

Linguistic borrowing in bilingual contexts

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Linguistic borrowing in bilingual contexts
by Fredric W. Field

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Table of contents

Foreword	XI
Preface	XIII
List of figures	XVII
List of tables	XIX
CHAPTER 1	
Introduction	1
1.0.1 Social factors	4
1.0.2 Linguistic factors	5
1.1 Borrowing as bilingual performance	8
1.2 Mixed languages — Language intertwining or extensive borrowing?	11
1.2.1 Defining mixed language	13
1.2.2 From product to process	15
1.2.3 The concept of matrix language	16
1.2.4 The correlation of transfer, substrate, and matrix	18
1.3 The plan of this book	22
CHAPTER 2	
Morphological structuring and system compatibility	25
2.1 Scales, indices, hierarchies, and clines: Continua of forms and meanings	27
2.1.1 The indices of synthesis and fusion	27
2.1.2 The cline of grammaticality	29
2.1.3 The cline of lexicality	32
2.1.4 A scale (or continuum) of morpheme types	33

- 2.2 Hierarchies of borrowability 34
 - 2.2.1 Borrowing hierarchies: Lexical items 36
 - 2.2.2 Borrowing hierarchies: Grammatical items 37
 - 2.2.3 Summary of hierarchies 37
- 2.3 The Principle of System Incompatibility 40
 - 2.3.1 Predictions within general classes 42
 - 2.3.2 The occurrence of anomalies: Reanalysis 44
 - 2.3.3 Predictions within subclasses 45
 - 2.3.4 The relative timing of borrowed elements 46

CHAPTER 3

Form classes and semantic types

49

- 3.0.1 The relationship of word class and semantic type 50
- 3.0.2 Form–meaning sets and semantic types 52
- 3.0.3 Organization of this chapter 53
- 3.1 Notions of word and word class 53
- 3.2 Contrasting points on a continuum 57
 - 3.2.1 Formal characteristics: Grammatical affixes versus content items 57
 - 3.2.2 Semantic characteristics: Grammatical affixes versus content items 59
 - 3.2.3 Function words: Formal and semantic characteristics 62
 - 3.2.4 Function words versus content words 65
 - 3.2.5 Function words versus inflectional affixes and elements in between 66
 - 3.2.6 Derivational affixes: Between content and inflection 67
- 3.3 Semantic types: Groupings of morphemes according to meanings 70
 - 3.3.1 Semantic types and subtypes of N, V, and Adj 73
 - 3.3.2 Person 75
 - 3.3.3 Object 76
 - 3.3.4 Activity 77
 - 3.3.5 Space 78
 - 3.3.6 Time 78
 - 3.3.7 Quality 79
- 3.4 Summary and comments 81

CHAPTER 4

The identification of form–meaning sets	83
4.0.1 The spread and integration of borrowed form–meaning sets	84
4.0.2 Identifying clusters of properties	86
4.1 Form identification characteristics: The role of salience	88
4.1.1 Transparency versus opacity	89
4.1.2 The opacity of fusional affixes	94
4.1.3 Borrowing continua of forms	98
4.2 Semantic characteristics	100
4.2.1 Inflectional meanings	102
4.2.2 Borrowing continua of meanings	105
4.2.3 Linking form and meaning	111
4.3 Issues of semantic complexity	113
4.4 Summary and general predictions	116

CHAPTER 5

Borrowing patterns in modern Mexicano	123
5.0.1 Bilingual phenomena	126
5.0.2 The corpus	128
5.0.3 Organization of this chapter	130
5.1 Overview of the participants: Mexicano and Spanish	132
5.1.1 Morphological structuring: The words of each language	134
5.1.2 The borrowing hierarchy of Mexicano	141
5.2 The role of form–meaning interpretation characteristics (FMICs)	144
5.2.1 FMICs pertaining to form	146
5.2.2 FMICs pertaining to meaning	148
5.3 The effects of borrowing	154
5.3.1 A chronology of borrowing	154
5.3.2 Phrasal and clausal organization	158
5.4 Discussion: The roles of form and meaning in borrowing	159
5.4.1 Issues of form	161
5.4.2 Issues of meaning	162

CHAPTER 6

Discussion	165
6.0.1 The relevance of form–meaning interpretation characteristics (FMICs)	166
6.0.2 The organization of this chapter	168
6.1 The PSI, FMICs, and other contact situations	169
6.1.1 Typologically similar languages	171
6.1.2 Along the index of fusion: Agglutinating versus fusional types	172
6.1.3 Along the index of synthesis: Isolating-analytical versus synthetic types	173
6.2 The analysis of apparent exceptions	174
6.2.1 Ma'a	174
6.2.2 Mednyj (Copper Island) Aleut	176
6.2.3 Wutun	178
6.2.4 Family trees with crooked branches	179
6.3 Connecting borrowing and various contact phenomena	180
6.3.1 Distinguishing code-switching and borrowing	183
6.3.2 Convergence and a composite matrix	187
6.4 The borrowability of inflectional categories	190
6.4.1 The emergence of category values	191
6.4.2 The inheritance of categories and category values	192
6.4.3 Limits on types of borrowable meanings/concepts	194
6.5 Conclusions	197
Appendix A: Additional Mexicano text	201
Appendix B: Spanish borrowings in the data	205
References	229
Name index	243
Subject index	245

Foreword

The question of whether there are constraints on what can be borrowed from one language into another, and if so what these constraints are, is one that is at the forefront of current research on language contact. The issue is important not only for our understanding of borrowing as a phenomenon in its own right, but also because of its broader implications for studies in the general area of language contact. For instance, if there is a controversial claim about whether similarities between two languages could be the result of language contact, rather than, for instance, of inheritance from a common ancestor, then knowing what the constraints on borrowability might be could help us to resolve the controversy.

Answers that have been given traditionally to the question of constraints on borrowability, once it is observed that at least some borrowing is possible, range from the positing of absolute constraints — certain things would be simply unborrowable under whatever circumstances — to the opposite extreme that anything can be borrowed under any circumstances. There are also intermediate positions, for instance that there is a hierarchy of borrowability, such that certain elements can only be borrowed if certain other elements are also borrowed, for example that verbs can only be borrowed if there is also borrowing of nouns. Another intermediate position would argue that certain kinds of borrowing are permitted, facilitated, impeded, or prevented by particular properties of the borrowing language. A persistent problem with the last mentioned kind of constraint has been the difficulty of pinning down just exactly what the constraint is meant to be: While statements might seem empirically testable that claim, for instance, that it is quite generally impossible for a language to borrow features that are incompatible with its own nature, it has proven almost impossible to pin down, with any degree of reliability, exactly what constitutes a violation of the “nature” of a borrowing language.

In the present work, Fredric W. Field not only examines critically a number of claims that have been made about hierarchies of borrowability, but also proposes — and this I see as the major contribution to the ongoing debate —

a particular constraint on borrowability that relates to an empirically ascertainable property of the borrowing language. Field argues that the borrowing language's morphological typology — whether it is isolating, agglutinating, or fusional — will constrain the possibility of borrowing features from another language. An isolating language can borrow neither agglutinating nor fusional morphology. An agglutinating language can borrow agglutinating, but not fusional morphology. A fusional language can borrow both agglutinating and fusional morphology. And of course, all languages can borrow “instances of isolating morphology”, since this simply amounts to the absence of morphology. The hypothesis is formulated in Section 2.3 as the complementary Principles of System Compatibility and of System Incompatibility (PSC/PSI).

The PSC/PSI hypothesis is investigated in detail against the material of Modern Mexicano, the result of language contact between the indigenous Nahuatl language of central Mexico and Spanish, whereby Nahuatl has borrowed substantially from Spanish. Nahuatl is an agglutinating language, while Spanish is a fusional language, so according to the PSC/PSI hypothesis Nahuatl should be able to borrow agglutinating morphology from Spanish, but not fusional morphology, and this is exactly what is observed: The Spanish agglutinating plural suffix *-s* has been borrowed into Mexicano, but not any of the fusional morphology of Spanish (for instance, in the verb system).

Field goes on to discuss a number of other cases where the PSC/PSI hypothesis seems to bear fruit, and also cases where, at least on one interpretation of the data, it might seem to be counter-exemplified. In all cases of the latter type there are competing historical interpretations of the data, some consistent with the PSC/PSI hypothesis, others inconsistent with it. Further research will be needed to ascertain whether, in such cases, it is possible to decide on independent grounds which of the competing interpretations is correct. If no counterexamples to the PSC/PSI hypothesis are found, then this would suggest that the PSC/PSI hypothesis is empirically robust and can in turn be used to decide among competing accounts, selecting the one that is compatible with the PSC/PSI hypothesis.

Like all good hypotheses, the PSC/PSI both provides solutions to existing problems and opens up a vast area of research that will follow up on testing the hypothesis. It has been my great pleasure to accompany the author on some of the initial stages of this journey of discovery.

Bernard Comrie
Leipzig/Los Angeles, January 2002

Preface

When I first traveled through Europe, I could not help noticing how people seemed to learn all sorts of languages with relative ease and how they cleverly moved from one to another in the course of normal conversation. It was very impressive. Raised in Southern California, I was used to a different sort of multilingualism (jokes about the American's lack of linguistic prowess notwithstanding), and the contrast was rather stark. My interest was definitely piqued. Even today, in many parts of California, the use of anything other than (standard) English is discouraged, and those who speak "foreign" languages are even looked down upon to a certain extent. Clearly, there are social and linguistic consequences to asymmetrical multilingual situations of this type, not all of them good, particularly as they play out in such areas of society as education. As I have continued to reflect on my own individual community over the years, its interlocking parts and the ways it interfaces with others, my attention has been increasingly drawn to how very ordinary people appear to snatch words from each others' languages. In fact, speakers of many different language varieties, from Spanish to Vietnamese and beyond, constantly seem to be weaving English words and expressions into their conversations, that is, when they are not switching from one complete system to another. Needless to say, this kind of linguistic phenomenon — borrowing — is not restricted to Los Angeles or other parts of the U. S.

So began a sincere and growing interest in language contact and what happens to languages (and their speakers) when cultures collide. The content of this particular book has been influenced to a great extent by many similar experiences and the actual work that was to follow. As it took shape, a number of friends and colleagues have taken part, offering input in the form of dialogue, data (apparent examples and counterexamples), correction, encouragement, and occasional agreement. As a result, I am indebted to a growing number of people for help and continuous support, but especially to John Hawkins and Bernard Comrie, without whose help this book would not have been completed. I am especially grateful for Hawkins' vision and his faith in me as his student.

For his constant input and encouragement, special thanks go to Comrie; he has been a friend, teacher, editor, proofreader, and at times anchor. The obligatory disclaimer is appropriate here: all mistakes, errors of commission and omission, and all instances of wrong-headed thinking are solely mine.

For their kindness, I would like to express special gratitude to Kenneth and Jan Hill of the University of Arizona for their inspiration and for making available their extensive corpus of Modern Mexicano. The Hills also made themselves continuously available as sounding boards for my thoughts and observations. *Their* work on Modern Mexicano continues to stand as a benchmark in the study of the links among society, culture, and language. I know that I am not alone in my appreciation; their contributions to the field cannot be understated. Of course, it should go without saying that no work such as this could be done without the pioneering efforts of such scholars as Edward Sapir, Einar Haugen, and Uriel Weinreich, and the current contributions of authors such as Sarah Grey Thomason.

As the ideas underlying this book were developing, I got into numerous stimulating and rewarding discussions. The context for much of this was the atmosphere that surrounds the various conferences available for specialists and students of language. For me, one of the best examples is the annual joint meetings of the Linguistic Society of American and Society of Pidgin and Creole Linguistics. The ongoing debate among the various schools of thought on the emergence of new language varieties and the constant evolution of older, perhaps more established ones provides much more than background information on such fields as contact linguistics (including such diverse areas as bilingual phenomena, creolistics, and language change), language acquisition (native and non-native), and so on. Open and honest interaction among peers undoubtedly leads to new ways of viewing our uniquely human capacity for language. In this regard, I thank Peter Bakker, now of the University of Aarhus, who from the very beginning of my studies freely offered his comments and continual support; Salikoko Mufwene for his candid responses to my work; Armin Schwegler for his unflinching friendship and sharing of ideas and data; Pieter Muysken for the example he sets as a scholar; Ad Backus for constant encouragement from the time of our first meeting in San Diego, California; and particularly, Carol Myers-Scotton for her tremendous example of commitment to the field and tireless giving of her time and self. I would be remiss if I didn't mention John Lumsden, whose prodding often got me back into motion in my work.

I would also like to acknowledge Bill Rutherford, Masha Polinsky, Joseph Aoun, Jean-Roger Vergnaud, Ed Finegan and the other teachers with whom I

had the privilege of studying during my graduate days at the University of Southern California. I will always remember each one vividly and the unique ways they had of challenging me to grow and expand my linguistic horizons. Others made contributions in perhaps slightly different ways, so I send thanks also to Laura Alvarez for her input; to John Singler, John Holm, and John Rickford, all past presidents of the Society of Pidgin and Creole Linguistics; Tom Klammer, Angela Della Volpe, Bob Noreen, and especially Sharon Klein for their encouragement and support in teaching; to Linda Williams-Culver for her kindness and willingness to listen on those days when it was especially needed; to David Kwak for his technical expertise on the computer; to Scott Kleinman for both his collegiality and computer smarts; and to Linda McCullum, Cindy Togami, Dee Polk, Tameika Hall, Janaki Bowerman, and Marjorie “Marjie” Seago — friends and colleagues on the administrative front. Also, special thanks go to my friends at John Benjamins, Bernadette “Bernie” Martinez-Keck and Paul Peranteau in Philadelphia, and to Anke de Looper and Kees Vaes in Amsterdam.

Last and most, a very special note of appreciation goes to my wife, Cathy and the boys, who had to put up with me during my studies and in preparation of this manuscript. To all those I may have unintentionally neglected in this preface: Thanks.

List of figures

Chapter 2

Figure 2.1. Language types and allowable morphemes 40

Figure 2.2. Compatibility and incompatibility 41

Chapter 4

Figure 4.1. Mapping patterns of grammatical affixes 96

Figure 4.2. The mappings of Spanish verbal *-o* 97

Figure 4.3. Calculating mapping possibilities (present tense) 97

List of tables

Chapter 4

Table 4.1.	Form–meaning interpretation characteristics (FMIC): Forms	93
Table 4.2.	Inflectional categories associated with verbs	103
Table 4.3.	Form–meaning interpretation characteristics (FMICs): Meaning	104
Table 4.4.	Content items according to semantic and syntactic complexity	115
Table 4.5.	Compatibility versus incompatibility	118
Table 4.6.	FMICs: form–meaning sets	119
Table 4.7.	Summary of predictions regarding FMICs	120

Chapter 5

Table 5.1.	The occurrence of Spanish content items	141
Table 5.2.	The occurrence of Spanish function items	141
Table 5.3.	The occurrence of Spanish form–meaning sets in Mexicano	142
Table 5.4.	The occurrence of Spanish form types based on selection	147
Table 5.5.	The occurrence of Spanish concept types	149
Table 5.6.	Borrowed Spanish nouns	151
Table 5.7.	Borrowed nouns: semantic (sub)types	152
Table 5.8.	Borrowed nouns: ratios of hyperonyms to hyponyms	153
Table 5.9.	Spanish content items according to Karttunen and Lockhart (1976)	156

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A number of attempts have been made to establish systematic approaches to the studies of lexical borrowing, code-switching, contact-induced language change, language attrition and convergence, and so on, with some proposing various links among these seemingly disparate phenomena. Recent developments have focused attention on the social and linguistic factors they hold in common and apparent similarities found in underlying processes. Examples of this growing trend are Thomason and Kaufman (1988) — more recently Thomason 2001 — who stress that the transmission of languages within differing social contexts by other than normal (i.e., “parental”) means shapes their fundamental characters (hence, their distinction between genetic and non-genetic origins), and Myers-Scotton (1995, 1993a, 1993b), who consistently advances the argument that the similar characteristics found in contact phenomena are traceable to similar underlying cognitive processes operating in the heads of individual (bilingual) speakers that collaborate to form what appears to be a matrix or base language system in performance, which, in turn, determines the nature of these phenomena (cf. Myers-Scotton 1995:239). She also suggests correspondences between language transfer (and the development of interlanguages) in second/subsequent language acquisition and substrate influence in the emergence of new speech varieties (e.g., pidgin and creole varieties), especially with respect to those evincing degrees and types of language mixing.¹ These works have generated much discussion in the growing field of contact linguistics.

In many of these studies, one can find a number of common linguistic threads, especially regarding the roles of the languages involved. Specifically,

1. Some linguists include pidgins, creoles, and other mixed languages under a general heading of “mixed languages” (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:3). Lines between these types may appear blurry owing to the particular and varied circumstances of their origins. Nevertheless, to avoid the obvious terminological confusion, in the present work, the term “*mixed language*” will refer specifically to a variety that clearly and overtly shows relationships to two (or more) distinct languages and does not include pidgins or creoles. The inclusive term “*contact language*” will be used to refer to all language varieties arising in contact situations.

when speakers of two distinct languages (representing two individual cultures) come into intense, day-to-day contact with each other, degrees of bilingualism are to be expected. Their respective languages, then, are said to be in contact when they are both spoken (alternately) by the same persons (Weinreich 1953:1), that is, at the same time in the same place (Thomason 2001:1). Languages in this kind of intimate contact often undergo a number of resultant changes, and these changes are generally concentrated in a single direction. In cases where one language is clearly dominant in a number of social domains, the dominant (or superordinate) will usually exert greater influence on the recessive (or subordinate) than the recessive does on the dominant (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:67–68; Thomason 2001:10–13). The dynamic relationships established among speakers and between linguistic systems have the potential to induce (perhaps, precipitate) a number of possible outcomes. For instance, the dominant language may assume the role of lexical donor, providing certain kinds of words or morphemes to be selected by speakers of the recessive language for adoption while the recessive language system becomes the recipient of the “donated” words and morphemes, acting as a kind of morpho-syntactic matrix into which these elements are grafted. In the most extreme cases, borrowed elements have replaced native ones to such an extent that a new and distinct variety emerges (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:48, 76ff; Thomason 2001:85–91).

The present study is primarily concerned with the processes by which forms (i.e., form–meaning sets) from a lexical donor language, language Y, are imported and integrated into a recipient language, X — X being the original language spoken by a speech community. It is assumed that speakers of X initially attempt to reproduce in their own speech (perhaps by some sort of imitation) forms that previously existed only in Y (Haugen 1950:212). These forms may or may not be fully accepted by speakers of X as subsequently belonging to X. Consequently, the term *borrowing* will be used primarily to refer to the integration of forms into a recipient language. As discussed in later sections of this work, the importation of foreign words or morphemes into one’s native language typically include various degrees of phonological adaptation; another possibility is the direct borrowing of foreign phonemes (or close approximations). However, to point out the obvious, phonological processes which may have applied to a particular phoneme in its source language are not normally borrowed along with the morpheme (or phonetic string) in which it appears. Borrowed morphemes, including those with non-native sound segments, generally become subject to the phonological processes of the new

linguistic environment. In fact, as evidence of an underlying matrix structure, reanalysis of some kind, at various levels of grammar, is to be expected.

While it is possible that a borrowing language will adopt certain phonological and structural characteristics from another independently of lexical borrowing, extensive borrowing from an individual source may gradually lead to phonological and other structural changes in the recipient in a kind of domino effect (Haugen 1950:225). It is also safe to say that a significant amount of lexical borrowing is to be expected *before* one finds evidence of other “interferences”, i.e., actual structural borrowings (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:20–21; Thomason 2001:69). Regarding morphology, it has been proposed that free morphemes are more easily borrowed than bound, and that the more highly bound the morpheme (e.g., inflectional affixes versus function words), the less likely it will be borrowed (Weinreich 1953:29–37). Generally speaking, the more closely associated elements are to the particular grammar (morphosyntax) of the potential donor, the more difficult they will be to borrow (Haugen 1950:224–225; cf. Thomason 2001:60). Consequently, syntactic characteristics are often considered to be the least easily diffused aspects of language (Romaine 1995:64) and the very last to be borrowed.²

On the one hand, when there is casual contact between languages, i.e., among their speakers, lexical items may be borrowed where there is little or no extensive bilingualism. For instance, American English has borrowed many cultural items from immigrant groups, e.g. *kosher* from Yiddish, *pizza* from Italian, *sauerkraut* from German, *tortilla* from Mexican Spanish, *sushi* from Japanese, and so on. On the other hand, many studies of extensive borrowing, the result of intensive contact, assume that the requisite starting point is a subset of the total number of native speakers of the recipient variety who are also relatively proficient and perhaps equally skilled in the donor,³ who act as a kind of conduit for the diffusion of lexical items and other properties of the

2. This is with the likely exception of word order (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:54f; cf. Thomason 2001:69). Contact induced word order changes have been observed in a number of instances, for example, in U.S. versions of Spanish (Sánchez 1982:34ff) and Low German (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:81–83), Asia Minor Greek (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:18, 220–222), and so on.

3. In many respects, degrees and types of bilingualism are always relative and difficult to assess, especially regarding competence and patterns of usage in each language (Hoffmann 1991:17–32, Grosjean 1982:230ff). As a consequence, many scholars posit the existence of proficiency continua in all varieties represented in a particular community (e.g., Silva-Corvalán 1994:11; Campbell and Muntzel 1988:185).

donor language (Thomason and Kaufman 1988:66). In this respect, Grosjean (1982), among others, distinguishes between (a) when an individual speaker spontaneously uses a form from another language within an utterance (perhaps adapting it phonologically and morphologically to varying degrees), what he terms *speech borrowing*, and (b) when words from one language have been borrowed by another and used by monolingual speakers of that recipient language, termed *language borrowing*. The connection between the two is obvious: languages borrow words because individual speakers have at one time borrowed them.

1.0.1 Social factors

A number of social factors have been discussed to account for the amount and types of borrowing. Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 65ff), for example, discuss (a) the intensity and length of contact; (b) the relative number of speakers of each variety; (c) cultural and political (therefore, economic) dominance of one group of speakers, and so on. In situations where these factors conflict, e.g., when a politically dominant group is numerically inferior to the subordinate group, patterns of borrowing may differ. The cultural pressure of a politically and numerically dominant group on a subordinate population is also offered as an explanation for why speakers of a minority language often learn a majority, prestige variety, while members of the dominant group do not, as a rule, seek to become bilingual by mastering the minority language.

Below is a brief list summarizing reasons for borrowing that have been posited by researchers in recent years:

- a. as a result of the cultural dominance of the donor language (Watson 1989:49–51; Mougeon and Beniak 1989:303–307; Hill and Hill 1986:4; cf. Gal 1989:318);
- b. to be associated with speakers of the dominant language (and gain socially from its prestige) (Mertz 1989:112; Hill and Hill 1986:103ff; Thomason and Kaufman 1988:44ff; Grosjean 1982:336–337);
- c. to fill lexical gaps in a recessive language well along in the process of shift (Myers-Scotton 1993a:167; Huffines 1989:212; Bavin 1989:270ff; Haugen 1989:65; Grosjean 1982:336; Karttunen and Lockhart 1976:16ff);
- d. to facilitate understanding with younger speakers who are no longer familiar with original forms of the recessive language (Bavin 1989:277; Haugen 1989:67);
- e. for affect or convenience (Hoffmann, 1991, pp.102–103; Grosjean 1982:311–313).

Grosjean (1982) also points out that borrowing of specific words may occur because only one language has the desired word, or because an individual is not equally familiar with the words of both languages and chooses the most available word (311). Whatever the actual reasons may be, patterns of borrowing remain nonetheless fairly predictable with respect to the formal characteristics of borrowed elements.

1.0.2 Linguistic factors

Two linguistic factors often cited as playing promoting and inhibiting roles in borrowing are frequency and (formal) equivalence (Van Hout and Muysken 1994: 42; Weinreich 1953: 61). The first, frequency, refers to how often specific items occur in a *donor* language. Frequently occurring items may have a pushing effect on a borrowing language: on the one hand, the more frequent an item is in the donor, the better it is as a candidate for borrowing; on the other, the more frequent an item is in the recipient language, the more of an inhibiting affect it will exert, thereby resisting or blocking the borrowing and subsequent usage of a corresponding lexical item from the donor. The second of these factors, equivalence, pertains to word classes, i.e., whether or not a particular form finds a structural or formal equivalent (usually defined as an equivalent form class such as N, V, Adj, and so on), which will either facilitate (if the answer is in the affirmative) or inhibit its inherent borrowability.

There are three points of caution when considering frequency as a cause. One, if frequency has a significant statistical impact on borrowing, its effects appear primarily with respect to certain morpheme types, i.e., those constituting content items such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives, whether free-standing or bound roots or bases. For example, content morphemes in the Romance languages normally occur with obligatory inflections for gender, number, and so on. Nevertheless, when a particular lexical item is borrowed, only the content morpheme, as perceived by speakers of the borrowing language, is incorporated into that language.⁴ Grammatical morphemes, which may consist of independent

4. This implies morphological reanalysis. For example, there are a number of Spanish borrowings into U.S. varieties of English, for instance, the word *taco*, the name for a popular Mexican food item. In Spanish, the *-o* ending is an inflectional affix indicating grammatical gender. English, which does not have grammatical gender, has borrowed the entire word as one unanalyzable unit — a content item. It has not borrowed an affix or the inflectional category of gender (which would apply to the entire lexicon).

function words, roots, or affixes, though they are among the most frequently occurring forms in any language, are clearly not borrowed on this basis (if at all). Two, it remains to be demonstrated how core vocabulary items (e.g., words for certain basic body parts, kinship relationships, everyday activities, and the like), which are particularly resistant to change (replacement or loss), correlate with frequency counts: if they are, indeed, as frequent as one might think, why are they almost never borrowed or replaced?

Three, while frequency may be a factor in the integration of particular content items into a recipient language, its overall effect may depend on other linguistic factors, for example, semantic transparency, relevance, and so on (Van Hout and Muysken 1994: 52–54). Moreover, the frequency of a particular word in a language (e.g., in corpora formally obtained from a wide range of native speakers or written texts) does not necessarily determine an individual or identifiable group of borrowers' relative exposure to that form. For example, a typical native speaker of, say, Spanish in Mexico City may not be exposed to agricultural or other terms from specific semantic fields (e.g., occupational nomenclatures) to the same degree as a bilingual speaker (of relative proficiency) of Spanish and Modern Mexicano (Náhuatl) in the relatively remote Malintzin (Malinche) region of central Mexico who may have more intense exposure to such terms as a consequence of his/her expertise in a particular occupation. In addition, many bilinguals are likely to have access to a somewhat narrower range of registers of speech in one or both of their languages as a result of socioeconomic conditions, hence, fewer semantic types (cf. Grosjean 1995: 259), especially if they are systematically restricted as a consequence of subservient or subordinate social status.

With respect to the possible effects of frequency on lexicon, one can contrast borrowing and the processes of pidginization or creolization. In the emergence of a pidgin, there is only the pull of the emerging pidgin to establish a rudimentary, core vocabulary and the complicit, uninhibited push from the lexifier (source) language. Little possibility exists of an overt blocking affect from an original (recipient) lexicon because there is no ostensible (or tangible) competition among lexical items given the separate linguistic identity and function of a pidgin against that of a native language. There is only one target, the lexicon of the donor/superstrate. However, if frequency is a main force, it remains to be seen why the most frequent items (function words and various affixes) are noticeably *absent*. In fact, their absence is even more conspicuous in the beginning stages when frequency would seem to have its strongest potential affect. Processes of equal or greater force must be present to over-ride its effects.

However, it must be acknowledged that frequency may be one of a number of factors which figure in the long term in the lexical expansion of a pidgin or creole. It is also important to note that sufficient evidence comes from studies of creole languages such as Berbice Dutch, Tok Pisin, Kikongo, Lingala, Haitian Creole, and others, to strongly suggest that there is, in fact, competition among grammatical categories from substrate languages — acting in relatively covert fashion as morphosyntactic matrices — that manifests itself in various ways, in some cases along with recognizable lexical contributions from substrate and adstrate sources.

Concerning equivalence, any formal notion must be established along some sort of sliding or gradient scale. This is especially necessary due to the multitude of ways lexical and grammatical meanings are represented in the languages of the world. The morphological character of each language will vary, but a scale for each language needs to be proposed to identify more precisely where the two languages may indeed have potential correspondences and mismatches among their diverse form–meaning sets. Insofar as nouns are consistently reported to be the first and most frequently borrowed items (followed by verbs or adjectives), perhaps one can conclude that it is easier for Y nominals to match up with X nominals both semantically and formally. After all, nominal classes appear to be more homogeneous across languages. Considering variable levels of proficiency in each language, identifying corresponding nominals seems to require a relatively low level of proficiency in either (or, perhaps both) languages. Conversely, borrowers may have the greatest difficulty finding equivalences in specific areas where a greatly decreased likelihood of formal and semantic correspondence exists. The most obvious example would be situations in which one language encodes a relatively opaque grammatical concept with an affix (or, even a zero or unmarked form) and the other with an individual function word. In such cases, correspondence may be difficult to establish on both formal and semantic grounds, though perhaps not a total impossibility. Nevertheless, exact equivalence is not a linguistic certainty merely because of a consensus among bilingual speakers that some kind of informal paraphrase or translation is possible between two formally distinct forms or expressions (cf. Gutknecht and Rölle 1996: 1–10).

More sophisticated ability in translation (seeking equivalent expressions) obviously requires a much higher degree of proficiency in both languages. It is also clear that bilingual proficiency will fluctuate among members of a given community, producing a diluting affect that might skew borrowing to areas of greater possible equivalence, reducing language borrowing to the lowest

common denominator, and, perhaps, obfuscating structural borrowing (one aspect of convergence). Any number of individual forms from Y, however, will diffuse even to monolingual speakers of X through the agency of more proficient bilingual members of the community (the most likely conduits of lexical innovation). As a logical consequence, any and all members of a speech community in which borrowing is a productive process can actively participate, irrespective of bilingual ability.

1.1 Borrowing as bilingual performance

Two key figures in the study of language contact are Einar Haugen and Uriel Weinreich.⁵ It is to their credit that much of their work still stands as the basis for current approaches. Although certainly not the first to do so, Haugen pointed out the obvious difficulties in the use of the term “borrowing”. The recipient language is not expected to give or pay the word back; neither can the process be called “stealing”, in that nothing is actually taken or removed from the donor. Despite the inherent inadequacies of such analogies, a more recent one may better illustrate the character of the processes involved. Taking a concept from the realm of computers, lexical borrowing can be seen as the *copying* of a form from one language system (the lexicon of Y) into another (X) (Johanson 1992), with or without all the associated meanings or concepts it typically expresses in its source language.⁶

In one of his most cited works, Haugen (1950: 211–220), in an attempt to clarify then current terminology, divided borrowed elements into a number of classes depending on phonological and semantic characteristics. For example, he made distinctions among (a) *loanwords* — which show the importation of form and meaning with degrees of phonological integration (all, none, or partial); (b) *loanblends* — hybrids or combinations of foreign and native forms, e.g., co-worker (Hartmann and Stork 1972: 133); and (c) *loanshifts* — in which a foreign concept (meaning) is represented by a native form. This last term includes “loan translations” (calques), e.g., English *superman* from German *Übermensch* (Crystal 1991: 205), and “semantic loans” (semantic extensions), in

5. See, for instance, Haugen 1950, 1953, 1989 and Weinreich 1953.

6. Obviously, concepts can be imported without their associated labels, as well, in what Haugen (1955) termed “loanshifts” — discussed in the following paragraph.

which the range of meanings expressed by a native form is extended to include a new, usually related concept, e.g., U.S. Spanish *grados* “degrees” extended to include the meaning of English “grades” (Spanish *notas*) (Silva-Corvalán 1994: 170).⁷ Relevant to the present work, loanwords can be further classified into (a) *additions*, those that provide labels for objects and concepts newly introduced to the culture,⁸ and (b) *substitutions*, those for which forms are already available in the recipient language (also known as a kind of relexification) (Albó 1970). Much attention is paid to (b) because the question naturally follows as to why speakers of one language would select forms from another when corresponding forms already exist in theirs. Speakers of a recipient variety must derive sufficient benefit to warrant the selection and usage of competing forms from a lexical donor.

It is apparent that the phonetic shape of only one morphological unit is taken in cases of “drastic allomorphy” such as in so-called strong (radical changing) verbs (e.g., Spanish *tengo* < *tener*) or suppletion (Spencer 1991: 8). This may produce the appearance of simplification in the recipient language, though interpreting borrowing as a form of simplification can only be made from the perspective of the donor language and its speakers and not from that of the borrower. This applies in cases of relexification, as well. When only the form or label is borrowed, the semantic content is assumed to be more or less the same as the native word it replaces. However, inherent in this is the possibility of further semantic splits where both native and borrowed forms exist but their meanings become more specialized (Sánchez 1982: 37–40).

Regarding the actual starting point of the borrowing process, for example, whether or not spontaneous borrowings in the speech of proficient bilinguals are better viewed as “speech” or *nonce* borrowings or as instances of code-switching (cf. Myers-Scotton 1993a, 1993b, 1995; van Hout and Muysken 1994; Muysken 1995; Poplack and Meechan 1995), it seems reasonable to assume that “...every loan starts as an innovation...” (Haugen 1950: 212); the borrowing process — from isolated, one-time usage of a copied form in normal bilingual speech to its complete acceptance and integration into the recipient system — has to start somewhere. Some sort of progression must exist from speech borrowing to language borrowing (in Grosjean’s terminology). For the present

7. Silva-Corvalán 1994 (170ff) refers to these semantic extensions as “single-word calques”.

8. See, for example, Karttunen and Lockhart (1976), Hill and Hill (1986) and Hill (1988) for reference to Spanish loans into Náhuatl (Mexicano), Bavin (1989) for English loans in Warlpiri, and Sánchez (1982) for English loans in Chicano Spanish (especially, 37ff).

purposes, forcing distinctions among terms like “innovation”, “nonce borrowing”, “lexical interference”, and “single-item code-switch” does not significantly affect the course of our discussion (cf. van Hout and Muysken 1994: 40).

By defining language contact in the context of *speakers*, Weinreich brought to the fore the possible roles that individual members of a bilingual community play in the various contact phenomena. As a consequence, the focus shifts to the mental processes (or “interferences”) that can be inferred to operate. Accordingly, those showing greater proficiency in the two (or more) languages are assumed to have a heightened ability and opportunity to draw upon the resources of either (or all) language system(s) and perhaps keep them separate. Specifically, Weinreich made general distinctions among Types A (coordinate), B (compound), and C (subordinate) bilinguals (1953: 9–11). Type A bilinguals have, in effect, acquired their languages in such a way (in separate environments) that they appear to possess two distinct linguistic systems. In Saussurean terms, each language has its own set of signifiers (forms) and signifieds (meanings); viz., the forms of each language remain separate with their own associated meanings. Type B bilinguals have learned their languages in such a way that only one set of meanings underlies two sets of forms; this may occur when both languages are acquired in the same contexts. Type C bilinguals, in contrast to both Type A and Type B, can only access meanings of weaker language forms through their stronger one, effectively succeeding in certain (limited) communicative functions only when engaging in continuous mental translation. More recent work suggests, as Weinreich was quick to note, that the form recognition abilities (word memory) of individual bilinguals cannot be accurately described in such strict terms, i.e., as exclusively A, B, or C. An individual’s representational system(s) that can affect lexical access may be situated anywhere on a continuum between extremes (i.e., from types A to C), determined by such social and linguistic factors as bilingual acquisition history (sequential or simultaneous), levels of proficiency in each language, form type (content items versus inflections), and so on (de Groot 1993: 46).

These distinctions and the conclusions that can be drawn with respect to the ways in which the bilingual lexicon might be organized become important when attempting to understand how such things as code-switching, borrowing, simultaneous translation, and other abilities that only proficient bilinguals appear to possess can actually occur. A number of issues broached by Weinreich remain the focus of much current psycholinguistic research into bilingualism: (a) Just how closely associated is lexical material from each language stored — is there one lexical system or two (Hoffmann 1991: 75–79, Romaine 1995: 205–210)?