speakers. These findings support the hypothesis that morphological properties, mostly gender, are acquired later in L2, as well as in L1 (López Ornat et al., 1994; Domínguez, 2003). The absence of gender markers in Haitian Creole may contribute to the generalized masculine singular form lo.

Along these same lines several hypotheses have been proposed in the acquisition of Second Languages. Lardiere (1998a, 1998b, 2005) and Prevóst and White (2000) postulate that there is a disassociation between syntactic and morphological properties (Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis). These researchers claim that the grammar of L2 learners have abstract categories and their features and attribute problems of convergence to difficulty in matching those abstract features at a superficial morphological level. These researchers maintain that morphological properties could constitute a handicap for learners if these properties create processing problems. In this respect, our results clearly indicated that the population of speakers of Spanish tested has knowledge of the syntactic implications of the clitic distinction. That is, clitics are always positioned in the correct positions. We did not find any examples in the data of object clitics placed in the canonical direct object position (contra Liceras, 1985; Eisenclhas, 1994). This fact clearly demonstrates that our participants have mastered the syntactical properties of clitics in Spanish. However, as shown in some of the examples given in the result section, the morphological properties associated with clitics are not acquired fully. Therefore, we tentatively claim that the acquisition of morpho-lexical properties of the clitics does not go hand in hand with the mastery of their syntactic properties.19

19 Although, one of the reviewers suggested that we should explore further the issue of whether the acquisition of target-like word order correlates with target-like morphological accuracy following Lardiere’s and Prevóst and White’s work, we had not intended to resolve this issue and making claims on whether morphological accuracy is necessary or must correlate for word order (à la syntax-before-morphology position presented in the main text). That would constitute a different paper which we leave for future research.
5 Conclusion

When the findings of this study are compared to other studies involving three acquisition models (L1, simultaneous bilingualism and L2) it must be concluded that syntactic properties associated with clitics, such as placement/movement, are acquired without major difficulty. It is the morphological properties of clitics, primarily the accusative, that present an obstacle to learning. In other words, children who are monolingual or bilingual, as well as adults with Spanish as L2, generally seem to converge in the properties of the Spanish grammar of an adult speaker following the models established by Universal Grammar (UG) and the specific properties of Spanish. Namely, Universal Grammar can thus been seen as guiding the L2 Haitian and Arayanos speakers of Spanish towards the adult target language grammar (i.e., Spanish). The results have also shown that there is not a complete convergence between the L2 speakers of Spanish and the target adult grammar. Nevertheless, this study shows that Haitian speakers and adult bilingual Arayanos who live in contact with the language can acquire these patterns despite typological differences in the contact languages (Spanish and Creole).

As indicated in several parts of this paper, there is scope for further research that would include a large number of participants using a combination of different elicitation techniques. At the conceptual level, other functional categories related to clitics (Uriagereka, 1995) should be included in the corpus, such as determiners. This would allow a more thorough investigation of the lack of agreement observed in this study to see if they occur in nominal phrases structures and more concretely between determiner and noun. It would be equally important to investigate the omission of clitics. We recommend that the relationship between acquisition and the properties associated with the null subject (Chomsky, 1981) be included in the study of clitics in light of the fact that recent theoretical proposals within the framework of generative grammar have recognized that the existence or absence of syntactic clitics is related to the way the particular language represents properties associated with the null subject parameter (Jaeggli, 1984; Hulk, 1986; Roberge, 1990; Law, 1992).

References


