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CHAPTER 5

Linguistic Variation, Cognitive Processes and the Influence of Contact

Angelita Martínez and Adriana Speranza

1 Introduction

The analysis of language contact from the theoretical-methodological standpoint of morphosyntactic variation, based on the postulates of Columbia School of Linguistics (García, 1985; García and Otheguy, 1990; Diver, 1995), has not, in general, been sufficiently used in studies on the use of language and in particular, studies reflecting on transfer from one language to another.

Nevertheless, “intra-speaker” (within-speaker) variation—in which the relationship between the basic meaning of linguistic forms and their context is vital—is a heretofore unsuspected source of knowledge (Martínez, 2010; Speranza, 2011; Pfänder and Palacios, 2013). Indeed, the paradigmatic shifts which are typical of one variety compared to the other, and the relative frequency with which the differing forms are used, allow us to glimpse the cognitive perspective of the community in question and to seek reasons that explain the variation.

Ethno-pragmatics studies language production through the basic meaning of forms and the cognitive consistency of this meaning with pragmatic contextual factors linked to cultural features that act on selection. From this standpoint, conclusions may be drawn which might contribute to the discussion of certain theoretical issues, such as: is it possible to demonstrate what is transferred from one language to another?

Indeed, except for the transfer of morphemes, which provides explicit evidence, the influence of one language on another is simply a hypothesis that may be more or less reliable depending on thoroughness of the analysis.

In Spanish in contact with other languages there are often intra-category shifts of certain paradigms. In other words, the same linguistic categories take different places in the paradigm of the contact variety, because the speakers/listeners use the same cognitive potentialities in different ways.

Exploring these strategies in a linguistic variety requires an analysis of intra-speaker variation to explain—in cognitive terms—the consistency between meanings and contexts. The analysis should also take into account that the
cognitive relationship between the significant contribution of the form and its usual context (orientation, according to Diver, 1995: 50) emerges at different levels of abstraction. It may be confirmed by the skewed frequency with which these varying forms are used, in the light of their respective contexts, which will be measured as independent variables. As we will discuss below, certain postulates which arise from specific schools of thought, e.g. the notion of *polyphony* or *illocutionary force*, have been considered as analytical resources and translated in terms of independent variables. In the light of these variables, the frequency with which linguistic forms are used is thus a symptom of the speaker’s cognitive perspective\(^1\) and provides evidence of the influence of contact.

2 The Ethno-Pragmatic Approach

This discussion can be channeled through an analytical approach called ethno-pragmatics (García, 1995; Mauder, 2001; Martínez, 2000; Martínez and Speranza, 2009), which endeavors to explain linguistic strategies in cultural terms. Language contact provides a fertile field for research, because it places different world views in contact with each other.

The ethno-pragmatic approach is based on a series of principles which are the pillars of the Columbia School of Linguistics, and have been made known through specialized volumes (García, 1975, 2009; Contini Morava, Kirsner and Rodríguez Bachiller (eds.), 2004; Contini Morava and Tobin (eds.), 2004; Reid, Otheguy and Stern (eds.), 2002; Davis, Gorup and Stern, (eds.) 2006; Huffman and Davis (eds.), 2012) and many articles. Some of these principles are:

- Language is an instrument of communication. Communication is achieved through a process of construction in which the human factor plays a major role. It is not the result of simple conveyance through linguistically coded elements.
- Language is a code of imprecise signs through which precise messages can be conveyed thanks to human ingenuity.
- Language is motivated by meaning and the speaker’s communicative intent (goal-oriented behavior).

---

\(^1\) The concepts of ‘polyphony’ (Bakhtin, 1997; Ducrot, 1984) or ‘illocutionary force’ (Austin, 1982) do not contradict the theoretical framework of the Columbia School of Linguistics, which the ethno-pragmatic approach supports.
The task of linguistic analysis is not to describe the structure of language but to discover it.

Units of linguistic analysis are forms and their meanings, not sentences and their parts.

Meaning is not constructed compositionally but inferred from clues provided by linguistic forms, which, together with a set of extra-linguistic elements, constitute the message.

The linguistic sign is conceived as the relationship between a form and a meaning, which is basic, invariable, constant and present in all utterances in which the form appears. Meanings are relational within a semantic domain.

Analysis requires the qualitative and quantitative study of the forms in their usage contexts.

Communication always occurs within a context and the linguistic forms used by speakers or writers cannot be understood outside their relationship with this context.

Based on these guiding principles, our linguistic analysis explored intra-speaker variation. It is the way in which this variation works that will lead us to explain the processes of linguistic change and to understand the influence of language contact as one of the factors that drives change.

Variation is the mold for change and thus provides explanation. Indeed, consummated change only allows for descriptive analysis of innovative forms. But the cause of the change—in this case, linguistic contact—may be discovered by analyzing the variation. The frequency with which the variant forms are used is key to understanding the cognitive profile that the speaker adopts in his utterances, as claimed by García:

Una premisa básica de la lingüística cognitiva es que toda categorización presupone el ‘perfilamiento’ de una situación, o sea, la selección de ciertos rasgos que se destacan contra el fondo de las demás características (MacLaury 1990: 40, fin. 3, 42 et passim). Esto sugiere que la variación en la expresión con la que se describe la ‘misma’ realidad básicamente refleja diferentes perspectivas por parte del hablante. (García, 1995: 55).

[One of the basic premises in cognitive linguistics is that any categorization presupposes ‘profiling’ a situation, i.e., selecting certain features which stand out against the background of the other characteristics (MacLaury 1990: 40, fin. 3, 42 et passim). This suggests that variation in the expression with which the ‘same’ reality is described basically reflects different perspectives within the speaker.] (García, 1995: 55).
Two points should be made regarding the utterances of speakers who are in a situation of language contact:

1) The same intra-speaker variation observed in the monolingual variety is systematically quantitatively potentiated in the contact variety.

2) The “trigger” for change is found in the grammar of the contact language. Indeed, the source language usually contains grammatically categorized semantic substances which favor the conceptualization that gives rise to the change in the target language.

This is the basis for ethno-pragmatics, which endeavors to translate the morphosyntactic strategies observed in terms of conceptualizations and cultural categories, enabling us to perceive the pathways of the influence of language contact.

3 Two Phenomena in Spanish in Contact with Quechua

We will provide examples by analyzing two language issues involving the variable use of clitics and verbs in utterances with the verb *decir* (say/tell) by speakers of Spanish in contact with Quechua.

We will focus specifically on the speaker’s appraisal of:

1) The degree of control exercised by speaker over the interlocutor (x said to y) in (4.1), and

2) The degree of validity of the source and of the information in (4.2).

3.1 The Hypotheses

Based on the idea that the intra-paradigm “play” (Martínez, 2010, 2012) observed in the strategic use of the phenomena we are analyzing arises from the community’s own conceptualizations and communicative needs, we pose the following hypotheses:

a) Speakers of Spanish in north-west Argentina (hereinafter NOA), use the clitics *lo* and *le* variably to refer to the dative in utterances with the verb *decir* (say/tell) for which the accusative is the speech. This allows the utterances to be perceived as coming from two participants, with the agent exercising control over the interlocutor. The use of the
ditransitive verb “ni” (say/tell) in Quechua. reflects the influence of agent on interlocutor.

b) The variable use of verb tenses in NOA Spanish is owed to speech strategies related to evidentiality as the underlying semantic substance, i.e. the speaker’s need to indicate the source of the information and how he assesses it, as happens in Quechua.

3.2 The Corpus
The nature of the corpus is crucial to ethno-pragmatic analysis (Martínez and Speranza, 2009). Our study is based on real utterances recorded from different communicative events.

Phenomenon (1) was analyzed in two collections of Argentine Stories and Legends, which are transcriptions of oral narratives in NOA, an area with Quechua substrate.

a) Forty-six stories from Relatos Folklóricos Salteños (Folkloric Narrations from Salta) compiled by Margarita Fleming de Cornejo from eight narrators.

b) Sixteen legends from Volumes VII and VIII of Cuentos y Leyendas Populares de la Argentina (Popular Stories and Legends of Argentina) compiled by Berta Vidal de Battini from eleven narrators.

Careful orthographic transcription of the materials allowed us to observe language features typical of the region, including the peculiar use of third person clitics. The corpus is made up of the stories and legends that include utterances with the verb decir (say/tell) and direct discourse.

Phenomenon (2) was analyzed in:

c) 160 narratives by teenage high school students attending the middle level of formal education in Buenos Aires Province. These students were from families that had emigrated from Santiago del Estero and Salta Provinces.

2 Our respondents are students at a Secondary School in Greater Buenos Aires City (formerly Escuela de Educación Polimodal No. 11 in the locality of Libertad, District of Merlo). The data presented here are the outcome of a survey performed during school years 2000 to 2006, involving 1233 students. Information on the socio-linguistic characteristics of the group was gathered by means of a survey questionnaire. Results show that 21% of total subjects interviewed are in contact with another language. Of these, 61% have contact with the Guarani,
These narratives are texts written during Language and Literature lessons at school. The corpus includes narratives of traditional legends, narrative exercises based on movies, book reviews and writing exercises based on pre-set tasks. The text features favor the use of reported speech.

The spelling and punctuation of the students’ original writings have been preserved.

4 Data Analysis

4.1 Speaker’s Evaluation of How Much Control the Person Who Says/ Tells Exercises over the Interlocutor (x says to y)

We will look at the varying use of the clitics lo/le in reported speech. For example:

(1) Le dice a la vieja (en secreto):
   — Hacelos dormir en mi cuarto
   
   ‘He says to the old lady (in secret),
   — Make them sleep in my room.’
   (Fleming 84, 40)

(2) El Coquena lo diju (al pobre):
   — ¡Hijuna! ¿Quí hace ostí aquí?
   
   ‘Coquena said to him (the poor man):
   — Hey! What are you doing here?’
   (Battini VIII, 2247, 712)

Both narrators present a situation where one person says something to another. However, in (1), the narrator refers to the interlocutor by means of the dative le form, as is usual in most varieties of Spanish, while in (2), the narrator uses the accusative lo form.

Since that the difference between these two forms makes a significant contribution to meaning, the choice cannot be considered arbitrary. Spanish includes the dative and the accusative in a paradigm that classifies the semantic sub-

27% with Quechua, and 12% report they are in contact with other languages (Italian, Portuguese, and German, among others). For a complete description of the socio-linguistic method applied, see Speranza, 2011.
stance of case “actant’s degree of activity/participation in the event” (García, 1975) and although in Castille (Klein, 1981; García, 1986; Fernández Ordóñez, 1999) this etymological paradigm has been re-classified in terms of gender, studies of Spanish in the Americas (Company, 1995; Flores Cervantes, 2006) and specifically, Spanish in Argentina (García, 1975; Martínez, 2000; Mauder, 2008; Martínez, 2013), show that pronoun system is “the etymological case system”.

In this context, selecting an accusative rather than the usual dative for the verb decir (say/tell) implies assigning the referent less activity in the event, and thus greater involvement of the more active actant. The relative frequency of this strategy in the corpus is about 15%. In it, the control of the teller over the person told is at stake. Indeed, example (1) is about a married couple who are plotting to kill some children, and (2) is about mythological character who protects wildlife and is highly regarded in the community, speaking to a peasant who is hunting a vicuña.

This use of different clitics with the verb decir (say/tell) does not occur in the Spanish of Rio de la Plata, where the dative form le is always chosen to identify the referent of intermediate activity. However, it does sometimes use an accusative clitic to signify the referent with other verba dicendi such as hablar (talk), reprochar (reproach) and aconsejar (advise). This variation is found—though to a very limited extent—in some written genres, such as the following examples from the sports section (3 and 4) and political section (5) of a major Buenos Aires newspaper.

(3) Si sirve para lograr los objetivos políticos, hablalo a “Ragazzone”, [espero no sea otro flor de “Ragazzo”, como el anterior [por Biglieri], (¿Son todos tanos en Mendoza . . .)

‘If it serves to achieve the political goals, talk to “Ragazzone”, (I hope he doesn’t end up being another “Ragazzo”, like the previous one, [referring to Biglieri]) (Are they all Italians in Mendoza?).’

(La Nación, September 3, 2013. Sports Section)

(4) Corcho, que se recuperó de la lesión y jugará su primer partido en el Rugby Championship, lo aconseja y lo ubica en el campo de juego. Incluso, durante toda la preparación, compartieron la habitación.

‘Corcho, who recovered from the injury and will play his first match in the Rugby Championship, advises him and puts him in the playing field. And what is more, they shared rooms throughout training.’

(La Nación, March 14, 2013. Sports Section)
We believe that this shows that the grammar and cognition relationship is present in each variety and, as expected, this relationship is always consistent. As mentioned above, in both the NOA and the Rio de la Plata varieties, the possibility of assigning more or less involvement is shown in utterances containing *verba dicendi*, i.e. when someone “says” something to somebody. The difference lies in two aspects: (a) the type of *verba dicendi*, which includes the verb *decir* (say/tell) in the NOA variety, and (b) the relative frequency it is used with, which is higher in NOA speakers.

We will focus on the NOA strategy in order to explain the variation of the clitic with the verb *decir* (say/tell) and to enquire into the possible influence of language contact.

Although the verb *decir* (say/tell) often involves situations with three participants [the person who says (agent), what is said (accusative) and to whom it is said (dative)], the accusative is not perceived as highly differentiated because it does not refer to an individual entity, since it is the repetition of someone else’s words. This, plus human cognitive potentiality, may prompt the variation in frequency and vocabulary observed in different varieties of Spanish.

According to this reasoning, when the accusative also corresponds to direct speech, there is more room for overlapping. Thus, we only found one instance in our corpus in which *lo* was selected with reported speech. Consequently, we shall limit the issue of the variation to direct speech.

The perlocutionary intention of the person who “says” or “tells” may generate a relationship between interlocutors which implies:

a) a situation where the speaker dominates the listener
b) a symmetrical relationship between speaker and listener
c) a situation where the listener dominates the speaker

As we know that a strong effect of the agent on the patient typically implies resorting to the accusative (García, 1975: 347–368), we would expect that in situation (a), speakers would favor the use of the less active *lo* form to signify the dative, while in (b) and (c) they would prefer the *le* form.
Following this line of reasoning, we will show the relationship between the contextual factors that will serve to prove our hypothesis and the speech acts in which the variation appears.

The analysis of clauses in direct speech in our corpus shows that, with the exceptions of three instances of constructions lacking a verb, as in (6), the rest follow the structure of the three sentences types traditionally considered basic: jussive (7), interrogative (8) and declarative (9).

(6) ¡Al ojo y a la cola, al ojo y a la cola! Leh decía el quirquincho (a los otros animales) [63, 29]

‘To the eye and to the tail, to the eye and to the tail! said the armadillo (to the other animals).’

(7) Al más chico no lo querían llevá loh mah grandeh, y lo dicen: No –dicen- voh quedate con la mamá. [78, 39]

‘The older ones didn’t want to take the youngest and they say to him, No, they say, You stay with mama.’

(8) Y lu ha invidiau también al compagre, y le dice:
   — ¡Compadrito! ¿Por qué no me lo cambia a la quena? [43, 17]

‘And he has also envied the friend, and he says to him,
   — Friend! Why don’t you change the quena [Andean flute] for me?’

(9) Y el lorito le ha dicho (al chiquillo):
   — El gigante tiene una ovejita lanita de oro [86, 40]

‘And the little parrot said to him (to the little boy),
   — The giant has a little sheep with golden fleece.’

If sentence type is relevant to the choice of clitic, we could expect jussive sentences such as (7)—in which older siblings give an order to a younger sibling—to be more likely to use lo for the dative than would the others, since an order involves one subject having power over another, whereas a mere declaration or question does not usually imply this kind of power.
However, after classifying sentence types in the corpus, we measured the relative frequency with which the clitics were used in each, with unexpected results, as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1  *Relative frequency of dative lo vs. le in utterances with the verb decir (say/tell) + accusative direct speech, according to sentence type.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lo</th>
<th>Le</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jussive</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarative</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interrogative</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 shows that the accusative speech sentence type is not a relevant parameter for the choice of clitic, as the percentages are very similar for all three types of utterance. An odds ratio so close to 1 suggests that the factors, as proposed, do not affect the variance and thus should not be relevant to the analysis.

Nevertheless, the results may be explained from the perspective of the Speech Act Theory which has shown that functional diversity in the social context is typical of linguistic statements, and therefore we cannot expect one-to-one correspondence between the grammatical structure and the illocutionary force of utterances (Lyons, 1980: 659 et seq.).

Indeed, sentences classified as Imperative are not always orders. Interrogative sentences may have greater or lesser perlocutionary effect. Similarly, conveying descriptive information is not usually an end in itself, but rather, when we tell someone something, we usually intend to influence their beliefs, attitudes or behavior in some way.

If the direct speech clause influences the choice of pronoun, it will be due to the type of speech act implied by the utterances due to their illocutionary force, and not due to the grammatical form of the sentences.

Let us look again at jussive sentences, this time distinguishing the speech acts, which sometimes convey an order, but other times convey requests or pleas, as in the following example, in which despite the use of the imperative of the verb *venir* (to come), the vocabulary suggests a polite invitation:

10)  *Y entonces él ha ido así a una distancia larga y l'aparecido un hombre, s'que le dici:*  
— Vení, vení, te invito [31,10].
‘And so he had gone a long distance and a man appeared, and he said,
— Come, come, I invite you . . .’

A similar analysis of interrogative utterances shows that some are requests and others are not. In the same way, consideration of the informative value of declarative utterances shows on the one hand, declarations with stronger illocutionary force such as threats, reproaches or orders, and on the other, declarations with weaker illocutionary force such as greetings, invitations or requests. Table 5.2 shows the association between the illocutionary force of the speech act and the choice of clitic.

**Table 5.2**  
Relative frequency of dative lo vs. le in utterances with the verb decir + direct speech in relation to the perlocutionary effect of the speech acts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lo</th>
<th>Le</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jussive</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orders</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O.R.</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>χ²</strong></td>
<td>17.61</td>
<td>p &lt; .001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interrogative</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More demanding</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less demanding</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O.R.</strong></td>
<td>29.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>χ²</strong></td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>p &lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Declaratives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-informative (&gt;I.F.)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-informative (&lt;I.F.)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>O.R.</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>χ²</strong></td>
<td>17.76</td>
<td>p &lt; .001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results show that the use of *lo* to indicate datives is influenced by the illocutionary force of the statement. A strong perlocutionary effect such as an order, favors the choice of *lo*, whereas a weaker perlocutionary effect, such as a request, favors the use of *le*. Similarly, in our corpus, *le* is selected when the direct speech is a yes/no question and *lo* is selected in Wh- questions. This variation is explained by the type of speech act that the question implies, with *lo* preferred for demands, and *le* preferred when the question does not imply a demand. Finally, for declarative statements, speech acts with weaker illocutionary force, in which politeness clearly places participants at the same level or in which the dative appears as a referent with power, use the form *le*, whereas when the speech act establishes a hierarchical relationship in favor of the subject, the *lo* form may be selected, as indeed occurs in 75% of the cases in our corpus.

4.1.1 How the Substrate (Indigenous Language) Shapes the Variable

Many papers have shown that certain features in the variety of Spanish spoken in north-west Argentina reflect the Quechua substrate (Granda, 1993; Fernández Lavaque, 1996; Martorell de Laconi, 1992; Rojas, 1984).

The communicative strategies shown in our analysis might be attributable to the speakers being influenced by structural features of the substrate language.

The *le*/*lo* variation we have analyzed implies greater flexibility of what can be conceptualized as dative than in other varieties of Spanish spoken in Argentina which do not have an indigenous substrate. This leads to the question of whether there is some distinctive feature in the Quechua language whose influence might “validate” the behavior of NOA speakers.

Quechua adds the suffix *-ta* to nouns and pronouns to refer to the object. Quechua grammars say that it typically refers to the direct object, but is also sometimes used to indicate what in Spanish is the dative. For example, Alderetes (1994: 66 et seq.) claims that the Quechua suffix *-ta* (accusative) is sometimes used to mark what in Spanish is the dative in “ditransitive” sentences with verbs that take more than one object. He offers the following example:

(11) Pay *-ta* hucha-*kuna*-ta pampacha-*rqa*-n
He/she **ACCUS. sin** pl **ACCUS. forgive** Pret. 3rd p.

‘(He) forgave him/her his/her sins.’

In (11), both objects—“he/she” and “sins”—are marked by the same nominal accusative suffix *-ta*. 
Calvo Pérez, in his analysis of the verb as head and immediate modifiers in the Quechua verb phrase, says:

“Por otro lado, el objeto directo, tan próximo al verbo, entre otras razones porque frente al sujeto que se constituye confrontativamente aparece siempre en órbita próxima a él (orden habitual: Sujeto—Objeto indirecto—Objeto directo—Verbo), se opone al resto de los objetos, cuyo estatuto está cerca o es propio más bien del complemento circunstancial (el ilativo -man, que vale también para el objeto indirecto, el ablativo -manta, etc.). Se establece, no obstante, una continuidad entre el objeto directo propiamente dicho y un cierto tipo de objeto indirecto que se da en el quechua con -ta, cuyo significado se resume en la compleción entera del espacio—no es sólo un aproximativo como -man—, lo que permite dar uniformidad a todos los objetos en el ámbito del sintagma verbal” (Calvo Pérez, 1993: 254).

[On the other hand, the direct object, so close to the verb, among other reasons because in the face of the subject that constitutes itself confrontationally it always lies close to it (usual order: Subject—Indirect Object—Direct Object—Verb), is in opposition to the rest of the objects, whose status is close to, or mainly belongs to the adverbial compliment (illative -man, which is also valid for the indirect object, ablative -manta, etc.). Nevertheless, a continuity is established between the direct object itself and a certain type of indirect object that occurs in Quechua with -ta, whose meaning is summed up in the entire completion of the space—it is not merely approximative like -man—, providing uniformity to all objects in the sphere of the verb phrase] (Calvo Pérez, 1993: 254).

(12) Pay sipas- -ta chukcha- -n -ta sinp’a- -rqa -(n)
He/She girl ACCUS. hair 3rd accus. braid Pret. 3rd p.
‘He/she braided the girl’s hair.’

In (12), Calvo Pérez (1993: 256) observes: “there are two objects: one about a thing (the prototypical) and another about a person (which also entails features of “subjectivity” and hesitates on the case). Both objects are thus immediate constituents: the first near the verb, even due to the word order, and the second between the subject and the object, mainly due to the meaning”.

Calvo Pérez also considers that the specific use of the clitic lo with verba dicendi reflects the categorization in the substrate language:
In (13) the noun phrase marked by -\(ta\) indicates the dative, not the accusative, because what is being omitted is the content of what was said/told (D.O.).

The fact that the substrate language can indicate with a single grammatical form what Spanish indicates through different forms, might therefore prompt extending the use of clitic \(lo\) to indicate the dative, as observed in this variety.

4.2 Speaker’s Evaluation of the Validity of the Source and the Information: Variability in the Use of Verb Tenses

With regard to (2) we will analyze the variable use of Past Perfect (hereinafter PP) and Past Simple (hereinafter PS) of the indicative mood in utterances introduced by verbal communication verbs in the past, specifically, in reported speech. For example:3

(14) Todos esperaban y la Lujanera hablo \(dijo\) q’ después de salir del galpon se fueron a un campito, cuando llego un hombre y lo enfrento, y le dio esa puñalada, pero seguro q’ Rosendo no lo iso. Todos le preguntaron como lo sabia. Ella \(contó\) que no lo \(había reconocido\).

‘Everyone was waiting and Lujanera spoke and \(said\) that after leaving the shed they \(went\) to a field, when a man arrived and confronted him and stabbed him, but surely it wasn’t Rosendo. Everyone asked her how she knew. She \(said\) that she \(had not recognized\) him.’

(Silvia V.)

We believe that this variable use is related to the way in which the subject acquired the knowledge and how reliable she believes the source of information and the information itself to be. This is known as evidentiality. Research into evidentiality has been driven by a series of studies conducted in recent decades on different languages, in particular on the indigenous languages of America (Aikhenvald, 2004; Chafe and Nichols, 1986; Fitneva, 2001; Guentchèva, 1996; Palmer, 1986; among others). It is important to address this issue in other languages, such as Spanish, which lack morphemes to account specifically for evidentiality.

3 All examples preserve the original utterance and transcription.
We believe that the linguistic variation in the reported speech is a manifestation of evidentiality. In the variety of Spanish we are looking at, we believe there is a relationship between the theoretical approach to the subject and the characteristics of the contact language, in this case Quechua, which has a coded system for this purpose.

Every statement is based on evidence available to the speaker, who becomes the guarantor of its content. Indeed, being “reliable” is inherent to any statement (Nølke, 1994: 84). This does not prevent the speaker from choosing to specify the source of the information from among a wide range, such as observation, inference, hearsay, rumor, or a dream that the speaker accepted as truth. In all these cases, the speaker’s statement includes linguistic reference to the source of the information.

Moreover, the speaker may access the information in various ways. He may have had direct or indirect access to the information (Willett, 1988). Direct evidence is that which is perceived through the senses and includes what is known as “firsthand”. In contrast, indirect evidence is information obtained second or third hand—reported evidence.

Different authors have shown that there are different approaches to organizing the domain of evidentiality and classifying evidential systems. In languages which have a specific grammatical system of this type, the speaker formally marks his commitment to or distance from the facts stated in his utterance, without necessarily expressing anything on the referential content of the statement.

In this chapter we propose the concept of evidentiality as the semantic substance referring to the source of information and we include the evaluation or perspective adopted by the speaker with regard to the content of the information conveyed. Because Spanish lacks specific morphemes to express evidentiality, we believe that the variable use of tenses that we are dealing with is in fact a linguistic strategy through which the speaker expresses the need to take a stance with regard to the content of the statement by selecting different verb tenses. The development of this linguistic strategy is supported by the basic meaning of the variable forms.

A first approach to verb tenses in Spanish describes PP as an expression of a past time prior to another past time, while PS expresses a situation prior to time of origin or time of speaking, which becomes the deictic centre of the temporal system (Rojo and Veiga, 1999: 2900 et seq.).

However, the perfective aspect expressed by PS puts the speaker in direct relationship with “what has concluded” and therefore with “what is known”—that which is understood as true. In contrast, the imperfective aspect of PP—
the lexeme *había* (had)—locates it in the sphere of “the unfinished” and thus “the unknown”, “the uncertain”, “the remote”.

In the utterances studied, according to the basic meaning we have proposed for the forms, selecting PS implies assigning a higher degree of certainty to actions—a form of acceptance or approval by the speaker, whereas PP suggests less certainty, wherefore the speaker distances himself from what is expressed in the statement. To sum up, we believe that there is opposition between the two forms due to the “conclusiveness” of PS on the one hand and the notion of “continuity” of an action “underway” contained in PP, on the other.

This is not exclusive to the variety of Spanish influenced by Quechua. We have found the same variable use in the Rio de la Plata variety, although it has a higher relative frequency of PS (Speranza, 2011). Let us look at the following examples:

(15) . . . en su casa leonides había descubierto que había encontrado una compañera y empezo a vestirse como la madre de la chica y hasta que un cierto dia llegaron las tias de la chica gorda y la llamaron cecilia le contaron que su madre había muerto y la chica fue donde se encontraba leonides.

‘. . . at home, leonides had discovered that she had found a companion and started to dress as the girl’s mother and until one day the fat girl's aunts arrived and called her Cecilia; they told her that her mother had died and the girl went to where leonides was.’

(Daiana N.)

(16) En el colectivo veniamos parados cantando un par de canciones y toda la gente nos miraba, algunos se reian y otros no. Cuando bajamos eran las 5:45 y yo tenia que llegar a mi casa a las 5:15, yo le dije a mi mamá que me quede a ver como se peleaban unos pibes y que despues nos quedamos a hablar en la esquina.

‘We were standing in the bus singing a couple of songs and everyone was looking at us, some were laughing and others were not. When we got off it was 5:45 and I was supposed to get home at 5:15, and I told my mother that I stayed to watch some boys fighting and then we stayed to talk at the corner.’

(Néstor D.)

We believe that the variable use—in which the frequency with which the forms are used is inverse compared to Spanish speakers in contact with Quechua
language—is a strategy that makes different use of the forms, even though it follows the same cognitive strategy of accounting for the speaker’s assessment of the source of the information and of the information provided by that source.

Here again we will focus on explaining the variability by the possible influence of the contact language.

We believe that the alternating use of PS and PP is related to how the speaker conceives the event he describes, and it shows whether he is committed to or distances himself from the referential content of that event, thus expressing an assessment of that event and of the source through the dependant verb in direct relation to the basic meanings put forward.

It follows that the verb forms used in certain contexts will vary according to:

i) The nature of the dependent base verbs, and
ii) The construction of point of view.

We will now show the extent to which these factors influence the selection of forms and whether they allow us to verify that, as we have suggested, these uses respond to evidential strategies in the variety of Spanish under study.

Firstly, we shall try to ascertain whether, as we have said, the nature of the dependent base verbs is a factor that explains variation.

The base verbs entail information that allows the speaker to take up a stance with regard to the event described. The semantic content of the dependent verbs is a significant factor, which the speaker resorts to in the construction of his communicative strategy. We have observed that this content is assessed by the speaker as “positive” and thus more “feasible” within the events in which the forms occur in variation (e.g. llegar [arrive], pedir [request], ver [see], etc.), the use of PS is favored, as in the following example:

(17) Un día al volver a su casa le contó primero a su hija que empezó una relación con una mujer. La hija se lo tomó bien y dijo que tenía ganas de conocerla entonces el protagonista la llevo para encontrarse, se saludaron esta todo bien pero cuando le contó al hijo mayor empezaron a discutir . . .

‘One day, when he came home, first he told his daughter that he started a relationship with a woman. The daughter was pleased and said she wanted to meet her, so he took her to meet the woman, they greeted each other and everything is fine but when he told the eldest son they began to argue . . .’

(Diego O.)
In contrast, contexts to which the speaker assigns a lower level of potential realization, actions assessed/desired as less "feasible", i.e., situations involving “negative” consequences from which the speaker wishes to distance himself (e.g. enterrar [bury], morir [kill], mentir [lie], morir [die], robar [steal], etc.) favor the use of PP, as shown in the following example:

(18) Esta leyenda se trata de que un hombre y una mujer se conocieron en un boliche y estuvieron juntos toda la noche y salieron de bailar y hacia mucho frío y el joven le prestó su campera y la llevó hasta la casa y le dijo que al otro día vaya a buscar la campera. El fue a buscar su campera y lo atendieron los padres y le dijeron que su hija había muerto el no le creía y lo llevaron al cementerio y la campera estaba sobre la tumba.

‘This is a legend about a man and a woman who met at a disco and spent all evening together and when they left the disco it was very cold and the young man lent her coat and took her home and she told him to collect the coat the next day. He went to get the coat and her parents told him that their daughter had died he did not believe it and they took him to the cemetery and his coat was on her grave.’

(Walter G.)

Table 5.3 shows the distribution observed according to the proposed variable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Past/PP</th>
<th>Past/PS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative base verbs</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive base verbs</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

O.R. = 2.67
\[ x^2 = 8.20 \] p < 0.01

The distribution of the forms matches our analysis quantitatively. The semantic content conveyed by the base verbs is directly related to the choice of the dependent verb form according to the basic meaning we have suggested for them.

Now we will look at the influence of the speaker’s assessment of the subjects whose speech he is reproducing, which we have called construction of point of view.
The texts we studied are of the type called polyphonic speech, where the speaker includes words attributed to different sources, and thus uses different mechanisms to present the different voices that make up the message being conveyed.

The speaker—here the actual person responsible for the judgments conveyed—adopts a position toward the statements he is repeating regarding the “quality” of their source (i.e. the characters he is talking about), to whom he attributes a given level of “reliability”. This in turn influences the degree of factuality and certainty that the speaker attributes to the events he is talking about, as shown through the points of view expressed in his utterances.

We shall use the term discursive subjects (hereinafter DS) to refer to the participants that the speaker is talking about. The speaker assigns a given intervention to each DS according to his evaluation of their action in the events he is describing. Thus, each DS is made liable for his/her actions through the points of view (hereinafter PoV) expressed in the utterance (Nølke, 1994: 85).

We have established different classes of discursive subjects according to the part they play in the account. Some are directly involved in the development of events and are responsible for decision taking, providing their view of the facts, and conflict resolution, among other things. Others are less relevant, sometimes even antagonistic to the main DS, and thus have less influence on decision taking, conflict resolution, etc.

We can thus distinguish the different discursive subjects in the utterances studied, according to the place assigned to them by the speaker. To do so, we have included the notion of point of view (Ducrot, 1984; Nølke, 1994).

We shall use the term DS1 to refer to the participant who voices the “hegemonic point of view”4 in the event, i.e. the one chosen by the speaker through which to focus the event.

We shall use the term DSX to refer to the rest of the discursive subjects, who take a less prominent part in the utterances, and voice the “non-hegemonic point of view” in the event.

The relative frequency with which the tenses are used differs between
(a) utterances where the information corresponds to the point of view of the DS who voices the “hegemonic” PoV in the event or “protagonist” (DS1), and
(b) utterances in which the information corresponds to the PoV of a “non-protagonist” DS (DSX), who has been assigned a less relevant part. This allows us to establish a relationship between the PoVs that the speaker constructs by assigning different levels of hegemony, as described above. The frequencies

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4 The notion of hegemony that we use here is related to the etymology of the term (“to lead”, “to guide”), departing from a sociological conception of the term.
with which tenses are used are thus a symptom of the cognitive profiling of the speaker through his speech. Let us look at examples:

(19) ...Reguel los siguió, cuando llegó se quedó un rato en la puerta y vio que Camilo bajo asustado, Reguel lo samarreo y le preguntó que le hizo a Rosaura y Camilo no le contestaba, Reguel quizo subir a la habitación y el dueño no lo dejo volvio a bajar y vio que Camilo estaba con dos policías y Reguel le dijo a la policía que Camilo le había hecho algo a Rosaura.

‘...Reguel followed them; when he arrived he stayed a while at the door and saw that Camilo came downstairs in panic; Reguel shook him and asked him what he did to Rosaura and Camilo did not answer; Reguel wanted to go up to the room and the owner did not let him; he came downstairs again and saw that Camilo was there with two policemen and Reguel told the police that Camilo had done something to Rosaura.’

(Laura G.)

(20) En un momento donde en el galpon todos tangueaban, se abrio la puerta, era F. Real q’ estaba herido de una puñalada, luego entro la Lujanera, F. Real se cae al suelo. Todos esperaban y la Lujanera hablo dijo q’ después de salir del galpon se fueron a un campito, cuando llego un hombre y lo enfrento, y le dio esa puñalada, pero seguro q’ Rosendo no lo iso.

‘While everyone in the shed was dancing tango, the door opened, it was F. Real who was wounded with a stab; then Lujanera came in; F. Real falls to the ground. Everyone was waiting and Lujanera spoke and said that after leaving the shed they went to a field, when a man arrived and confronted him and stabbed him but surely Rosendo did not do it.’

(Silvia V.)

Here, the construction of the PoVs is reinforced by the variable use of verb tenses. Thus, the speaker distances herself from the PoV of DS_X in utterances such as (19)—the voice of the antagonist—by using PP, while in utterances such as (20)—in which the “hegemonic” PoV prevails through the voice of the protagonist of the event—PS is preferred. The difference shown through the distribution of forms (Table 5.4) is a communicative strategy related to evidentiality. By selecting PS, the speaker assigns greater likelihood of occurrence,
and thereby greater responsibility, to the content in the speech of DS1, who voices the “hegemonic” PoV. In contrast, when the information corresponds to the “non-hegemonic” PoV, the speaker prefers PP, as we have suggested.

4.2.1 Expression of Evidentiality in Quechua

Different authors (Aikhenvald, 2004; Floyd, 1997; Granda, 2003; Klee and Ocampo, 1995; Martín, 1979; Palmer, 1986; Taylor, 1996; Weber, 1986) agree that Quechua, like other indigenous languages, has a precise morphological system for denoting evidentiality.

Quechua has a specific past tense for narrating or reporting, which refers to a remote time, not controllable by the speaker and disconnected from the present. This tense is marked by either -ñaq or -sqa, according to the dialect (Cerrón Palomino, 1987: 273):

\[(21)\] ni-ñaq or ri-sqa

\[\text{go P.N.}\]

‘he had gone.’

The Quechua language from Santiago uses the narrative suffix -sqa, which indicates that the action was performed either in absence of the speaker or while

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**Table 5.4** Frequency of use in relation to subjects who convey the information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Past/PP</th>
<th>Past/PS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less hegemonic PoV</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More hegemonic PoV</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

O.R. = 2.15

\[x^2 = 4.92 \quad p < 0.05\]
the actor had no control over it. It is typically used for narrating anecdotes and dreams, and for indicating an attitude of surprise in the speaker while narrating an event (Alderetes, 2001).

Calvo Pérez (1993: 108–111) claims that the narration of past events leaves aside the entities of the dialogue, and thus the speaker himself remains outside the events by using the reporting index -si / -s, as we shall see below:5

    child  dim  to be  prog  sub  1st  top  cuzco  accus  rep

    name  caus  1st  obj  fut  3rd  pl.  ben  take  1st  objª  np  3rd  pl.

'It is the case that when I was a baby (they say) they had taken me to Cuzco to be baptized.'

Calvo Pérez agrees with the description of the features of this past tense and believes that it involves shades of aspect that imply distance and unexpectedness compared to the regular past (Calvo Pérez, 1993: 110–111).

Quechua also has a series of mandatory validation suffixes, which include the assertive -mi to indicate firsthand information; the reporting -si to indicate second hand information or “hearsay”, and the conjectural -cha (with their specific phonological modifications). Let us look at the following examples from Cerrón Palomino (1987: 287–288):

(23) miku—n
(24) miku—n –mi

Both could be translated as “he/she eats”, but the addition of -mi in (24) implies a context that makes explicit the source of the information conveyed, putting into play a set of expectations, beliefs and attitudes which serve as background to the speech act. It could thus be translated as: “I know for a fact—because I have confirmed it myself—that, contrarily to what might be assumed, this person eats”. In contrast, if the suffix -si is added, the message could be translated as: “It is said—though I have no proof—that this person eats” (Cerrón Palomino, 1987: 287).

The purpose of these suffixes is to relate the speaker to his utterance in the speech act. Their use supposes certain knowledge of the cause and degree of certainty regarding what is being said. With regard to how they work in the Quechua language in Santiago, Alderetes says:

5 Example taken from Calvo Pérez 1993: 108.
... [el assertivo] -mi junto a -si y -cha integra un conjunto de sufijos que permiten especificar la fuente de la información transmitida. En particular, -mi indica que el hablante tiene alto grado de seguridad de lo que dice, transmite información de primera mano. (...) [El reportativo -si] indica que el hablante se basa en la autoridad de otra persona acerca del juicio que se emite. Simplemente repite lo que ha escuchado o lo que se comenta (...). [El conjetural -cha] indica duda, conjetura. Ocupa el lugar más bajo en la escala de seguridad expresada por el hablante (Alderetes, 2001: 267–270).

... [the assertive] -mi, -si and -cha belong to a set of suffixes that specify the source of the information conveyed. Specifically, -mi indicates that the speaker has a high level of certainty about what he says, and is conveying firsthand information. (...). [The reporting -si] indicates that the speaker bases his statement on someone else's authority, and is simply repeating what he has heard or what is being said (...). [The conjectural -cha] indicates doubt, conjecture, and takes the lowest place on the scale of certainty expressed by the speaker.

The description of the evidential system in Quechua and of verb tenses, in particular regarding the narrative properties of PP in Spanish and Narrative Past in Quechua, is particularly consistent with the basic meanings we have suggested for the analysis of the forms in variation. We believe that variable uses are linguistic strategies through which the speaker expresses his need to provide "evidence" of the events conveyed in different utterances with relation to the need to specify the source from which the information was obtained, as necessarily happens in Quechua.

4 Conclusions

In this chapter we have discussed the possibility of transfer in situations of language contact by emphasizing the cognitive processes underlying such situations. Linguistically, these processes give rise to intra-paradigm shifts in the receiving language as a result of the categorization of the semantic substance in the light of communicative needs.

Analysis (1) shows that one of the characteristics of dialects in north-west Argentina is the shift of the lo form to indicate the dative in utterances with direct speech. The unexpected skew in the frequency with which it is used in comparison to standard Rio de la Plata Spanish shows that it is a result of communicative needs of the speakers. Indeed, at least in narrative, the variable use of the clitics le and lo shows conceptualization regarding which entities
deserve to be considered more or less active. We have endeavored to reinforce the evidence of the hypothesis that the transparency of the third participant (Martínez, 1999) gives rise to the variation: when the accusative is speech, it is perceived as opaque in its capacity as participant and allows the less active form lo to be used to focus on the hierarchical relationship of speaker over interlocutor.

Consistently with the above, the parameters that influence this choice are related to the illocutionary force of the speech act represented by direct speech. The greater the illocutionary force—order, requests, threats, reproaches—the greater the relative frequency of the use of the accusative form.

This intra-category distribution may be related, as mentioned above, to the grammar of Quechua, which lacks a suffix to indicate the third person object and allows the use of the suffix -ta, which is typically accusative, to refer to datives, as occurs with di-transitive verbs, including the verb decir (tell/say). We believe that this grammar is a result of the opacity of the accusative as such and therefore to the lesser transparency of the dative as a third participant.

Analysis (2) shows that the greater use of PP of the indicative mode in the variety of Spanish studied shows a communicative need of the speakers (Speranza, 2005, 2011). The narrative past and the fact that validation suffixes are mandatory in Quechua explain the frequencies found.

The polyphony in our corpus directs us to the evidential system, through which the speaker establishes linguistic responsibilities in the different statements and his degree of commitment with the referential content of the event conveyed. This is confirmed by the factors influencing this shift because they are related to the source of information and to the information itself, i.e. the core of the evidential system.

The narrative character of the utterances favors the use of the different forms of reported speech, which are appropriate for expressing evidentiality, particularly in languages like Spanish, which do not have a specific code for expressing evidentiality.

The strategies used by the speakers are supported by the basic meaning of the forms in variation. Indeed, due to its inconclusive meaning, the PP can be used to distance oneself, to relativize the source or the information conveyed. In contrast, the PS emphasizes the speaker’s greater belief in the reported speech, because it is conclusive and repeats the use made in direct speech. With regard to the meanings suggested, the shift in the use of the PP is consistent with the existence of the evidential system in Quechua, by which speakers show the linguistic responsibilities expressed in the statements. In this regard, the lack in Spanish of a coded system for this specific purpose leads speakers
to develop their creative capacity from the resources available in the target language. The variable use thus expresses communicative needs of speakers who represent, in this case, of a community in which language is determined by the contact with Quechua.

The study of morphosyntactic variation—when it takes into account the significant basic contribution of alternating forms and the contexts that favor each variety in the light of the contact language—explains speakers' communicative strategies and is a highly relevant tool for analyzing language contact situations.

The frequency with which forms are used and their relationship with the features of Quechua allow us to interpret the ethno-pragmatic strategy of the cultural need to reinforce the degree to which the speaker affects his interlocutor.

References


