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SPANISH HOME LANGUAGE USE AND ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AS DIFFERENTIAL MEASURES OF LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT

GARLAND D. BILLS, ALAN HUDSON, AND EDUARDO HERNÁNDEZ CHÁVEZ
University of New Mexico

ABSTRACT. This study examines 1990 Census data for a large sample of the Hispanic-origin population in the Southwest, exploring two possible indices of language maintenance - Spanish home language claiming and English proficiency - as these are influenced by nativity, time and age of immigration, citizenship status of the foreign born, education, and income. Both Spanish home language claiming and reported English proficiency reveal the processes of shift to English in the native-born population. The data on English proficiency, however, indicate that the process of Anglicization and therefore diminished use of Spanish is already abundantly clear in the immigrant generation.

THE IMPERFECT OF POLITENESS IN SPANISH

MARIANNA CHODOROWSKA-PILCH
University of Southern California

ABSTRACT. This paper examines the noncanonical use of the Imperfect in Spanish, establishing systematic pragmatic contexts and verb types used to encode a speaker's polite attitude towards his/her addressee. The paper also argues that the Imperfect might be used to encode politeness not solely because of its reference to the past (James 1982, Randriamasimanana 1987, Fleischman 1989), but also because of its aspectual value (cf. Comrie 1976). The analysis of natural data shows that the Imperfect is a frequent strategy for encoding politeness through modal auxiliaries, and desiderative and transactional-situation verbs. These types of verbs, used in the Imperfect, occur in specific impositive speech acts (direct/indirect questions, indirect requests, suggestions, explanations, etc.). Based on various parameters characteristic of grammaticalization (Hopper & Traugott 1993), and the frequent inference of interpersonal distance between interlocutors in impositive situations, this paper proposes that the Imperfect should be considered a grammaticalized device for encoding politeness in Spanish.

PROSODIC MANIFESTATIONS OF FOCUS IN SPANISH

TIMOTHY L. FACE
The Ohio State University

ABSTRACT. The majority of work on focus in Spanish has concentrated on the way in which focus is conveyed through word order. The few scholars who have investigated the prosodic

manifestations of focus in Spanish have found conflicting results. This paper reports on an experimental study of the effects of narrow non-contrastive focus on fundamental frequency (F0) peak height, the relationship between adjacent F0 peaks, and the occurrence of intensity, duration, and prosodic boundaries in Castilian Spanish. Results show that different speakers use different strategies to convey focus prosodically, but that duration is the most reliable phonetic correlate of focus. The results of this experiment differ from those reported by Toledo (1989) for the same type of focus in the Spanish of Buenos Aires, but they are similar to those reported by de la Mota Gorriz (1997) for contrastive focus in Castilian Spanish.

A SPECIALIZED LANGUAGE SYSTEM IN WORKING MEMORY: EVIDENCE FROM AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

BETH L. LOSIEWICZ
Hamilton College

ABSTRACT. Baddeley and colleagues have accumulated substantial evidence that speakers of an auditory language have an auditory language working memory subsystem, a PHONOLOGICAL LOOP, that operates separately from visual-spatial working memory (e.g. Baddeley et al. 1984). The current experiment investigates whether users of a visual-spatial language, American Sign Language, also have a separate working memory subsystem for their visual-spatial language, or whether their language working memory is a part of their general visual-spatial memory. Signers made significantly more errors in recall of digits when asked to repeatedly sign the simple sign SHOES during the 15 second recall interval, than when that interval was unfilled, or filled with a purely visual-spatial (tapping) task. These results indicate that prelingually deaf signers of American Sign Language have a sign language working memory system that operates separately from their general visual-spatial working memory. It was concluded that Baddeley's proposed Phonological Loop might rely on an essentially amodal linguistic working memory system, being auditorily based only in speakers of an auditory language.

THAT/ZERO VARIATION IN AN EARLY MODERN ENGLISH CORPUS OF PRIVATE AND NON-PRIVATE LETTERS

TERESA MORALEJO-GÁRATE
University of Santiago de Compostela

ABSTRACT. That and zero have been used since Old English times as the major links to introduce nonwh- finite complement clause constructions. The distribution of these two complementizers has varied throughout the history of English, as the major studies on the topic reveal (Visser 1963-73, McDavid 1964, Huddleston 1971, Elsness 1982, 1984, Mitchell 1985, Fanego 1990, Rissanen 1991, Traugott 1992, Finegan && Biber 1995, López Couso 1996). The present paper seeks to analyze how several factors, such as the presence or absence of intervening material between the matrix predicate and the complement clause subject, the nature of the subject of the complement clause, the form and voice of the matrix predicate, and the style, affect the distribution of that and zero in a selection of private and non-private letters from the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts, Diachronic and Dialectal (1991).