Spanish as L2 on the Dominican/Haitian Border and Universal Processes of Acquisition*

Luis A. Ortiz López

Introduction

Recently, the Spanish language has come to figure prominently, in the debate over economic globalization (Del Valle and Gabriel-Scheiman, 2004). This has led to a reconceptualization and reevaluation of the traditional symbolic value of Spanish and other languages as an ethno-cultural instrument serving to ‘bond’ and ‘unify’ peoples in addition to their linguistic value as means of communication. In today’s globalized world, Spanish is a marketable product which generates economic capital. This new economic dimension is becoming increasingly important in contexts where Spanish is in contact with other languages, as, for example, in the USA (Zentella, 2000). This instrumental value of Spanish has contributed to the development of a variety of degrees of bilingualism in different speech communities, not only amongst Spanish speakers, but also amongst other groups, for example, amongst students in universities in the USA and elsewhere in the world. The majority of studies which examine the role of Spanish in a global era have thus far focused on the role of Spanish in contact with English in the USA, although more recently there have been a number of works about the political and commercial pressures brought to bear by external agents on global speakers or ‘users’ of Spanish (Del Valle and Gabriel-Scheiman, 2004; Del Valle, 2004; Lacorte, forthcoming). The majority of these works either analyse the possible loss of Spanish in Latino communities in the USA on account of historical, political and socioeconomic factors; or examine attitudes towards Spanish not only on the part of the English-speaking majority but also by the groups which make up the ‘Hispanic community’; or, finally, cast a critical eye over the selection and promotion of given standard varieties to be taught in a particular academic context (Ortiz López and Lacorte, 2005c).

Although the border region between the Dominican Republic and Haiti is at the margins of the global economy, it is not exempt from these sociolinguistic trends. Dominicans, in their invariably coerced encounters with the other, have hammered out a variety of types of contact which imply that it is almost always the Haitian who adopts the language and the culture of their host country, for, like all foreigners, they are impelled to do so for their own economic survival. Here Spanish, in its various forms, becomes the instrumental language as can be seen from the extracts below taken from interviews with two Haitians, interviews which reflect in what typically occurs in contexts of migration:

11 Poque si uno chit aqui, obligatamente hay que sabel el dominicano poque si, no como tú, como tú puedes buscar comida y si una persona te necesita un favet de ti, tú no entiendes nada, como quiera obligatamente hay que hablar. (H/M/25)

(Because if you’re here, you must speak Dominican Spanish because, if not, how are you going to go out and get food and if someone needs you to do them a favour, you don’t understand a thing, you just must speak it.)

12 Con, cuando una, una persona dominicano quiere comprá yo habló dominicano con él. Y por eso sabe más. Habla más ofite ... Sí. Viene mucha gente que viene aquí y sabe hablar, no sabe hablar bien, pero un chin. (H/M/19)

(When a Dominican wants to buy something I speak Dominican Spanish with him. And then he finds out more. I speak more, you see, I do. A lot of people come and sell here and can speak Spanish, they can’t speak it well, but a bit.)

Linguistic studies of contact between Spanish and other languages in the Americas were relatively rare until the end of the twentieth century. Those works that have appeared have focused mainly on contacts between Spanish and indigenous languages (Zimmermann, 1995; Silva Corvalán, 1995; Klee, 1996; Sánchez, 2003) as well as between Spanish and English, chiefly amongst Hispanics in the United States.
(Silva Corvalán, 1994; Torres Caucoullos, 2000), and have neglected other sites of language contact, notably the Caribbean (see also, for example, Díaz et al., 2002). In the Caribbean, a number of ethno-linguistic groups have lived together for extended periods of time and, although there have not been prolonged periods of stable bilingualism, as has been the case in other parts of the Americas, linguistic traces of mutual influence have been left in the languages which have been in contact. In the Caribbean many languages coexist — varieties of Spanish, English and French are spoken among a number of Creole languages which are a product of contact from the sixteenth century onwards between the lexicifying languages (Spanish, Portuguese, French, English and Dutch), and African languages spoken by slaves. This multilingualism, as well as the extra-linguistic factors which have contributed to its existence, are the subject of important current research, including that which focuses on the role played by metropolitan languages in the global economy (see Freeland, this volume). The origins and development of the different varieties of creole in contexts such as these, is just one factor which has helped to fuel the debate over the genesis of the varieties of Spanish spoken in the region. Nonetheless, apart from instances of Afro-hispanic linguistic contact in the Caribbean which have been the focus of research since the end of the twentieth century, there has been little research into the significant and growing contact between Hispanic groups and non-Hispanic groups in the region. For example, Haitians are to be found in the south-east of Cuba and along the border between Haiti and Santo Domingo, cocolos (English-speaking immigrants) in the Dominican Republic and in Cuba, Dominicans and immigrants from the Lesser Antilles in Puerto Rico (Rio Piedras and Santurce). Within this context it is particularly surprising, indeed quite astounding, how little attention has been devoted to ethno-sociolinguistic contact between Haitians and Dominicans on the border dividing Hispaniola into the Dominican Republic and the republic of Haiti. To date, there have been no synchronic studies of the ethno-linguistic situation of this particular speech community, known as La Rayana and made up of the border provinces of Pedernales, Independencia, Elías Piña and Duajabón (see Map 7.1 in the Methodology section), and extending to other areas of the country, including the historic Dominican bateyes (sugar plantations), inhabited by Haitians and their descendants.

Given the absence of studies in this area, I have chosen to carry out an ethno-linguistic study3 — from the theoretical perspective of languages in contact (Thomason and Kaufman, 1988; Silva Corvalán, 1994; Lass, 1997; De Graff, 1999, in press; Winford, 2003) — into the speech community which resides along the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic focusing particularly on the variety of Spanish spoken by Haitians and their descendants in the Dominican Republic. In a previous work on the Spanish spoken as L2 by Haitians, both in the East of Cuba (Ortiz López, 1999a, 1999b, 2001b), and on the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic (Ortiz López, 2001a, 2004, 2005a), I have carried out a qualitative study of certain aspects of the noun and verb systems of both speech communities.

On this occasion, I shall carry out a quantitative study of the use of the infinitive (see 1–4 below), from the perspective of languages in contact, paying special attention to the acquisition of L2, in a sample of Haitians and people of Haitian ancestry in the Dominican Republic.

1. *Cómo te preguntar (preguntas) cualquier cosa que tú te venga a la mente.* (M39, Haitian, Pedernales)
2. *Aquí no hay vida, no vale una bocai (que busque uno) trabajo.* (M36, Haitian, Pedernales)
3. *¿Y para (por) un vehículo así, ¿(en) cuanto uno alquilar? (lo alquila).* (F15, Aranyana, bilingual, Pedernales)
4. *Sembrar (siembras) la habichuela y trabajo en sembrar (d) guineo y café.* Y *sube (sube) aquí cada rato, no sube (sube) todo, todo el tiempo.* (M30, Dominican-Haitian, Pedernales)

My principal aim is to study the role of certain linguistic variables including the semantic class of the verb, the presence or absence of subject pronouns, adverbial reference, as well as extra-linguistic factors such as ethnic group, in the use of these elements of the verbal system. In particular, I address the question of why these and other phenomena, such as the invariant third person (see 5–8 below) appear to behave like second language acquisition universals in situations of language contact.

5. *Yo había en dominicano con ella, alguna vez yo había en haitiano.* Si lo *dó muchachó chiqui (et) ci cri (se crió) con dominicano no yo había en haitiano.* (M60, Haitian, Pedernales)
6. *Tiene (tengo) brentise año.* (M36, Haitian, Pedernales)
7. *Yo no sube porque me quemó el raciñiento (el acta de racionamiento). No *tengo otro poque yo cuando que yo, ya que yo lo hace señorillo yo me coge pa Santo Domingo con mi esposa y cuando viene me luya mi mundo y mi papá se mueren.* (FSS, Haitian, Pedernales)
8. *Yo casi no come carne.* (FSS, Haitian, Pedernales)
These phenomena have been identified, and reproduced in literary texts, in **brazil**, the Spanish spoken by Africans and their descendants in the Greater Antilles (Lipski, 1999, 2005; Ortiz López, 1998), as well as for speakers of Spanish as a second language (Ortiz López, 1999a, 2001a, 2001b). In this study, I provide data from yet another contact speech community in support of the thesis that speakers pass through a number of stages before they acquire a given target language and that, during these stages, they follow universal processes of language acquisition which override other variables, such as, for example, the linguistic typology of the language in question, the age of speakers when they first come into contact with L2, ethnic group and degree of bilingualism. I also attempt to identify those semantic, syntactic and pragmatic factors which may cause certain linguistic structures—for example, the infinitive, the third person and the gerund—to be utilized universally in the course of second-language acquisition, with particular reference to Spanish as L2. Before going on to discuss the results, I wish to position this study within the field of second-language acquisition.

**Theoretical framework**

This work situates itself within the study of languages in contact, and in particular the study of the processes of L2 acquisition in contexts where there are differing degrees of bilingualism, specifically on the DH border. Situations of sociolinguistic contact are very favourable to language change, whether through lexical borrowing, linguistic transfer between one system and another or through the generation of linguistic innovation brought about by the proximity of the two systems. This type of linguistic change has been the subject of theoretical investigation into whether it is the result of universal linguistic processes, influence from L1, influence from L2 or some combination of these factors.

Universalist positions are supported by the general trends in linguistic theory over past 50 years (Chomsky, 1986, 1993). The last five decades have been of considerable importance for linguistic theory, as they have ushered in a new paradigm in the ways of conceptualizing and researching language. The (Ex)ternal approach, based on the theories first of the neo-grammarians, and later of the structuralists, who explained language variation and change from an extra-linguistic perspective, that is, by factors external to the language itself, has been superseded by an (Int)ernal approach to language. This new model, based on largely on the work of Noam Chomsky, sees languages as an ‘element of the mind of the person who knows the language, acquired by the learner, and used by the speaker-hearer’ (Chomsky, 1986: 22). This approach sees human language as a part of the innate human capacity to process language which transcends all elements of social context.

Starting from this view of language, one of the main aims of linguistics at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the current one has been to create a grammatical model of the linguistic competence or internalized knowledge of the language (L1) held by a speaker/listener, as well as the principles which govern this competence. Chomsky (1986: 3) argues that language and how it is used is dependent on intra-linguistic factors which are part of the human mind and which follow universal processes:

those aspects of form and meaning that are determined by language faculty, which is understood to be a particular component of the human mind. The nature of this faculty is the subject matter of a general theory of linguistic structure that aims to discover the framework of principles and elements common to all human languages; this theory is now often called *universal grammar* (UG).

Within this view of language, UG ‘may be regarded as a characterization of genetically-determined language faculty’ (1986: 3). Consequently, this theory seeks to establish a model of how grammars are constituted, or, more precisely, of the language universals which make up these grammars which then capture the regularities in these grammars, which reflect our linguistic competence, rather than describing languages or collating superficial details about these languages (Chomsky, 1986, 1993). This approach, which transcends both linguistic and socio-cultural specificities of natural languages, has played an increasingly important role in the study of bilingualism, of second-language acquisition, and of Creole genesis.

Within this theoretical framework, language acquisition involves the setting of binary parameters to conform to those settings that typify the target language (Chomsky, 1986). It is assumed that the universal principles that apply uniformly to all languages are sufficiently restrictive for Primary Linguistic Data (PLD) to be all that is required to set the values of the parameters for a particular language (Chomsky, 1995: 87). In acquisition studies there has been considerable debate over the role of the innate principles of UG on the one hand, and that of external stimulus on the other. In the case of adults learning a second language, the debate revolves around whether they use the Principles and Parameters (P&P) of Universal Grammar (UG) to the same extent as children acquiring
there is a close relationship between the natural learning of varieties of L2 and the processes of pidginization and creolization, for in both processes there is evidence of universal processes such as 'bootstrapping' (Bates and Goodman, 2000).

Levin and Rappaport-Hovav (1995) have pointed to a causal link between certain semantic functions and certain syntactic expressions, which supports the idea that the semantic class of the verb determines the syntactic structure of the utterance. When the morphosyntactic properties of the verb such as TMA inflection are not acquired, then it is the role of the semantic class of the verb to mark those absent or missing syntactic features. If it is true that the acquisition of the grammar of a language, whether it be L1 or L2, depends on the development of the lexicon, then it follows that there are common processes and universal trends in language acquisition that come into play in all situations of language contact.

During the stages of pidginization and creolization involving Ibero-Romance languages and other European languages, TMA inflection processes are crossed and even lost, as can be seen in the case of boozal (Lipski, 1998, 2005; Ortiz López, 1998, 2005b). These processes are not dissimilar to the strategies employed by adults when acquiring a second language. DeGraff (1999, 2005) notes that inflectional reduction appears even more dramatic in the variants of L2 that develop in situations where language contact is not friendly, that is where it occurs under pressure and allows limited access to the native language. A case in point is the use of the informal by informants who have Spanish as L2, specifically the varieties of Spanish used by Haitians and their descendants living on the Dominican side of the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Methodology

Area of the study

The borderland which is the focus of this study lies between two sovereign nations, Haiti and the Dominican Republic. These two nations are divided essentially by language and culture due, in the view of Castor (1987: 15), to historical events which shaped the internal structure of each nation, determining the nature of settlements, development, and the social, economic, cultural and ideological makeup of each. These two nations have been in constant geographic, political, ethnic and linguistic conflict for more than four centuries. They are two nations which have experienced continuous migratory flows. The emigration of
Haitians to the Dominican Republic which originated with the need for Haitian labourers on the sugar plantations, known as bateyes, has continued unabated up until the present day with Haitians now working in the construction industry, agriculture and as domestic help. The greatest concentration of Haitians in the DR is in the borderlands, a region otherwise referred to as La Raya. La Raya is home to various emigrant communities including: (1) the congó, recently arrived Haitians who do not speak Spanish; (2) the viejo, migrants who have lived in the Dominican Republic for a considerable length of time, but who have retained strong links with Haiti and who, consequently, have resisted cultural and linguistic assimilation; (3) the DH, a Dominican of Haitian descent, who was born in the Dominican Republic and who is generally bilingual to a certain extent, and (4) the rayano or arayano, who is of mixed Haitian and Dominican ancestry, was born in the Dominican Republic and is almost always bilingual. The further away from the border you go, the more hostile and conflictual are the relationships between Haitians and Dominicans. Alongside the strong rejection of Haitians on racial grounds, language proves an additional barrier; with Haitians being compelled to acquire Spanish in a context marked by linguistic stress and pressure. In spite of the fact that on the border these groups live together with a degree of harmony (albeit with inequalities) which involves various degrees of language contact, away from the border there is increasing discrimination and rejection of ethnolinguistic contact. Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent are integrated to differing degrees into Dominican society and culture and this has implications relating to language use, language loyalty, linguistic attitudes and beliefs, as well as to the maintenance or loss of the heritage language.

In the border area two languages coexist which are typologically different: on the Eastern side of the border there is Dominican Spanish and on the Western side, Haitian Creole. The area is characterized by socioeconomic contact. Language has not been exempt from this cultural encounter, and since the last century there has been talk, but no direct evidence, of the biculturalism and bilingualism of the arayanos (border inhabitants). There are many social variables which could be responsible for this cultural and linguistic mix: geographical location, immigration, the population of Haitian origin who reside legally in the Dominican Republic, family ties, commerce, agricultural labour, church attendance, and so on. It was the lack of ethnolinguistic studies of contact in the region which led me to carry out fieldwork in La Raya over the summers of 1998 and 1999.

Sample and methodology

This study forms part of a fieldwork project which I am carrying out in the four provinces along the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic: Pedernales, Elías Piña, Independencia and Dajabón (Map 7.1). In this study, I used both participant observation and recordings of conversational speech from a random selection of informants to examine the linguistic behaviour of the members of the border speech community. The data presented in this work were collected from four groups of informants (Table 7.1), subdivided by ethnicity, whom I recorded during

![Map 7.1 The border area between the Dominican Republic and Haiti](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Language proficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians (H)</td>
<td>1 F</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>15-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 M</td>
<td>(3) + 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual: Creole L1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed Spanish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican-Haitians (DH)</td>
<td>(1) M</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>15-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>15-25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) + 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual: Creole L1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish L2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arayanos (AY)</td>
<td>(2) M</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>30-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual: Creole L1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish L1 or L2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans (D)</td>
<td>(2) F</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>15-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) + 30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual Spanish L1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sessions of spontaneous and semi-spontaneous conversation that lasted between 20 and 40 minutes.

The Hs have lived for between five and thirty years on the border in La Raya and their dominant language is Haitian Creole; they speak Spanish with varying degrees of proficiency, but mainly speak it as an interlanguage. The DFs are Haitians who were born in the Dominican Republic; they are strongly attached to Haitian culture, but have had significant exposure to Dominican culture and are bilingual to varying degrees, although Creole is the language of the home. The AYs are ethnically mixed and have experienced strong contact with both Spanish and Haitian Creole since childhood, through a Dominican father and a Haitian mother. They form the group of most balanced bilinguals in La Raya. In addition to this sample, I included four monolingual Ds who speak a Dominican variety Spanish and who live on the border, as a control group.

Interviews were carried out in a variety of contexts: in homes, on the road, on farmsteads, in grocery stores, and so on. The main topics of conversation revolved around the history of the border and what things are like now, the relationships between Dominicans and Haitians, lifestyles, working practices and how both nations get on with each other. These topics proved extremely interesting and stimulating and the informants took every opportunity to describe and denounce the subhuman conditions that Haitians and their descendants are forced to endure. After transcribing the 16 interviews, I identified the verb forms (both standard and non-standard), codified the data according to the linguistic and extra-linguistic variables selected and ran the findings through an SPSS program to identify correlations between variables.

The system of Haitian Creole (HC)

As Lefebvre (1998: 112) shows, in HC the mark of past time (past or present perfect) is te, that of unmarked past (definite imperfective or future) or the subjunctive is ap, a-va, poa (21, 22, 24 and 25 respectively), that of the imperfect or uncompleted action (habitual or imperfective) is ap (19 and 20):

- te marks past time/perfectivity (+ punctual/+perfective a aorist/+ -
  dynamic(16-18):
- ap marks imperfectivity (+ habitual/+/simultaneous/ +dynamism (19-22):

In HC (12), as in other varieties of Ibero-romance creole, for instance palenquero (13-14) and papiamento (15), the SV is marked by a preverbal particle + an invariant verb in the infinitive:

12 Dye pou proteje ou (Lefebvre 1998: 120) Haitian Creole
   God SUB protect you
13 i tá kuñé (I am eating) (Dieck 2000: 89) (S) palenquero
   bo tá min-a-n'é ele nu?
   (Are you) not seeing her?
14 Suto a ten kanatulé (Dieck 2000: 21) palenquero
   (We are hungry.)
15 E ta papy a (papiamento)
   He IMP to speak
   (He speaks.)
16 E ta papy a (papiamento)
   He IMP to speak
   (He is speaking.)

In all these examples, the preverbal particles contain the TMA information.

The verbal system of creoles

Haitian Creole (HC) follows the verbal patterns of languages from the West African substrate (not Bantu). For example the TMA system of HC is closer to Fonbge (9-10), a substrate language, than it is to French, the lexifier (Lefebvre, 1998: 111) which follows the morphosyntactic patterns of Romance languages, as in 11 below.

9 Mari ka tün Jan (Lefebvre 1998: 117) Fonbge
   Marie ANT know Jan.
   (Mary knew John or Mary had known John.)
10 Mi ni du. (Lefebvre 1998: 119) Fonbge
   You (p) SUB eat.
   (You must eat.)
11 Jean va manger. (Lefebvre 1998: 113) French
   (John will eat (in the near future),)
affixation alongside auxiliaries. Nonetheless, both systems employ the properties of tense (= punctual, simultaneous, succession), of aspect (= perfective/antist, imperfective, neutral or unreal) and mood (= stative, dynamic, telic, atelic, etc.).

Analysis

In situations of language contact, it is the verbal system which experiences the greatest amount of change throughout the process of acquisition of a contact language. There is evidence for this in the different stages of acquisition. According to Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 157), a process of language accommodation appears to take place in learners who attempt to learn the dominant language by 'accommodating' the L2 to their own language. Various factors come into play in this accommodation process, including access both to L1 and to L2, the typological distance between L1 and L2, the motivation to learn the language and the natural tendency towards unmarked universal forms, especially where differences between the two languages most pronounced.

As we shall see, the Spanish verbal system of speakers dwelling on the border displays different degrees of L2 acquisition. In principle, there are differences between the two groups of speakers who are most distant from each other: Hs vs DHs, AYs and As. The first group of Hs have learnt a variety of Spanish which has been affected by many of the processes we mentioned previously. There is, on the one hand, the use of an interlanguage among recent arrivals and among those who, despite having lived in the Dominican Republic for a considerable period of time, have remained on the margins of the dominant culture for a variety of reasons including the ethnic discrimination they have been subjected to, the age they were when they emigrated (the 'critical period' according to Krashen, 1973-74), isolation in rural areas which frequently have been abandoned by the Dominicans themselves, linguistic loyalty towards HC as the mother tongue, etc. And there also is the learning of Spanish as L2, basically amongst those who have overcome barriers of this nature and created a space for themselves amongst the Dominican community. Conversely, amongst Dominicans of Haitian descent there is evidence of the acquisition of the grammar of Dominican Spanish with few traces of creole; although we do find some informalists who, having remained, along with other older members of their family, isolated in marginal, rural, agricultural communities, acquire, along with creole, an interlanguage or approximate system of Spanish. Many of these inhabitants display a range of mastery of the
The verbal system going from the extended use of infinitives and progressives to the generalization of the third-person singular as an unmarked form and the use of the local variety of Dominican Spanish.

The 16 interviews provided a corpus of 2,310 verb forms, of which 1,906 corresponded to the group of Haitians and their descendants (Table 7.2). Of these, 1,648 (86%) were grammatical and 258 (14%) non-standard. These data place the informants on the continuum of acquisition of the Spanish verbal paradigm, where the HS, as was expected, make up the group which is farthest from the Dominican Spanish system with 17% of non-standard forms, followed by the DHs with 12% and the AVs with 11%. These figures are significantly different from those for the sample of Dominicans with Spanish as LI, who account for barely 3% of non-standard forms.

For the purposes of this study, I will focus on the non-standard forms of the verb. Of these, 217 (84%) relate to three specific phenomena: non-standard use of the infinitive, the third person of the verb and the gerund (Table 7.3). The patterns of use of these three features enabled me to investigate the processes of language acquisition, specifically in relation to the verbal system, within the La Baya speech community.

**Infinitives**

As can be seen in Table 7.3, it is the HS who use these forms with greatest frequency (49%). Furthermore, this group shows a particularly frequent use of the infinitive (84%), as shown below in examples 26-29.

**Table 7.2** Corpus of verbs, according to ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>standard (%)</th>
<th>non-standard (%)</th>
<th>Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>653 (83%)</td>
<td>130 (17%)</td>
<td>783 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican-Haitians</td>
<td>312 (88%)</td>
<td>43 (12%)</td>
<td>355 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aryanos</td>
<td>685 (89%)</td>
<td>85 (11%)</td>
<td>770 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1648 (80%)</td>
<td>258 (14%)</td>
<td>1906 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>392 (97%)</td>
<td>12 (3%)</td>
<td>404 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26 ¡Es mucho yo llevó a Haití! (H, M36, Pedernales)
27 No siempre yo llevaro para allá porque yo, ese es un pobrecito. (H, M36, Pedernales)

**Table 7.3** Use of the infinitive, the third person of the verb and the gerund, according to ethnic group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Infinitive %</th>
<th>3rd person of the verb %</th>
<th>Gerund %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Haitians</td>
<td>21 (20%)</td>
<td>59 (55%)</td>
<td>27 (25%)</td>
<td>107 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican-Haitians</td>
<td>3 (7%)</td>
<td>31 (70%)</td>
<td>6 (15%)</td>
<td>40 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aryanos</td>
<td>1 (40%)</td>
<td>67 (95%)</td>
<td>2 (102%)</td>
<td>70 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25 (12%)</td>
<td>157 (72%)</td>
<td>35 (17%)</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominicans</td>
<td>7 (4%)</td>
<td>3 (1%)</td>
<td>10 (8%)</td>
<td>10 (4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 Yo vivir paa en la Frontera. El no vivir más lejos. (H, F39, Pedernales)
29 Si te mandas (mandas) a buscar un chico de agua, él no va a saber. Si te mandas buscar la comida, él no va a saber. (H, F, 39 Pedernales)

The infinitive, in most Romance languages, has over time extended its verbal functions and has become the canonical form of the verb. For example, in Spanish, utterances such as those in 30-32, albeit common in the Caribbean, can also be found in the Canaries, and in Andalusian, Galician and other varieties of Spanish (Lipski, 1994):

30 Para nosotros llegar a la fiesta, necesitamos suficiente tiempo. (PR, L1)
31 Antes de ustedes viajar, tenemos que despedirnos. (PR, L1)
32 Recibí en muchos navideños y Navidad para los nenes divertirse. (PR, L1)

These infinitival structures which depart from standard Spanish, in addition to being of particular interest to those who study the Spanish of the Caribbean (Navarro Tomás, 1948; Henríquez Ureña, 1982 [1940]), have also been the subject of debate amongst generativists (Suárez, 1986; Morales, 1986; Pérez-Leroux, 1999).

Nonetheless, the use of the infinitive by HS is much more extreme than the use of infinitival structures with an overt subject in LI we mentioned before: in the former a full verb is replaced by an infinitive principally in main clauses, while in the case of speakers of Spanish as LI, the infinitive replaces the subjunctive. As we can see in Table 7.4, the verbs which appear in the infinitive are mainly verbs of activity (88%) and all are atelic: verbs of development or less punctual action. Here we can see that both the infinitive (88% of occurrences) and the gerund (90% of occurrences) co-occur with dynamic verbs or verbs of activity,
Table 7.4  Non-standard uses, according to verb type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb class</th>
<th>Infinitive</th>
<th>- Person*</th>
<th>Gerund</th>
<th>-TMA**</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Static</td>
<td>3 (3%)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>4 (4%)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4 (4%)</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamic</td>
<td>22 (14%)</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Principally use of the 3rd person. ** Problems with tense, mood or aspect.

and that the use of the third person represents the greatest number of occurrences (77%).

In many cases, these structures characterize a preliminary stage in language acquisition where speakers display a marked reduction in the use of inflections; in others, they reflect forms which have become fossilized as a result of incomplete acquisition of Spanish as L2. The infinitive becomes the verbal marker which, while lacking tense, mood, aspect, person and number, retains enough meaning to enable communication to take place. Compared with the complex verbal morphology that typifies Spanish, Haitian Creole uses a very different system of auxiliaries (tou, ap and pou) instead of affixes to indicate TMA. Many of our informants used uninflected verbal forms which are largely sufficient for communication during the initial stages of acquisition, although some of these may fossilize and become part of a non-standard L2 grammatical system.

What is more, Haitian Creole has the syntactic structure *prepositional phrase + pronoun + infinitive*, as in (33), which is similar to utterance 30 for L1 speakers:

33  *Pou non rive non fet la nou bezvon you ben tan.*
Para nosotros llegar a la fiesta, necesitamos suficiente tiempo.
(In order to get to the party, we need sufficient time.)

Influence from the verbal system of Haitian Creole, which lacks inflections, morphemes (Lefebvre, 1998; Decrafft, 2005) (see examples 16–22) may be contributing to the fossilization of the acquisition of the infinitive in place of an inflected verb. Nonetheless, for some informants, (for example the DFs and the Ays, who have greater contact with the target language through a bilingual context within which they acquire both languages, although almost always with a degree of imbalance) the verb gradually incorporates the inflections of the language which is being acquired, albeit with traces of the L1 system, as is the case with the non-standard use of third person, which is the least marked form of the Spanish verbal paradigm (Table 7.3).

In the acquisition of both L1 and L2, there is a clear natural tendency to adopt universal, unmarked forms. In such instances the non-standard use of the infinitive reflects a universal of language acquisition in the speech of those who are learning Spanish principally, although not exclusively, as a second language. Furthermore, there is evidence in favour of a greater frequency of the infinitive (77%) over the subjunctive (7%) in subordinate clauses which allow either the infinitive or the subjunctive (23a and 23b), amongst L2 speakers of Caribbean Spanish (Morales, 1986; Rivera Alamo, 1989):

34a  *Tenían toda clase de juegos para los muchachos divertirse.* (PR, Rivera Alamo 1989)
34b  *Tenían toda clase de juegos para que se divirtieran los muchachos.*
34c  *Lo hizo sin que yo lo supiera.* (PR, Rivera Alamo 1989)
34d  *Lo hizo sin que yo lo supiera.*

The question which now arises is whether and how our informants compensate for the morphosyntactic information which has been lost when they fail to use standard Spanish verbal morphology. With verbs of activity, non-standard infinitival forms are used 88 per cent of the time and with verbs of development such as *seman, comprender, llevar, vivir, mandar a buscar*, etc. they are used 100 per cent of the time. This indicates that in many cases time reference is not completely lost, as the semantic element of these verbs contains - movement + progress in a given direction. The preference for the infinitive, and later for the invariant third person form of the verb (§–8), as can be seen in the data (Table 7.3), responds to a natural tendency on the part of speakers to use the least marked forms, where semantic elements are retained in the meaning of the verb. In line with the work of Levin and Rappaport (1995), we contend that in our data the semantic class of the verb often determines much of the syntactic structure of the utterance so that when certain features of the verb are not marked morphosyntactically, such as TMA inflection, then it is the semantic class of the verb which determines these features. It is dynamic verbs and verbs of activity with the features [-movement, +development] which appear to supply the information lost with the verbal affixes. These data appear to support the argument that during the acquisition of the grammar of a language, whether L1 or L2, lexical and semantic proficiency precede syntactic proficiency.

The TMA interpretation of verbs of activity is frequently supported by other discursive resources such as the presence of adverbials (for example
Table 7.5  Class of verb, according to presence/absence of pronouns or subject NPs in Haitians, Dominican-Haitians, Arayanos and Dominicans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of verb</th>
<th>Pronoun present</th>
<th>Pronoun absent</th>
<th>NP present or referential</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Static</td>
<td>502 (44%)</td>
<td>356 (31%)</td>
<td>284 (25%)</td>
<td>1142 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>411 (35%)</td>
<td>544 (47%)</td>
<td>199 (17%)</td>
<td>1154 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>913</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>2296/2310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ahora, después, en la mañana*, in the same clause or in the speech act. These adverbial references syntactically help to retrieve TMA information lost morphologically, although retained to a certain extent by verbal semantics.9 Also, most non-standard instances of the infinitive (50%) occur in environments where an inflected verb would be in the present tense. Non-standard infinitives also replace verbs which would otherwise be in the subjunctive, which situates itself midway between the atemporality of the infinitive and the temporal precision of the indicative. Indeed, the use of subjunctive is in gradual decline even by L1 speakers, as shown in 34–35 above. Furthermore, the data show a fairly high rate of occurrence of subject pronouns or explicit subject noun phrases with 69 per cent of the stative verbs and with 53 per cent of the verbs of activity (see Table 7.5); the figures for the infinitive are similar. These markers, either accompanying the verb or occurring earlier in the speech event, help to furnish information about person and number which is lost with the morphology, and appears to serve a pragmatic function.

Invariant third person10

The extension of the third-person singular to other verbal contexts which demand a verb marked for person and number, in standard varieties (see 5–8 above), appears to be a fairly generalized phenomenon in the processes of second-language learning (Table 7.3), to the extent that it has been considered a language universal which characterizes speakers of L1 as well as speakers of vestigial varieties and of pidgins and creoles. In the process of learning L2, this feature represents an advance on the use of the infinitive and the gerund, for here we have a full verb which is marked for TMA and which amply meets the semantic demands of the utterance. This is a frequent phenomenon amongst HS and for many of these speakers it has become fossilized as the sole verbal marker. For the DHs and the AYs, although invariant third-person forms are used, there is some evidence of acquisition of verbal forms with +person and +number as marking required by standard varieties of Spanish. The generalization of the third-person singular is one of the strategies adopted by speakers who are immersed in the process of contact while they are learning a second language. This strategy, in turn, corresponds to a particular stage of L2 acquisition, which appears to be superseded in contexts which are favourable to learning. In these speakers, this generalization may be supported by an absence of marking of verbal forms by morphemes and by the widespread presence of an unmorphologically-marked infinitive, supported by preverbal particles and subject pronouns, all characteristics of HC. Consequently, a language universal supported in turn by a characteristic feature of L1, here HC, tends to promote the generalization of the third person. An even more striking example of the use of the third person can be seen in the invariant copula *ser* in structures 37–38:

37  *Ete son familia mía.* (M60, H, Pedernales)
38  *La libra son a die peso.* (V145, H, Pedernales)

These structures are similar to those of Haitianized Spanish in Cuba (39–40):

39  *Sí (el creole) son la lengua de masiato.* (Ortiz López 2001b: 181)
40  *El valón son teniente (en) La Habana.* (Ortiz López 2001b: 182)

They also coincide with the forms recorded for Afro-Antillean based Spanish in the nineteenth century, and which, according to Lipski (1996, 2005), originated in the variant *ser/dar* which emerged from a contact between Africans and the Portuguese. In the case of the His, as much in Cuba as on the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, rather than a vestige of an Afro-Portuguese *pidgin* or creole, it is a widespread generalization of the third person which, in many cases, has become grammaticalized amongst those HS who have only learnt an *interlanguage*.

The generalization of the third-person singular to other verbal contexts is different, in our view, from the phonological reduction of *is* and *in* which produces the simplification of the verbal forms corresponding to the second and third person in non-standard Dominican Spanish and Caribbean Spanish in general. Such reduction is also found in Haitianized Spanish in both Cuba and La Raya and border Spanish (41–45):

41  *A vece no echas uno (nos echan a uno) y no jura ni la conía porque a veces viene lo dueño no que matanza te paga, que pasa t', y así se va (el tiempo).* (M36, H, Pedernales)
En Haití hay las habitaciones está horada. (M30, DH, Pedernales)

Lo único que tiene yo es que ese mismo horado. (M36, H, Pedernales)

No hay mucho trabajo no porque sí sabe a lo que ya tiene la mejoría. (F45, H, Pedernales)

Después llega cuarto y se lo paga. (F45, H, Pedernales)

This simplification is a result of the process of phonetic erosion which occurs in many varieties of Spanish from the Americas and the Caribbean (López Morales, 1992) and which appears to become accentuated in speakers of interlanguages, mainly those whose mother tongues do not have verbal inflection as is the case with many creoles, including Haitian Creole. This feature has been associated with the descendants of speakers of slave languages who acquired Spanish imperfectly, and who through their learning of the language transferred structures from African languages to Afro-Hispanic Caribbean varieties and/or of the hypothetical Pan-Caribbean plug-in creole (Granda, 1976; Megenney, 1985; Perl, 1983; Green, 1997). I contend that this is a natural process of phonetic erosion which frequently takes place in L2 acquisition, which is supported by the fact that consonant elision and lack of verbal inflection typify Haitianized Spanish in general.

Conclusion

To conclude, the use of the infinitive and invariant third person among people of Haitian descent in La Raya, can be considered to be due to the operation of universals of language acquisition for speakers of Spanish as L2. The infinitive is starting to gain ground as a variant for the subjunctive in subordinate clauses, principally in contexts where alteration between the infinitive and the subjunctive is possible for speakers of Spanish as L1. In this regard, there is a need for variationist studies to be carried out to determine the extent to which the infinitive is used in subjective contexts and of the linguistic and extra-linguistic variables which determine its use. The data in the present study support the argument that, during the acquisition of L2, the reduction of the verbal inflectional paradigm is even greater than is the case for L1 speakers; this is true for the use of both the infinitive, as well as of the invariant third person of the verb. As we have tried to demonstrate in this study, these processes of inflectional reduction are inflected and/or compensated for as much by linguistic variables as by extra-linguistic factors. These linguistic variables include: (1) the semantics of the verb; (2) the use of adverbial phrases; (3) the use of pronouns in subject position; (4) the lack of verbal inflection in L1 (HC); (5) fixed SVO word order in L1 (HC); and (6) the existence of similar constructions in L1 (HC). Among the extra-linguistic factors we find firstly, the degree of contact with Spanish which ranges from the congolero vede Haitian on one side of the continuum, who has little access to the L2 or target language, and on the opposite end the panajah who is always bilingual to some extent and, secondly, the ethno-linguistic attitudes which arise from this contact which is always stressful and almost never amicable due to the rejection on ethnic, cultural and linguistic grounds to which Haitians and their descendants are invariably subjected.

In La Raya, any variety of Spanish (even the Haitianized variety discussed in this chapter) provides an entry into the global marketplace which paradoxically promises a better chance of economic survival in a context of extreme poverty and great human injustice. It is by using these varieties of Spanish that Haitians and their descendants manage to negotiate, albeit not on equal terms, with forces of domination, in a way which mirrors the experience of the indigenous peoples in Latin America, and Latinos in the USA. The stressful context of language contact found in La Raya gives rise to conflicts of ethno-linguistic identity in which the Spanish language becomes the discourse of progress or indeed the rhetoric of progress’ (Del Valle and Gabriel-Siuecman, 2004), relegating to the margins any sentimental values attached to HC.

Notes

* An early version of this chapter was presented at the Second \textit{UK Symposium of Hispanic Linguistics} held at the University of Southampton, 15–17 April 2004. I am grateful to Miranda Stewart and Nicholas Faraceus (University of Puerto Rico) for the translation.

1. See Ortiz López (1998) for a summary of positions on this issue.

2. For an historical account of the different groups of immigrants in the Dominican Republic, see Inoa (1999).

3. For an overview of the project, see research proposal (manuscript available for those interested).

4. I am grateful for the support during this stage of the research of graduate students Melvyn González and Rose Vásquez from the Linguistics Programme and from the Dean’s Office for Graduate Studies and Research of the University of Puerto Rico.

5. In palenques two functions have been identified for \textit{tā}: one which is close to that found in other creoles: \textit{I tā Kane o am eating and another similar to Spanish}: \textit{bo tā mínki-o de na?} (you are not seeing her) which, according to Dieck (2006: 9), on account of its form, distribution and function, appears to be a loan from the Spanish grade. The semantic information contained in \textit{tā} is the same as that of \textit{tā} (continuous or progressive): there appears to be no difference of meaning between \textit{bo tā mínki-o de na} and \textit{bo tā mílikon}?
8
Whose Story Is It Anyway?
Representing Oral Testimony
in a Multilingual
‘Contact Zone’

Jane Freeland

Introduction

One discipline area which has arguably always been ‘globalized’ is anthropology, in particular its ethnographic methodology. Until relatively recently, ‘the historic mission of ethnology [was] to find the universals of human language and human culture’ (Foley, 2002: 470). Its unexamined assumption was that the generalizations (Western) anthropologists drew from their ethnographies would be universal. In the 1970s, in the context of decolonization and postcolonial criticism, anthropology entered a state of crisis, acknowledging that it rested on ‘liberal, humanist doctrines of ameliorism, orientalism, colonialism, and racism’ (ibid.).

Since then reflection upon and deconstruction of the interaction between ethnographic field researchers and ‘their subjects’ (both the noun and the possessive are revealing) have become an increasingly overt part of ethnographic research, and of other social sciences which use similar methods. They have also stimulated experiments in the writing of

* This chapter and the articles it comments on (Freeland, 2003, 2005) arise from work with my students on the Licenciatura (BA) in Intercultural-Bilingual Education at the University of the Autonomous Regions of the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua (URACCAN) in 2000 and 2001. I am deeply indebted to them for their insights into the communicative practices of the Coast and for permission to cite their ‘linguistic autobiographies’. I thank the Sahwang Project for financing that teaching as part of its development of the Licenciatura, and the URACCAN’s Institute for the Promotion and Investigation of Languages and Cultures (IPILC), especially its director, Guillermo Meléndez Herrera, for constant moral, intellectual and logistical support.