

Syntactic reanalysis as internal change: exploring the dangers of intake

INTRODUCTION This abstract aims at revisiting the argument that all grammar change, exogenous and endogenous alike, is internal (i.e., a product of the internal mechanisms that controls linguistic function). I argue that the synchronic data of deviant structures in child language as presented in Belletti (2017) are at the heart of the argument for not only a *Child Innovator Approach* (CIA; Cournane 2017) but also evidence for the internal pressures that lead to (synchronic) deviant structures and, eventually, diachronic change. As an example of this, I argue that these internal pressures gave rise to the main clause complementizer agreement (C-AGR) phenomenon in Galician, a typologically rare agreement pattern for Romance.

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THEORY Work connecting child language deviance to diachronic change often (indirectly) addresses the argument that change is endogenous (i.e., caused by internal factors) or exogenous (i.e., caused by external factors) (Willis 2017). In the child language acquisition literature, however, deviance is seen as a purely internal result stemming from the differences between *input* and *intake* (Omaki 2010; Omaki et al. 2010; Omaki & Lidz 2015; Gagliardi & Lidz 2015; Pearl in press, a; *i.a.*). This is best predicted as suggested in Phillips & Ehrenhofer (2015:416-417) regarding the three parsing outcomes:

- (1) a. A learner fails to assign a parse due to its complexity or its arriving too quickly;
- b. A learner systematically assigns an incorrect parse to a string due to parsing biases or reanalysis failure;
- c. A learner successfully parses an input string so that it reaches the perceptual intake mechanisms and feeds the learning systems (e.g. statistical)

In Author (2021), I claimed that (1b) is the pathway that leads to grammar change when *repair* of the learning bias for a string/phenomenon is not realized. Thus, *pace* Kiparsky (2021), misparsing should be considered a prime cause for situations of potential change.

From a CIA perspective, some change is truly exogenous in the sense that children may adopt assumptions about their grammar that do not form part of the adult grammar. This has been shown in Belletti (2017) for Italian children that both differentially mark their objects and front them to a preverbal position (2), neither of which is licit in the corresponding adult variety.

- (2) Il coniglio [a il penguin]_i lo_i tocca
the rabbit DOM the penguin CL_{M.SG} touch.PRS.3SG
'The rabbit touches the penguin.'

In Author (2021), I claim that this type of internal pressure may be explained due to cognitive constraints (Omaki 2010, Gagliardi & Lidz 2015, Omaki & Lidz 2015) as well as the developing properties of derivational constraints (e.g. *Distinctness Condition*, Richards 2010). Here, misparsing does not play a direct role but, instead, the internal biases the child herself creates. As pointed out by Pearl (in press, b), deviant structures may be created by extralinguistic aspects of the acquisition process (e.g. Poverty of the Stimulus). However, as most diachronic change has a traceable pathway, we should expect the lack of perfect transmission to be a factor (Hale 1998). Thus, the misparsing of input that feeds the perceptual intake component of the language acquisition device seems a viable explanation for grammar change via the CIA.

GALICIAN COMPLEMENTIZER AGREEMENT Based on the observations above, it should be easy to see how similar types of biases may impact parsing as described by Phillips & Ehrenhofer. In Author (2021), I claim that misparsing of the biclausal structure in (3) led to the reanalysis of a monoclausal complementizer agreement construction (4).

- (3) [Ve-lo]_{CLAUSE 1} [aí vai Xan]_{CLAUSE 2}
 see.PRS.2SG-CL_{M.SG} there go.PRS.3SG Xan
 ‘You see him, there goes Xan.’
- (4) Velaí o vai Xan
 behold CL_{M.SG} go.PRS.3SG Xan
 ‘There goes Xan.’

Following observations in Fuß (2014), this construction bears the C^o-T^o dependency discussed in Germanic where the agreement morpheme may not appear when either the main clause complementizers *velaquí* and *velaí* (‘behold’; Ferreiro 1999) or the verb in T^o is elided (5), eliminating this as a possible case of locative inversion (*pace* Longa, Lorenzo & Rigau 1996).

- (5) a. *Velaí-o
 behold-CL_{M.SG}
- b. *Vai-no
 go.PRS.3SG-CL_{M.SG}
 Intended: ‘There he goes.’

Along with the reanalysis of the main clause complementizers, the accusative clitic of the verb in Clause 1 was misparsed as a subject agreement marker. This is seen due to the fact that it only agrees with the subject in [NUMBER] and [GENDER] but never [PERSON] (6). This derives directly from the *property of clitic doubling* (Preminger 2011, 2019) in which a doubled clitic must bear the entire φ -set of the DP it doubles.

- (6) a. Velaquí as vides as nenas
 behold CL_{F.PL} come.PRS.2PL the girls
 ‘Here come you girls.’
- b. Velaí os andabamos nós (os gaiteiros)
 behold CL_{M.PL} walk.IMPV.1PL we the bagpipe-players
 ‘There we were, the bagpipe players, passing through.’

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION There is evidence from this construction presents us with scenarios in which several elements within a string have been misparsed and, thus, feed the inference engine and developing grammar with intake that does not match the input (e.g. multi-word reanalysis). Additionally, it also provides us with evidence for the development of a novel and typologically rare construction within a language that creates scenarios of agreement not seen elsewhere in the grammar (e.g. C-AGR). As discussed thoroughly in Phillips (2012:282), the learner must store relevant examples/strings and perform appropriate computations over them in order for transmission to proceed smoothly. When this computation fails (i.e., the input signal does not match the intake) and *repair* of the proposed hypothesis space is not realized, I claim that change is expected, as we see here.

SELECTED REFERENCES: AUTHOR. 2021. *Language acquisition and endogenous grammar change: the rise of Galician complementizer agreement*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Georgia. GAGLIARDI, A. & J. LIDZ. 2014. Statistical insensitivity and the acquisition of Tsez noun classes. *Language* 90(1). OMAKI, A. & J. LIDZ. 2015. Linking Parser Development to Acquisition Syntactic Knowledge. *Language Acquisition* 22. PEARL, L. (a) In press. Modeling Syntactic acquisition. *The Oxford Handbook of Experimental Syntax*. PEARL, L. (b) In press. Poverty of the Stimulus Without Tears. *Language Learning and Development*. PHILLIPS, C. 2012. Individual variation and constraints on language learning. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 2(3). PHILLIPS, C. & L. EHRENHOFER. 2015. The role of language processing in language acquisition. *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* 5(4).