

## **Chapter 1**

### **Literature Review**

#### *1.1 Bilingualism*

Contrary to the belief system of many non-linguists in the predominately monolingual West, between one third and one half of the world's population is bilingual, making the study of multilingualism and language contact particularly interesting and rich. Moreover, the study of bilingualism, bilingual individuals, and bilingual communities is crucial for the development of linguistic theory because it challenges the notion of the "ideal speaker-listener" who belongs to a "homogenous language community and who knows the language perfectly" (Chomsky 1965: 4, cited in Brown, 1996: 2). Bringing another language into a community, household, and therefore an individual mind draws into question the concept of a bilingual ideal speaker-listener due to the lack of linguistic homogeneity. But more importantly, as will be seen throughout this study, is the question of a bilingual speaker-listener who knows (each) language perfectly and who can be "recognized as a native speaker in either of his languages" (Hamers and Blanc, 1989: p. 132; see also Bloomfield, 1933). As will be seen throughout this study, the ideal of perfection is not always so straightforward.

One of the first questions that is raised when studying bilingualism is its definition. Although an intuitive definition of it as the native ability in two or more languages may satisfy non-linguists, there is a continuing discussion among linguists regarding bilingualism, especially at the level of individual speakers due to the multidimensionality of bilingualism (Hamers and Blanc, 1989).

To begin with, Hamers and Blanc distinguish between ‘bilinguality’, which refers to the psychological state of an individual with access to two or more languages, and ‘bilingualism’, which includes not only individual bilinguality but also the state of a community in which languages are in contact and available for use and in which there are bilingual speakers. Romaine (1995(1989)) describes a range of perspectives and definitions of bilingualism by linguists. Li (2000) goes further by publishing a long list of measurements and characteristics that can be used to define individual or societal bilingualism. The author therefore suggests that bilingualism be considered a “relative term” (Li, 2000: p. 7).

According to Weinreich (1974(1953)), bilingualism is the alternate use of two or more languages by the same individual. In this sense, bilingualism is defined within the context of language usage, as in cases of multilingual communities in Africa in which several languages are used by the same individual on a daily basis. Often the question at hand is not whether one language in particular or each individual language in a bi- or multilingual community can serve as a means of communication for all discourse contexts, but rather that of what language or code is necessary or appropriate for communication depending on person, place, and topic. (See section 1.3 for a discussion of diglossia).

In some cases the age of the speaker is considered a factor in determining bilingual competence, especially in cases in which a second language was learned after the ‘critical period’ (see Johnson and Newport, 1989 or Long, 2000 for a more detailed discussion). Mackey (2000) suggests that the bilingualism of people who learn two languages as children may be different than that of people who become bilingual as

adults. The same author also points out the fragility of childhood bilingualism as children may change mother tongues in a very short time period (see also Wong Fillmore's (1991, 2000) description of L1 language loss among immigrant children). Therefore, bilingualism can be *additive* (learning an L2 while maintaining an L1) or *subtractive* (learning an L2 at the expense of the L1).

Other linguists use competence in a person's L1 and L2 (or L3) as a measure of an individual's bilingualism. Some such as Haugen (1953, cited in Romaine, 1995) allow for an individual to have a superficial knowledge of a second language in order to be considered bilingual, while others such as Bloomfield insist that an individual must demonstrate "native-like control" of both languages (1933: 56, cited in Romaine, 1995: 11) to be considered so. Usually this discussion of bilingual competence is applied when determining the linguistic competence of an L2 learner. Certain terms such as 'balanced bilingual', 'incipient bilingual', and 'passive bilingual', among many others, are used to describe the degree of monolingualism versus bilingualism of speakers along a proficiency continuum.

However, if linguistic competence is used to label a person as bilingual, then what can be said of the linguistic competence of bilinguals who have limited linguistic competence in a language undergoing attrition or death or of "passive bilinguals" (bilinguals who comprehend an L2 but who cannot produce it)? Dorian (1982, cited in Romaine) describes 'semi-speakers' of Gaelic who, despite linguistic limitations, nevertheless demonstrate such keen communicative competence that communication in the minority language is uninterrupted.

While it is not the purpose of this paper to contribute to the definitions of bilingualism, it is important to keep in mind the multiple dimensions that can and should be considered when studying bilingual individuals. Most pertinent in the discussion of this research is the concept of bilingual competence with respect to the continuum of proficiencies ranging from “native-like control” and knowing the language(s) perfectly to ‘semi-speakers’, now considered an out of date term, with limited grammatical competence. A second important factor directly related to that of competence is that of language contact and the role of cross-linguistic influence in bilingualism, which will be discussed in the following section.

#### *1.1.1 Language contact and cross-linguistic influence*

Language contact can be viewed from a number of different perspectives. Odlin (1989: 6) speaks of contact situations in which there is a “meeting of speakers who do not all share the same language and who need to communicate”. In other words, language contact can be seen as a societal phenomenon. Of course, this definition can also be seen as a continuum which ranges from situations in which there are very few bilingual speakers, to a situation in which only the speakers of one language (usually a language viewed as having less prestige, or a minority language) speak both languages, to situations in which the majority of speakers are bilingual in both languages. Another continuum of language contact is that of pidgins and creoles. Pidgins come about in situations of language contact between two or more languages in which there are very few fluent bilingual speakers and a need for inter-group

communication. Creoles come about when the pidgin is used with such frequency that children begin to acquire nativelike competence in it.

Contact can also be seen from the point of view of bilinguality, in other words, from the point of view of individuals who have two or more languages at their disposal. Contact, therefore, can be studied from a psycholinguistic point of view. Moreover, language contact at the psychological level can be integrated into language contact at the social level when societal bilingualism and contact are viewed as the cumulative effect of the individual bilingual abilities in the minds of each speaker.

Often the literature on language contact is accompanied with information on cross-linguistic influence. This is a blanket term proposed by Sharwood-Smith and Kellerman (1986) that includes the concepts of transfer and interference and is used to describe how knowledge of one language affects knowledge of another, especially in cases of language learning. This term can refer to differences between monolingual and bilingual speech (Weinreich, 1974 (1953)) or can be used to describe instances in which elements of one language are found in another. These elements range from lexical items to grammatical features. Most linguists studying cross-linguistic influence accept that there is a hierarchy of ease of borrowing in which lexical features are easily borrowed while syntax is the hardest to borrow (Romaine, 1995: 64).

However, syntactic borrowing is neither impossible nor undocumented. Gumperz and Wilson (2000 (1971)) report a high degree of syntactic convergence between the four languages spoken in Kupwar, India after centuries of contact. The syntax of these languages manifests itself in such a way that seemingly only the lexicon differentiates each language, and is evidence of the effects of contact and creolization over centuries.

The authors also explain that while historical linguists attempt to explain the origins of foreign elements in one language or another, and while scholars of bilingualism and language contact often look only at the results of these phenomena, there has been little discussion regarding the mechanisms of these linguistic changes (218). Of relevance for this discussion is an integration of the collective external language used at a social/community level with internal language competence at the psychological level of each individual speaker. The creolization described in Gumperz and Wilson (2000 (1971)) is a result of the accumulation of cross-linguistic influence across generations. In other words, the linguistic features which were introduced into the community's four languages centuries ago are now part of each language's grammar as well as the competence of the native speakers of these same languages. The importance of this discussion is to provide a foundation to the claims that languages in contact can have effects on one another that go beyond mere lexical borrowing; in this case, it was the syntax that was affected more than any other linguistic feature.

The following sections will further delve into the psycholinguistic mechanisms for the presence of certain foreign elements in an L2 (or in this case, a heritage language) and for the process of language change.

### *1.2 Psycholinguistic aspects of bilingualism*

In order to comprehend bilingualism from a psycholinguistic perspective, it is necessary to discuss the ways in which both languages are represented and what mechanisms are used to store and retrieve language-specific information. In the case of this research project, cross-linguistic influence as demonstrated by the presence of

linguistic features in the L1 from the L2 source will be described. For this project, cross-linguistic influence at the lexical level, now referred to as cross-lexical influence or CLI, will be studied in greater depth. The next section will discuss the hypothesized architecture of the bilingual mental lexicon, thereby giving an explanation of CLI at the levels of the underlying concept of a word and at the level of the word itself. Additionally, in subsequent sections, a description of the Parasitic Model (Hall and Ecke, 2003; Hall, 2002; Hall and Schultz, 1994) of the mental lexicon, the theoretical framework adopted here, will be included.

### *1.2.1 The mental lexicon*

The mental lexicon is the component of memory which stores representations of all the words a person has at his or her disposal. From studies on monolingual subjects, psycholinguists have proposed that words are interconnected semantically (Singleton, 1999). This means that a word such as *nurse* is connected to the related word *doctor*, as evidenced through lexical recognition experiments involving priming. This interconnective model of the lexicon normally serves as a methodological and theoretical starting point for studies of the bilingual mental lexicon.

If words are in some way connected to other words with similar meanings in monolinguals, how are translation equivalents connected? Weinreich (1974(1953)) proposes the following models for describing the bilingual mental lexicon. The first is that of a coordinate system in which there is no overlap between the L1 and L2 lexicons and each lexical entry has its own conceptual meaning. A compound system, on the

other hand, has one underlying conceptual representation connected to both the L1 and L2 lexical entries. Individuals with a subordinate system demonstrates access their L2 lexicon indirectly through the L1, with only the L1 having a direct connection to the underlying conceptual representation. The three models can be shown in the following way, in which the ovals represent the underlying concept of the lexical entry:

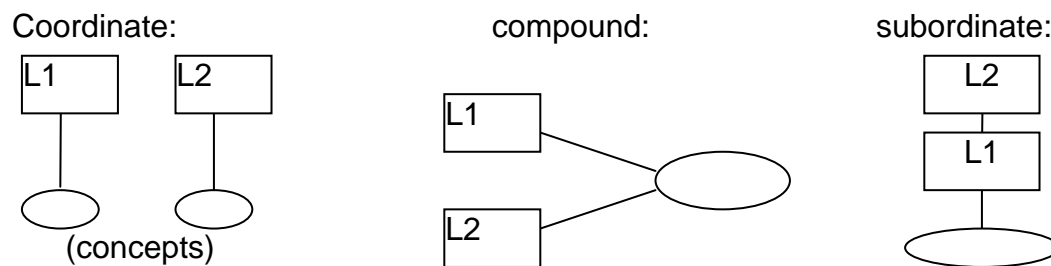


Figure 1: Possible organizations of the bilingual mental lexicon

It is interesting to note that if a bilingual person's lexicons are organized according to the coordinate model, it would be impossible to perform a translation or find a translation equivalent because meanings are represented twice with no links or overlaps. On the other hand, the L2 of a subordinate bilingual would be completely dependent on his or her L1, leading to a parasitic link discussed in the following section. Based on an earlier model by Potter, So, Von Eckhardt, and Feldman (1984), Kroll and Stewart (1994) propose the Revised Hierarchical Model of a learner's mental lexicon as shown below.



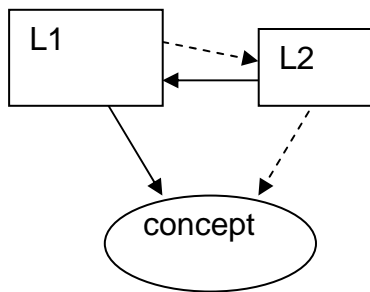


Figure 2: The Revised Hierarchical Model

This model is based on Weinreich's models but is also an attempt at describing more accurately the relationships between a person's two mental lexicons without placing the individual into a discrete group. Furthermore, it is necessary to point out that there is the possibility of an individual having mixed representations in his or her lexicon (de Groot, 1993). This means that while certain L2 words may be accessed directly from the underlying meaning, as in the compound model, other lexical items may be accessed in a coordinate or subordinate fashion.

In the Revised Hierarchical Model, the L1, or the person's dominant lexicon, is larger and shows stronger connections with the concepts, as demonstrated visually in figure 2 with a solid arrow. The L2 on the other hand is smaller and shows a weaker link to these same concepts, as shown by a dashed arrow. In this sense, the model is a revision of the compound model. But it also shows the connection between the lexical entries, thereby conserving certain aspects of the subordinate model.

### 1.2.2 The Parasitic Model

Up until now, we have considered only the relationship between whole lexicons of bilingual individuals. At this point, it is necessary to go into more detail of the connections between individual lexical items in the L1 and L2, and, more specifically, what a word is from a psycholinguistic perspective. A word, according to Jackendoff, (2002), consists of two linguistic elements: the phonological or orthographic representation of a word and the syntactic frame, and a third extra-linguistic element: the underlying concept. While lexical entries and their underlying concept are included in models of mental lexicons, this third piece of information, a word's syntactic frame, is important because it contains idiosyncratic grammatical information such as gender for nouns or reflexivity for verbs. In other words, it contains syntactic information which goes beyond basic knowledge of parts of speech and gives specific information about how a word must be used in an utterance. A graphic representation of this is provided by the Triad Model (Hall, 1992), as follows:

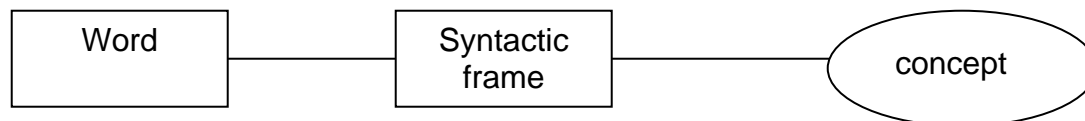


Figure 3: The Triad Model

Considering what we know about the connections within a monolingual's mental lexicon as well as the connections between the two lexicons of a bilingual speaker, Hall and collaborators' model can be seen as supplementary to the other models by demonstrating lexical connections of an L2 learner through the following diagram. In

other words, as can be seen in Figure 4, when an L2 word is learned, it is linked in a subordinate way to the underlying concept either via the form, in case of cognates (Hall, 2002) or the frame (Hall and Schultz, 1994).

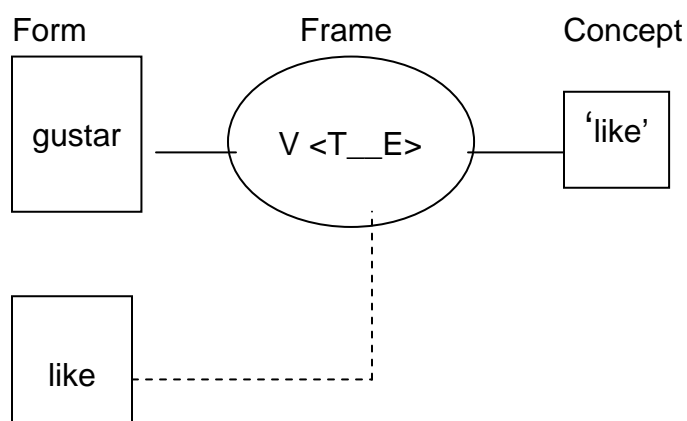


Figure 4: Cross-linguistic influence at the frame level (Hall and Schultz, 1994); T= theme, E= experiencer

Since the syntactic frames for *gustar* and *like* are not the same (Spanish marks the experiencer as the object while English marks the experiencer as the subject), using the above figure, we can visualize the psycholinguistic process underlying this specific L2 error as seen in the following example.

(1) \* Acapulco likes me.

Of course, the Parasitic Model is not limited to explaining L2 learner errors. On the contrary, the Parasitic Model should be seen as the representation of the mental processes involved in L2 vocabulary learning in general and the links between an L2 and an L1 should be seen as a cognitive process that facilitates learning, despite the

occasional mistake. When there are differences in the syntactic frame of the L1 word and its translation equivalent, the Triad Model can explain syntactic aspects of negative transfer during vocabulary learning. The Triad Model, according to Hall and Ecker (2003) is actually an automatic default mechanism.

### 1.2.3 Parasitism in a bilingual community

Up until this point in the discussion of cross-linguistic influence at the lexical level, the discussion has been directed toward explaining L2 vocabulary learning, primarily in situations of classroom teaching without a large natural discourse community of speakers of the target language to support and facilitate L2 acquisition. Again, this is one of the greatest differences between bilingualism that comes about in cases of societal bilingualism and bilingualism that occurs due to the conscious addition of another language as a foreign language learner.

However, there are instances in which languages used in bilingual communities share features with the language produced by students studying a foreign language in a classroom setting. This is because cross-linguistic influence can occur in any situation of language contact but the manifestation of it is mitigated by social factors. In other words, cross-linguistic influence may be an automatic process in situations of language contact if and when extra-linguistic conditions are right, such as in cases of language shift. (See section 4.3 for discussion).

When applied linguists study language learning they look at what is called interlanguage, or modifications to the L2 grammar that do not result in the “attainment of target language norms” and that are neither “fully nativelike nor targetlike” (Odlin, 1989:

113). In societal bilingualism, when looking at the competence continuum between 'balanced bilingual' and 'semi-speaker', certain features appear in the heritage language speech that do not appear 'fully nativelike' either. Linking language acquisition to language loss could lead to a more complete view of linguistic change. In fact, core authors in the field of language obsolescence such as Andersen (1989) make links between cross-linguistic phenomena that take place during second language acquisition (SLA) or learning and the cross-linguistic phenomena that occur within bilingual communities, especially those in which the minority language is being displaced. He therefore calls for those linguists studying cross-linguistic influence in situations of language attrition to draw upon knowledge gained from the study of cross-linguistic influence in the field of SLA. Therefore, I intend to first describe what has been discussed in these areas of study and make links between them as necessary. The following sections give a sociolinguistic explanation of the factors which lead to the 'balanced/semi-speaker' continuum during language shift and loss.

### *1.3 Language shift, attrition, and death*

When one the communicative functions of one language overlaps or encroaches on the communicative functions of another language, a phenomenon called language shift occurs. If this encroachment is total and there is no longer transmission of the latter to younger generations, a situation called language death occurs.

There is a range of indicators of the extent of threat to individual minority languages. One cannot simply look at the number of speakers of the language, nor government or state support, to determine linguistic vitality. One must return to

sociolinguistic aspects- those of domains or functions, transmission of the language and attitudes- to try to explain why some languages die while others flourish, and why some ethnolinguistic communities face language shift while others are successful in maintaining their minority language.

The multilingual nature of many of the world's discourse communities leads to questions of a sociolinguistic nature regarding language use and choice. Any language or variety is sufficiently complex and can potentially function as means of communication for any topic. However, choices in code are made based on several factors.

Holmes (1992) states that there are certain social factors that constrain language choice within multilingual communities. These factors are person, place, and topic, and are referred to as domains or functions of language. In order to illustrate this, one must consider that a healthy bilingual individual has at his or her disposal, and at all times, two languages. This speaker must evaluate the linguistic abilities of his or her interlocutor, since effective communication can be carried out only in a language that both individuals understand. Therefore, if the interlocutor is monolingual, the bilingual individual will need to use the language in common if communication is to take place (on the other hand, choosing the other language may be an effective end to communication). If the interlocutor is bilingual, there are more options; language A could be used to the exclusion of language B or vice-versa, person A could choose one language while person B chooses the other, or each speaker could switch between both languages. In this way, the domain of person, just like the domains of topic and place, constrains language choice.

Since individuals from multilingual communities can establish linguistic patterns vis-à-vis the above-mentioned domains, stable multilingualism can be manifested in a variety of ways. For example, when one language is used for certain domains to the exclusion of the other language(s) in the community's linguistic repertoire, a situation referred to as diglossia is created. This situation can lead to stability between the majority or high (H) code and the minority or low (L) code.

According to Fase, Jaspaert, & Kroon (1992), language shift also can occur in different ways: either interlinguistically (shifting toward the use of a non-heritage language outside of the community) or intralinguistically (shifting toward using a non-heritage language with other members of the same minority community). These authors state that when members of different linguistic communities come into contact, it is often the case that the speakers of the minority language are confronted with speakers of the majority language who do not speak the minority language. Decisions about minority and majority language use can overcome these barriers to effective communication, but in turn may have effects on the extent that language shift or maintenance take place. For example, according to Fase, Jaspaert, & Kroon's (1992) model, in cases of limited contact, the interlinguistic use of the majority language by minority language speakers may have little effect on a shift to the majority language. However, if contact increases, as in the case of extended contact between the two communities, shift to the majority language is made more possible. However, interlinguistic shift is not completely responsible for all language shift. One must take into account the linguistic code that is used intralinguistically.

The language used within a linguistic group need not change due to communicative needs. The question here is that of ethnic identity, cohesion of an ethnic group, covert and overt prestige felt toward the minority language and culture, and pressure to use the majority language at the expense of the minority one.

As mentioned above, a minority language can be maintained in a diglossic situation fulfilling the L functions of the community members. However, external forces can affect intralinguistic language shifts in the course of as little as two, three, or four generations. This is often the plight of the languages which are spoken by immigrant and indigenous groups who are under nearly irresistible forces (be they nationalistic/political or economic) to assimilate into the majority culture.

However, there are some fundamental stages that are commonly followed that may lead to a reduction of inter- and intralinguistic shift. The most important factor is that there is a discourse community which transmits the minority language to younger generations (Baker, 2000; Fishman, 2001a; 2001b). Intralinguistic shift leads to a preference within an ethnolinguistic group to use a non-heritage language. This in turn will cause following generations to either be passive bilinguals or will lead to language death. If native speakers are no longer reproducing the language within the community, its survival possibilities will be highly compromised.

When speakers of a minority or immigrant language do not or cannot use their language for a full range of communicative functions due to a shift toward using the majority language, the reduction of use of the L1 can lead to a reduction of linguistic



features of the same language. This attrition, according to Ecke (in press) refers to loss of language or language skill by healthy<sup>1</sup> individual speakers.

In the case of immigration, a great deal of research has been dedicated to the study of second language acquisition and the transfer of features of the L1 to the L2. According to Andersen (1989), while first generation immigrants typically have restricted access to the language of the community to which they have immigrated, second- and third- generation immigrants have restricted access to their family language. Thus we find patterns of heritage language loss in only two or three generations (see also Baker, 2000).

There is, however, evidence that language loss could occur in less time. Py (1986) goes beyond studying either the L2 language acquisition process of immigrants or the intergenerational loss of the family tongue. He states that a linguistic study of the first generation immigrants' L1 would shed light on transfer of the L2 to the L1 as well as attrition. The author makes the point that the language of a migrant may often undergo changes leading to a loss of linguistic competence. There are two external circumstances that lead to attrition: 1) a reduction in knowledge of linguistic norms and 2) a reduction in communicative situations in which the native language can be used. Regarding the first circumstance, the author states that divergence from the linguistic norm may not be accepted within a speech community; rather there is social pressure by other members of the speech community to converge linguistically. However in the case of migration, a speaker may no longer be part of such a network; in such cases there is no longer a speech community to give this type of social pressure to converge. This in turn leads to a breakdown in the norm.

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<sup>1</sup> A person without a brain lesion that might lead to language loss

For the following generations, there is usually a reduction in the communicative situations or domains in which the family language can be used. Thus there is a “quantitative diminution of the use of the native language ... and an impoverishment in the verbal repertoire linked to a reduction in the variety of speech acts and discourse types realized through the native language” (Py, 1986: p. 166). These two situations, that of a reduction of knowledge of norms and of a reduction in domains, can lead to a situation in which the speaker might incorporate features of the L2 in his or her L1, leading to language change or eventual loss.

Py’s research into L1 attrition demonstrates first of all the dynamic nature of linguistic competence, including competence in one’s native language. In other words, competence is not static; it can change due to external factors. It also provides the theoretical foundation for the potential presence of cross-linguistic influence in any situation of contact. External social factors (ie. lack of pressure to adhere to linguistic norms, for example) provide a social atmosphere that allows the automatic cognitive process of cross-linguistic influence to occur, as opposed to a different social situation (such as a strong sense of group cohesion and pressure to maintain norms) which may slow this process.

Similar processes occur among other non-immigrant minority languages in contact with majority languages. According to Cambell and Muntzel (1989), in cases of gradual loss/shift in which there is a shift to the dominant language with an intermediate stage of bilingualism, there also tends to be a proficiency continuum among speakers of the minority language which corresponds to age. In this case, younger speakers have a greater proficiency in the majority language and often develop an incomplete

competence of the minority language. Therefore, both the degree of the original acquisition and the degree of disuse lead to certain patterns of the attriting language (Menn, 1989). In fact, Cambell and Muntzel (1989) describe a series of predictable changes such as phonological convergence to the majority language, overgeneralizations (both of unmarked features and of marked “exotic” ones), variability across speakers due to uncertain internalization of rules, and morphological and syntactic changes.

Andersen (1989) looks at L1 attrition from a different perspective, stating that the interlanguage processes that an L2 learner goes through look similar to linguistic features of a language that is dying by undergoing shift. Growth (L2 learning/acquisition) and reduction (L1 attrition/loss) are constrained by the same cognitive processes:

Language contraction is typically a phenomenon of second language development in that the weaker, contracting language is almost always a secondary language for the speaker, even though it may be the speaker’s original mother tongue (being the “first” acquired and the family language). It is for this reason that it is important to view language contraction from a second language perspective. (Andersen, 1989: 386)

This perspective is central to the investigation into whether specific cognitive processes that take place automatically among L2 learners also occur in cases of speakers of minority languages, and whether these processes are responsible for language change.

In this investigation, the specific area of study will concentrate on the bilingual mental lexicon of individuals in a bilingual community of immigrants in Chipilo, Mexico.

#### *1.4 Veneto-Spanish contact and the Parasitic Model of the lexicon*

The Chipilo community has been in contact with Spanish since slightly more than 500 people from the Veneto area of Italy, principally the town of Segusino, came to settle in Mexico in 1882. These 500 immigrants, who came in intact families, dedicated themselves initially to agriculture, which continues to be a central part of the Chipilo culture, building a small town out of previously inarable lands. Located approximately 12 kilometers from the state capital of Puebla, a city of two million Spanish speakers, Chipilo remained relatively isolated for the first 80 years of its existence. Since the 1960s Chipilo residents have had more contact with people from Puebla and with Spanish. Currently, Chipileños come into greater contact with Mexicans and the Spanish language due to television and radio, increased schooling (now often through high school or university, with these higher institutions located outside of Chipilo), intermarriage, and work.

According to MacKay (1992, 1999), initial contact with Spanish and Spanish speakers was limited, yet increased with the first generations of Chipileños born in Mexico. However, lately the town has faced increased levels of contact with the majority Spanish-speaking community. Furthermore, the homogeneity of the Chipileño community, which is discussed in MacKay, 1992, has been affected due to recent developments in the community have lead to more in-migration of Spanish monolinguals due to intermarriage, and some out-migration of Veneto speakers. The

language, therefore, is undergoing systematic changes to the lexicon and its phonology due to the contact of its bilingual speakers with monolingual Spanish speakers. Phonemic changes in Veneto were documented in MacKay (1983) and explained as a result of contact with the sound system of Spanish. Included in this 1983 work is a glossary with Spanish-Veneto translations. It is interesting to note that for a number of Spanish words, there are two translations into Veneto. The presence of doublets such as *zbentolar/abanikar* (Sp. 'abanicar', Eng. 'fan') indicates the ease with which Veneto can borrow verbs from Spanish and probably indicates a lexical change in process.

The incorporation of the Spanish word alongside the Veneto one indicates cross-lexical influence between the L2 (Spanish) and the L1 (Veneto). In this case, Spanish words are being lexicalized into Veneto, allowing for alternations of lexical items by Veneto speakers. While this shows evidence for linguistic change, more importantly it shows that the L1 and L2 are not hermetically sealed and leaves open the possibility of other types of cross-lexical influence.

The presence of doublets in which a Spanish loan word alternates with the classical Veneto form could demonstrate a code switch, but more importantly, it could indicate that Veneto is incorporating Spanish words into its lexicon. This, in turn, could have consequences at the syntactic level since, as mentioned in above sections, lexical entries also contain information about the word's syntactic frame. Information about a word's grammatical behavior (syntactic category, thematic role, gender) among other type of information is included in the lexical entry (Hall and Schultz, 1994). Since words, particularly verbs, behave differently cross-linguistically, a parasitic relationship between lexical entries of verbs could be one of the mechanisms of cross-linguistic

influence due to contact. But again, since social factors mitigate the degree of cross-linguistic influence in each situation of language contact, a parasitic relationship at the level of the lexicon will most likely show correlation with the factors such as age of speaker, use of each language, and degree of contact with the majority language.

In the case of Chipileño Veneto, qualitative data gathered as background for this study indicate that a parasitic relationship between Veneto and Spanish could possibly be a consequence of the extended contact with Spanish and the ensuing bilingualism. The purpose for data gathering is to verify and quantify the incorporation of Spanish words into the Veneto lexicon, the use of the Spanish translation equivalent's syntactic frame with a Veneto word, and finally, changes in Veneto verbal syntax.

### *1.5 Overview of methodological precedents*

Although using naturalistic language samples as data for analysis might provide a wealth of information about linguistic change in Veneto, this particular study is not about change in general. Rather, the goal is to obtain and analyze a specific kind of data, those of verbs that are undergoing syntactic frame change.

The use of a series of Oral Elicitation Tasks as described by Kasper (1999) might be seen as an option to the naturalistic approach by instead eliciting situationally appropriate responses in the target language. This method involves the presentation of a situation in the target language and a prompt for the informant to finish it. However, feasibility restraints have forced the abandonment of this option.

Therefore, the technique used to collect data is based on work done in the field of anthropological and descriptive field linguistics, documented by Gudschinsky (1967),

and involves the construction of translation equivalents from the field worker's bilingual advisors in order to elicit translations from informants in the community. Gudschinsky also writes emphatically about the importance of audio recording the interactions between the fieldworker and her informants in order to allow the researcher a chance to study and analyze the language after the communicative event has taken place. Any transcription of the recordings or subsequent analysis should, as this author states, preferably be done the same day as the recording or soon afterwards.

The use of social networks as discussed by Milroy (1980) can allow an unknown researcher a way in to an ethnic community. In a tight-knit, semi-isolated community such as Chipilo, the use of social connection and networks will lead to participants being more forthcoming and open with researchers regarding linguistic information. Using networks allows greater access to participants in a quick and unobtrusive way, resulting in a friendly rapport with the participants, which is in turn important for leaving the door open to further studies in the community.

### *1.6 Research Strategy*

The following assumptions are made:

1. A variety of the Veneto spoken in Chipilo is being maintained and spoken by the younger speakers,
2. Convergence toward the use of Spanish phonological and lexical structures as documented by MacKay (1983) is continuing.

Based on the review of literature and the theoretical framework of this study, the following hypotheses are put forth:

1. The language contact situation and the ensuing bilingualism of the members of the Chipilo community have effects on the lexical architecture of Veneto, as seen in the use of Spanish syntactic frames of translation equivalents.
2. The degree of change due to cross-lexical influence in the lexicons of Veneto speakers will correlate first with the factors such as age, and second, with the degree of contact with Spanish. The younger the speaker and the more contact with Spanish, the greater the cross-lexical influence.

Using this literature review as the theoretical framework, the rest of the thesis will proceed as follows. Chapter two will outline the methodology used in the elaboration of the material, the procedure used to approach participants and apply the material, and procedure used to code the data. In addition, a description of the pilot study is included. Chapter 3 presents the results of two analyses which describe the use of Veneto forms and frames across participants. Chapter 4 gives the interpretation, explanation, and synthesis of both analyses as well as support for both hypotheses. This chapter also includes implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research.