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CASE SYSTEMS IN CONTACT: SYNTACTIC AND LEXICAL CASE IN BILINGUAL CHILD LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT. This study examined effects of language contact and attrition on the Hungarian morphological case system in Hungarian-English bilingual children's speech production. To discover whether lexico-semantic and grammatical features are equally vulnerable in bilingual contact, the study compared patterns of change in case morphemes that express semantic relations with patterns of change in one that expresses a syntactic relation. Drawing on a lexically-based approach to production, an analysis of naturally-occurring data showed clear differences in both relative accuracy and predominant error types between case morphemes that mark lexico-semantic information (local cases) and the case marker of the syntactic object (accusative). Overall, local-cases are less accurate than syntactic case; moreover, they tend to show substitution errors rather than omission, which is the predominant error in application of syntactic case. These asymmetries are explained in terms of (a) how and when various case morphemes are accessed in production, and (b) typological differences in morphological marking of abstract case relations.

THE MEDIA, MARKETING AND CRITICAL MASS: PORTENTS OF LINGUISTIC MAINTENANCE

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ABSTRACT. Sociolinguistic studies paint a grim picture of the probability of long-term survival for Spanish in the United States. At the same time, market research suggests that commercial ventures, particularly the Spanish-language media, may be creating conditions that reflect a change in patterns of loss. Specifically, the sheer demographic and economic presence of Latinos in the United States is fueling an unprecedented demand for goods and services in Spanish. The numerous business ventures that have arisen to meet this demand have established Spanish as a language of tremendous economic value in the U.S. In the process, perceptions of this language have grown more positive and interest levels in learning Spanish have increased significantly. This state of affairs is creating a social context that is consistent with the predictions of the CATHERINE WHEEL MODEL (Strubell 1998, 2001). According to this model, the synergistic interaction of social and economic conditions can result in a powerful self-priming mechanism of language maintenance.

DISENTANGLING THE NECESSARILY ENTANGLED: THE PHONOLOGY AND PHONETICS OF SPANISH SPIRANTIZATION

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ABSTRACT. Previous accounts have treated Spanish spirantization either as a purely phonological process or as a purely phonetic one. Each of these approaches, however, is inadequate on its own. In this paper a new analysis of Spanish spirantization is proposed that takes into account both phonology and phonetics. By considering both phonology and phonetics together, a cleaner and more explanatory analysis can be offered. A phonological spirantization process by which the value [+continuant] spreads from a preceding segment to an underlyingly [-continuant] voiced obstruent is proposed. This process applies more broadly than similar processes that have been proposed, affecting all voiced obstruents following a [+continuant] segment. But this process is overwritten by a phonetic process in one case where an intrusive stop burst occurs as the result of gestural timing during the production of a particular consonant sequence.

VOWEL MUTABILITY: THE CASE OF MONOLINGUAL SPANISH LISTENERS AND BILINGUAL SPANISH-ENGLISH LISTENERS

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ABSTRACT. Do consonants and vowels differ in their influence on lexical access to spoken words? Van Ooijen (1996) introduced a new task, the word reconstruction task, for exploring this question. Participants are presented a spoken non-word that can be altered to a word by changing either one vowel or one consonant. Van Ooijen found that participants made more errors in the consonant condition than in the vowel condition and were generally faster in the vowel change condition, an effect she called VOWEL MUTABILITY. The present study replicates van Ooijen's (1996) procedure with monolingual Spanish listeners and bilingual Spanish-English listeners in an attempt to detect any differences in processing between monolingual and bilingual listeners of languages that are structurally different. The results showed a clear vowel mutability effect in both groups of listeners, suggesting that neither the size of the vowel repertoire nor the monolingual versus bilingual mode of processing are the cause of vowel mutability.

LINGUISTIC AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE WRITING OF MIDDLE-GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT. This study investigates the writing development exhibited in essays written four months apart on two topics by 55 middle-grade (sixth through eighth), primarily Hispanic English language learners. Five measures of writing development are employed: words per T-unit, clauses per T-unit, lexical diversity D-optimum score, percent of error-free T-units, and number of T-units. Correlations between measures is examined as well as differences related to topic, time of writing, and grade level. Interpretation of the results suggests that cognitive, age-related development must be considered separately from general language development when working with adolescent second language writers.