

In the third and last chapter of Part II, Taeschner relates the results of the experiment to the roles played by various factors of the learning process. Among these factors are attention span, memory, and sound discrimination. No single factor was shown to correlate with high achievement in the foreign language. However, children who learned rapidly and also had a greater capacity for work were more likely to be successful than those who learned more slowly and had a shorter attention span. The ability to discriminate sounds was found to characterize high achievers in the foreign language but did not play a role by itself in predicting success. Memory turned out to be markedly less important than predicted. The factor of motivation was not considered because all of the children, high and low achievers alike, had been motivated to learn the foreign language. Class participation, i.e., interaction as members of groups, seemed to mark all high achievers. Even children who were shy improved when they were placed in situations that promoted their participation in groups.

The students who ranked lowest in terms of proficiency in the foreign language were those characterized by Taeschner as slow, accurate, and nonparticipatory learners. Unlike the expectation one might have for success in mathematics, learning to speak a new language does not seem to require great logical and/or analytical skills. Far more important for second-language learning is the willingness to leap into the unknown and take chances communicating in a language that is only partially mastered.

Insegnare una lingua straniera nicely fills the gap that exists between the second-language researcher and the classroom teacher. The presentation of findings is lucid and highly accessible. The warmth and enthusiasm with which Taeschner writes reflect a deep, personal commitment to improving formal instruction in foreign languages for elementary school children. She demonstrates that the classroom need not be hostile to acquiring a new language. Through promoting interaction, it can become a locale where young minds are stimulated to create new worlds and learn new languages to use in them.

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Speaking Mexicano: Dynamics of syncretic language in Central Mexico. Jane H. Hill and Kenneth C. Hill. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1986. Pp. xiii + 493.

This is an important book, rich in insights and in carefully analyzed and presented data. It studies "the syncretic project," a continuum of ways of speaking drawn from both Nahuatl and Spanish, through which Indian peasants on the slopes of the Malinche volcano in Central Mexico have adapted themselves to the Spanish dominant society. As such it fits into the tradition of language contact studies by Haugen (e.g., 1953), Gumperz (e.g., 1982), and Albo (1975; not cited here). It also draws on over fifty years of sophisticated ethnographic, ethnohistorical, and linguistic studies of the Nahuatl (or *mexicano*) speaking communities, descendants of the Aztecs, in the Central Mexican highlands. Both authors have contributed a great deal, either separately or conjointly, to this research over the past ten years. This book, together with the earlier studies

summarized and documented in it, makes Nahuatl-Spanish one of the most thoroughly studied cases of language contact we have.

After three introductory chapters vividly sketching the geographic and socioeconomic setting and presenting the theoretical framework, *Speaking Mexicano* is organized around four core chapters: IV, "The frames for speaking Mexicano" (pp. 90–155); V, "Lexical borrowing and phonological convergence" (pp. 156–232); VI, "Syntactic convergence" (pp. 233–344); and VII, "Code-switching into Spanish" (pp. 345–402). The book concludes with a chapter describing the decay of the "syncretic project" and the possible outcome of the disappearance of Nahuatl or Mexicano, and an epilogue. It also contains appendices on research procedure and speaker selection, a general index on topics covered and authors, and a detailed index of speakers, allowing us to study the language use of individual Mexicano speakers (some of whom are cited in extenso over 30 times) separately. I will briefly summarize the four main chapters before concluding with some general comments.

Chapter IV is an ethnographic account of the categories of speech in the Mexicano communities: the words for languages and speaking, the significance attached to bilingualism and mixing, the status of Spanish as the "power code," the rise of Mexicano purism as a way to define ethnic boundaries in retrenchment, and the use of Mexicano honorifics to signal social hierarchy. A complex sociolinguistic picture emerges: Spanish competes with hispanicized Mexicano in prestige contexts, and Mexicano, sometimes without honorific markers, functions as the community or "solidarity" language. At the same time, we find language shift phenomena, such as a correlation between age and Mexicano usage.

Chapter V focusses mainly on linguistic aspects of lexical borrowing, while it is noted at the beginning that most borrowed lexical items derive from the sphere of Spanish cultural influence. This is not necessary, however, and the existence of a Mexicano word for a given concept does not preclude a Spanish borrowing. Different grammatical categories are described one by one. Spanish verbs are borrowed in their infinitive form, and receive Mexicano suffixes, e.g., *quin-COSTAR-oa* 'them-cost-transitive', i.e., 'it costs them', *COSTAR-ihui* 'cost-intransitive', i.e., 'it is costly'. Nouns can be freely borrowed, and undergo complicated patterns of morphological adaptation. Interestingly enough, many Spanish function words, including prepositions and conjunctions, have been borrowed as well, sometimes as syntactically loose discourse conjunctors, and sometimes with more specific syntactic functions. In spite of the extensive lexical borrowing, borrowing of affixes is rare and is limited to three nominal affixes. The second part of the chapter is a detailed study of processes of phonological adaptation of borrowed items. The most striking conclusion is that adaptation is not nearly as frequent as the standard picture of lexical borrowing would lead us to expect. When it occurs, it is subject to speaker manipulation and shows complex patterns of sociolinguistic stratification. Similarly, the frequency of using borrowings is sociolinguistically determined.

In Chapter VI, the complex issue of syntactic convergence is discussed. The authors claim that Malinche Mexicano syntax has converged completely with that of local Spanish. The shift to a completely head-initial word-order pattern,

already under way in Pre-Conquest Nahuatl, may have been hurried along by the influence from Spanish. The strategy of incorporating nouns in complex verbs, characteristic of Classical Nahuatl, has become quite rare, and other features of complex verbs have been replaced by analytic constructions as well. Spanish relative pronouns have been introduced. The wide range of uses of Spanish reflexive *se* has been extended to Mexicano particles. Finally, the introduction of Spanish *de* 'of', and *que* 'that', in Mexicano discourse has caused many Mexicano constructions to be more like Spanish. Only in the case of nominal concord do we find divergence between Mexicano and Spanish rather than convergence. It should be noted, however, that the local Spanish has not been studied by the authors; convergence goes only one way in their account.

Chapter VI, finally, concludes the survey of the syncretic project by analyzing code-switching. The authors begin by pointing out the difficulties in separating code-switching from borrowing, particularly when Spanish borrowed items undergo phonological adaptation so infrequently. They use the criteria for well-formed code-switchings in the recent literature with some success to distinguish borrowings from cases of switching. This section is a bit superficial, in my opinion, without much more research done on Mexicano syntax. They mention the important problem of determining what a speaker's Mexicano is like, before stating what is a well-formed case of switching. This problem is aggravated because of the syntactic convergence encountered between the two languages involved. The most interesting part of this chapter, however, is the study of the functions of code-switching and the attempt to analyze the phenomenon in terms of Bakhtin's translinguistics (e.g., 1935). In this approach, the different "voices" heard even in monologic texts may be represented in the form of different languages.

Linguists wish to emphasize that multilingualism is a type of competence, which is as orderly in its own way as monolingual competence. But a view of multilingualism which admits only order cannot address the fact that different languages bring with them different worldviews or ideologies, which may engage in battle, an engagement in which rules can be broken in order for one voice or another to achieve domination of the dialogue and impose its own point of view. (p. 396)

The types of meaning associated with different languages may impose their own chaos on multilingual discourse.

Hill and Hill's book contains more echoes of Gumperz than of Chomsky, or Labov for that matter. This gives us a wealth of insights, in the form of detailed commentaries on abundant textual material. This review has certainly not been able to do justice to this aspect of the book. The authors have not indulged in much quantification. Overall tables documenting processes of shift or change are rare. This is because the authors have wanted to stress the pattern of the syncretic project as an adaptive strategy. In the last chapter they describe how, finally, Spanish seems to take over. This presents a bit of a problem for this reviewer. The image one gets is of a three-phase development: (a) until 1530: Nahuatl; (b) 1530–1980: the syncretic project, as an adaptive strategy; and (c) 1980–: Spanish. Perhaps the transition from (b) to (c) is more organic than the text suggests. I should hasten to add that in many places the authors stress internal variation and change, but nonetheless their emphasis on the syncretic project as a functioning

system, characteristic of much anthropological work, leaves one with the unintended impression of more of a stasis than can be the case. Perhaps a perspective along the lines of work by Labov and Fishman would have been helpful here.

One of the valuable outcomes of this book is the image of the phenomena of language contact, here borrowing, convergence, and code-switching, as complex and interrelated. While the authors are generally careful to present their conclusions as tentative, a reading of the chapters on convergence and code-switching suggests to this reviewer the need for even more detailed linguistic analysis. To what extent have Mexicano and Spanish really converged syntactically? Can there be syntactic convergence without morphological convergence? Is the line between code-switching and borrowing as clear as the authors suggest? A more detailed and explicit account of Spanish and Mexicano grammar than is presented by the authors may be needed to answer these questions.

Work such as *Speaking Mexicano* offers an exciting prospect for comparative studies. The authors discuss some of the other language contact studies carried out in Mexico, in other Mexicano speaking areas and involving Otomi, but Spanish has profoundly influenced Amerindian languages throughout the New World, and even a cursory overview yields both intriguing similarities and differences between different situations of contact. I hope that the authors of this book will be willing to engage in this research as well; in the end it may deepen our insight into the situation in the Mexicano speaking areas of Central Mexico even more.

The book is very well written and well produced, clear in the presentation of the examples. Glosses of Mexicano words and morphemes are only given when this is essential for the understanding of the argument. This means that those who want to go through the reproduced texts independently will need to be equipped with a Nahuatl grammar and dictionary.

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Linguistic theory and second language acquisition: The Spanish nonnative grammar of English speakers. Juana Liceras. Tübingen: Günter Narr, 1986. Pp. xi + 203.

The relationship between linguistic theory and applied linguistics has been tenuous and often strained. The nature of this relationship may be due in part to the misapplication of theories to practical situations in which the theories have no direct relevance, e.g., the classroom (Newmeyer, 1983). Newmeyer states that "the inability of grammatical theory to produce immediate practical results in