

BOOK REVIEW

Review of *Portuguese-Spanish Interfaces: Diachrony, Synchrony, and Contact*

Portuguese-Spanish Interfaces: Diachrony, Synchrony, and Contact, edited by P. Amaral & A. M. Carvalho, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 468 pages, 2014

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This volume, the first to be published in John Benjamins' new series *Issues in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics*, contains 17 original contributions, in addition to an introduction by the editors. What makes this volume unique within the extensive existing scholarship on Spanish and Portuguese linguistics is that all chapters are concerned with both languages in some way, be it in contrast or in contact.

The chapters are organized in four sections: Comparative perspectives in diachrony (chapters by D. Wanner, A. M. Martins, A. Quintana and M. Delicado Cantero), Comparative perspectives in synchrony (chapters by L. Ferreira & D. E. Holt, M. E. Armstrong & M. Cruz, P. O'Neill and A. R. Luís), Portuguese and Spanish in contact in communities and individual (chapters by A. M. Carvalho, Cristina Martins, J. Rothman, D. Giancaspro & B. Halloran, M. R. Salaberry & Custódio Martins) and Portuguese and Spanish in the Americas: The African legacy (chapters by J. M. Lipski, J. C. Clements, A. Schwegler and G. R. Guy). In this review I will use a somewhat different grouping.

One of the most striking differences between Spanish and Portuguese, as well as between European and Brazilian Portuguese has to do with the expression and placement of clitic pronouns. In this volume, three chapters deal with this topic. Ana Maria Martins (in "Syntactic change in Portuguese and Spanish: Divergent and parallel patterns of linguistic splitting") shows that until the first half of the 16th century both languages displayed the same variation between enclisis and proclisis in finite clauses, with the same ban against sentence-initial clitics. The substantial differences that we find nowadays are thus relatively recent (the chapter also deals with postnominal *algum/alguno*, where Portuguese appears to be at a more advanced stage in what are seen as parallel developments in the two languages).

The different rules of clitic placement in present-day Spanish and European Portuguese are analyzed by Ana R. Luís ("On clitic attachment in Ibero-Romance: Evidence from Portuguese and Spanish"). The author appeals to a distinction between morphological and phrasal attachment of clitics in order to account for the observable differences between the two languages. Scott Schwenter ("Two kinds of differential object marker in Portuguese and Spanish") considers both European and American varieties of the two languages, making the interesting observation that in spite of salient syntactic and morphological differences in the expression of objects, there are some remarkable commonalities at a deeper level. Based on corpus data, Schwenter shows that the variability between null objects and either tonic pronouns (in Brazilian Portuguese, e.g. 'I saw it' = *eu vi* vs 'I saw her' = *eu vi ela*) or tonic pronouns (in European Portuguese, e.g. *eu vi-a*) is conditioned by essentially the same criteria of animacy, definiteness and specificity that trigger the use of the preposition *a* with direct object noun phrases in Spanish (e.g. *vi a la profesora* 'I saw the teacher' vs *vi la lámpara* 'I saw the lamp'). In this sense, all three language varieties can be said to make use of some type of differential object marking. This is an important insight. These three chapters, put together, offer a very informative panoramic view on one of the most important aspects of variation in Ibero-Romance, from different theoretical perspectives and using different methodologies.

Other linguistic features of the two languages that are analyzed from a comparative perspective, highlighting commonalities and differences, include segmental phonology (Ferreira & Holt "On the partially divergent phonology of Spanish, Portuguese and points in between"), intonation, albeit limited to European varieties of the two languages (Armstrong & Cruz "The intonational phonology of Peninsular Spanish and

European Portuguese”), and patterns of allomorphy in irregular verbs (O’Neill “Similar and different patterns of allomorphy in the Spanish and Portuguese verbs”), as well as standard and non-standard usage of prepositions introducing finite complement clauses (Delicado Cantero “*Dequeísmo* and *queísmo* in Portuguese and Spanish”). Dieter Wanner’s chapter (“The position of Ibero-Romance in the Romania and of Portuguese within Ibero-Romance”) compares Portuguese with other Romance languages, especially Ibero-Romance (including, not only Spanish, but also Galician, Astur-Leonese, Aragonese and Catalan), from a mostly historical perspective.

Several of the chapters in the book consider situations where Spanish and Portuguese are or were in contact and the outcome of this contact. These situations are all very different and their analysis within a single volume is useful and illuminating. In the Americas, contact between Portuguese and Spanish is found in northern Uruguay, along the border with Brazil. As Ana M. Carvalho explains in her chapter devoted to this topic (“Sociolinguistic continuity in language contact situation: The case of Portuguese in contact with Spanish along the Uruguayan-Brazilian border”), this area was settled from Brazil, at a time when the political border between Brazil and Uruguay was yet to be fixed. Although the language spoken in this area has been given its own name, *fronterizo/frontereiro*, in some of the scholarly literature on this topic, sometimes with the suggestion that it is a mixed linguistic variety that shares features with Spanish and Portuguese (*portunhol*), Carvalho maintains that, as could be expected from its historical origin, the language of the region is simply Portuguese, with some non-standard features that are also found in rural varieties of southern Brazil. In actual performance, code switching and language mixing are found because speakers are bilingual in Spanish. Carvalho argues that the present-day situation is not conducive to the creation of a mixed language combining features of Spanish and Portuguese or to progressive convergence of the local Portuguese with Uruguayan Spanish, but rather to the maintenance of bilingualism. In this area of Uruguay, knowledge of Spanish is seen as essential, since it is the national language. At the same time, the existence of an open border where, in some towns, it is enough to cross the street to be in Brazil, makes bilingualism in Portuguese important. As Carvalho argues, this explains the spread to Uruguayan Portuguese of recent phonological changes in Brazilian Portuguese that are seen as prestigious, such as the palatalization of /d/ and /t/ before /i/ (as in *dia*, *tia*), even if this results in divergence from Spanish.

A less well-known example of Spanish/Portuguese contact, with a very different outcome, is that discussed in Aldina Quintana’s chapter (“Judeo-Spanish in contact with Portuguese: a historical overview”). Unlike in the Uruguayan case, where the sociolinguistic situation favors the maintenance of Portuguese/Spanish bilingualism, a shift to Judeo-Spanish was the logical outcome both for Portuguese speakers who participated in the formation of the Castilian-based Judeo-Spanish koiné in the Sephardic communities of the Ottoman empire at the time of the expulsion of the Iberian Jews, and in the later incorporation of waves of Portuguese-speaking Jewish immigrants into these communities. The result was the incorporation of lexical, syntactic and phonological features of Portuguese into the Judeo-Spanish language, which Quintana discusses in detail. In the specific situation of some Sephardic communities on the Adriatic Sea, it appears that the numerically very important immigration of Portuguese speakers to communities where Judeo-Spanish was already established actually led to the development of a true mixed language in the 17th century, including elements from Spanish, Portuguese and Italian.

Armin Schwegler, in his chapter “Portuguese remnants in the Afro-Hispanic diaspora”, discusses yet a third, and also very different, case of contact between Portuguese and Spanish. Schwegler attributes the presence of the third person pronoun *ele*, both in Spanish-based creoles (Palenquero, in Colombia) and in Afro-Spanish varieties elsewhere in Latin America, to a West African pidgin Portuguese brought to the Spanish colonies in the Americas as a result of the slave trade. Although other authors have explained this feature of Palenquero and Afro-Spanish as an internal development, Schwegler makes a strong case for the Afro-Portuguese hypothesis.

Historically, in the north of the Iberian Peninsula, Portuguese and Spanish, rather than being two languages in contact, were part of a dialectal continuum where Galician-Portuguese forms of speech blended into local Astur-Leonese varieties which, in turn, as one travelled east, became more and more similar to Castilian. With the subsequent spread of the standard national languages this situation has been altered, leading either to the disappearance of local varieties or to situations of bilingualism. The demographically and sociologically most important of these bilingual situations in western Iberia is nowadays that found in Galicia. The Galician/Spanish bilingual context is not discussed in this volume, perhaps because of its complexity, which might have required several chapters to do it justice. Within Portugal, an Astur-Leonese variety has been preserved in the area of Miranda do Douro. All speakers of

Mirandese are now bilingual in Portuguese and many of them also speak Spanish, given the proximity of the political border. Cristina Martins (“Mirandese in contact with Portuguese and Spanish”) compares the inflectional morphology and historical phonology of Mirandese with those of Portuguese and Spanish. As she shows, Mirandese shares most features with either Spanish or Portuguese, consistently with its geographical location in the northern Ibero-Romance continuum, although it also shows some specifically Astur-Leonese innovations, such as the palatalization of word-initial /l/, e.g. *lhuna* ‘moon’. Martins also examines the current vitality of the language and concludes that Mirandese is undergoing replacement by Portuguese in its traditional spheres, including communication between parents and children. Revival, however, is not impossible, as the language has been given official recognition and is now seen by many as a symbol of cultural identity.

Whereas the chapters just reviewed deal with Portuguese/Spanish contact, the contact of each of these two Ibero-Romance languages with African languages is also given a prominent position in this volume, including, in addition to Schwegler’s chapter, three other contributions. Gregory Guy (“Variation and change in Latin American Spanish and Portuguese”) notices the presence of similar phenomena of variation in New World Spanish and Portuguese, including the deletion of word-final consonants, sentence-final negation and the use of subject pronouns and argues that contact with African languages may have favored these parallel changes in Portuguese and Spanish.

John Lipski (“A historical perspective of Afro-Portuguese and Afro-Spanish varieties in the Iberian Peninsula”) investigates the neglected history of the presence in the Iberian Peninsula of significant numbers of African speakers of Spanish and Portuguese as an L2 from the 15th to the 18th centuries, evaluating the trustworthiness of literary imitations, which, as the author points out, constitute the only available source of information on this matter. Lipski concludes that, leaving aside baseless parodies, in these texts “there are also indications that a stable Afro-Portuguese speech mode may have existed” (p. 372) and identifies some of its features.

J. Clancy Clements’s chapter (“Form selection in contact languages: Evidence from some Portuguese and Spanish-lexified contact varieties”) has a wider scope as it considers nine Spanish and Portuguese-lexified pidgins, creoles and immigrant varieties from around the world. The question that he explores is why certain forms of a morphological paradigm are recurrently selected in contact varieties. He focuses on copulative verbs, tense/aspect/mood markers and pronouns and concludes that form frequency and detectability are crucial factors that explain selection of specific forms.


Finally, two chapters, by Jason Rothman, David Giancaspro & Becky Halloran (“On the structural basis of non-redundant acquisition: Evidence from Spanish bilingual L3 Portuguese”) and by M.Rafael Salaberry & Custódio Martins (“Cross-linguistic transfer of core aspectual conceptualizations in Portuguese and Spanish: Theoretical and methodological factors”) address issues in the acquisition of Spanish and Portuguese as an L2 or an L3, an area that is receiving increasing attention.

In the introduction, the editors make the claim that a comparative analysis of these two closely related languages, Portuguese and Spanish, can be especially illuminating and this claim is indeed abundantly substantiated in the present volume. The contributions brought together in this volume demonstrate that we gain in our understanding of many aspects of the structure and history of each of the two languages when we consider both languages together. The varied historical and geographical contexts where the two languages have been and are in contact are also better understood when they can be compared. As such this book is a very valuable addition to the study of Ibero-Romance. Given this demonstration of the fruitfulness of the approach, it is to be hoped that the new book series *Issues in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics* will continue to offer high-quality scholarship where the two languages are studied in tandem.

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