

‘PARTIAL’ SPANISH
STRATEGIES OF PIDGINIZATION AND SIMPLIFICATION
(FROM LINGUA FRANCA TO ‘GRINGO LINGO’)

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0. Introduction

A recent comic strip, resuscitating racial stereotypes which had purportedly disappeared at least a century ago, depicted a dialogue between a Spanish priest and an outrageous parody of an African ‘native’. The latter begins by addressing the priest as follows:

Yo estar muy enojado. Yo haber tenido 10 hijos, “todos de color”! Ahora el 11vo. nacer blanco! Ud. ser el único hombre blanco en 200 km. Ud. deber “EXPLICARME.”

[I am very angry. I’ve had ten children, “all colored!” Now the 11th one has been born white! You are the only white man within 200 km. You must “explain to me.”]

This stereotype is confirmed by independent observations. Ferguson (1971, 1975) says that

a speaker of Spanish who wishes to communicate with a foreigner who has little or no Spanish will typically use the infinitive of the verb or the third singular rather than the usual inflected forms, and he will use *mi* “my” for *yo* “I” and omit the definite and indefinite articles: *mi ver soldado* “me [to-] see soldier” for *yo veo al soldado* “I see the soldier.” Such Spanish is felt by native speakers of the language to be the way foreigners talk, and it can most readily be elicited from Spanish-speaking informants by asking them how foreigners speak. (Ferguson 1971:143-4).

Thompson (1991) presented native speakers of Spanish with options as to how to address a newly-hired employee who spoke little Spanish. A large number of respondents preferred sentences with bare infinitives, such as *¿cómo estar familia?* “How is [the] family?” and *¿Jugar niños afuera?* “[are the] children playing outside?” When asked to ‘speak like Tarzan,’ the same respondents

came up with sentences using uninflected infinitives and null subjects: *estar comiendo* "[we] are eating," *¿estar plátano bajo tierra?* "is [the] banana down [on the] ground?", *¿quién ser hombre?* "who is [the] man?" Hinnenkamp (1984) similarly lists the bare infinitive as a typical strategem of foreigner talk, while Corder (1975) believes that foreigner talk, baby talk, interlanguages, and pidgins share the general lack of copulas and functional categories, a single pronominal paradigm, and little or no verbal inflection.

It is unlikely that any modern reader or speaker has heard Spanish spoken in this fashion, by natives of Africa or elsewhere. Those who struggle to employ Spanish as a weak second language do not combine the bare infinitive with correct vocabulary, compound verb formation, and NP-internal agreement. And yet this model of Spanish 'foreigner talk' has been in existence for at least 500 years and probably much longer. Nor are black Africans the only group to be branded with this type of language; at one time or another, similar reductions of Spanish have been attributed to speakers of Arabic, Berber, Chinese languages, Tagalog, Basque, French, German, English, and a variety of Native American languages. In Renaissance Spain, this was the language of the *moro* or Moor; today, it is the hands-down winner for typecasting the gringo or 'ugly American.' Moreover, when unsuspecting Spanish speakers throughout the world are asked to imagine how Tarzan or some other 'ape-man' might talk, the spontaneous responses are suspiciously similar to the above-mentioned literary parodies. Lest it be thought that such 'broken Spanish' is nothing but a fanciful invention, the product of bigotry, previously documented or currently surviving offshoots of Spanish-, Portuguese-, Italian-, and French-based foreigner talk reveal that this type of pidginized language has existed in real speech communities, although today no known second-language learners of Spanish speak in this fashion. What, then, is the relationship between imagined and real 'foreigner' Spanish, and how has a reasonably cohesive model of such 'almost-Spanish' remained in the Spanish collective unconscious for so long? In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to examine real examples of reduced Romance, seeking paths of historical evolution, crossovers among languages, and recurring patterns. Particular attention will be paid to the choice of the infinitive as default verb and *mi* as subject pronoun.

1. *Afro-Iberian language*

Reduced forms of Spanish, used both by native speakers and by second-language learners, have coexisted with the full language since its origins, but accurate documentation of L₂ varieties of Ibero-Romance does not emerge until the end of the medieval period. Beginning towards the middle of the 15th

century with Portuguese explorations in West Africa, various forms of reduced Portuguese and then Spanish arose between Europeans and sub-Saharan Africans. Trade, then slavery, provided the momentum for Afro-European contact languages, some of which were immortalized in the form of creoles, in West Africa and the Americas. Portuguese trade and colonization in southern and southeastern Asia also resulted in the formation of numerous creole dialects, in which a strong African component was also present. Finally, a number of Spanish-based creoles developed in the Philippines, according to some (e.g. Whinnom 1956) relexified from earlier Asian Portuguese creoles, and therefore possibly bearing an African imprint.

For more than three centuries beginning in the 1450's, Portuguese and Spanish authors, in Europe and later in the Americas, would embellish their poems and plays with the *fala de preto/habla de negro* 'black speech'. In Spain and Portugal, these literary imitations persisted long after African-born blacks ceased to be a commonplace in the Iberian Peninsula (Lipski 1995). Despite the high degree of racist stereotyping, many of the linguistic traits present in the first round of Afro-Iberian literary texts appear in established creoles, thus lending more credibility to the remaining features.

The first couple of Afro-Portuguese texts, found in the *Cancioneiro geral* of Garcia de Resende published in 1516, contain the bare infinitive and use of *mi(m)* as subject pronoun, contain non-agreeing null subjects, and lack articles and some copulas:

- (1) FERNAM DA SILVEIRA [1455]: *A min rrey de negro estar Serra Lyoa, lonje muyto terra onde viver nos, andar carabela, tubão de Lixboa*
 "I am [a] king from Sierra Leone, from from the land where we live, [I] travelled by caravelle/shark to Lisbon"

Bare infinitives were soon replaced by some form of conjugated verb in the early Afro-Portuguese texts; by the time of the first major writer to use such language (Gil Vicente 1912, writing in the early 16th century), 'Africanized' Portuguese uses a combination of correctly conjugated verbs and incorrect forms, some of which are inappropriate members of the same paradigm, while others are wild inventions. In Spain, Afro-Hispanic pidgin language was first represented in the "Coplas a los negros y negras" by Rodrigo de Reinosa, written at the turn of the 16th century. Most verbs are left in the infinitive; occasional defective attempts at conjugation (e.g. *sabo*) also occur. There are some null subjects and articles are frequently missing:

- (2) *A mi llamar Comba de terra Guinea, y en la mi tierra comer bues
cangrejo*
“My name is Comba from the land of Guinea, and in my land [we] dine
well on crabs”

Uninflected infinitives were soon replaced by some semblance of conjugated verbs. Only a decade or two after Reinoso's poems, Lope de Rueda, widely acknowledged as one of the most accurate imitators of early Afro-Hispanic language, alternated bare infinitives and conjugated verbs in the speech of his African characters. Conjugated verbs--some bizarre, others only slightly deviant--formed the basis for Afro-Hispanic language for several centuries following these early Golden Age writings. The subject pronoun *mi* was replaced by *yo* by the middle of the 16th century, and invariant verbs gravitate toward the 3 s., with some use of the 1 p. in *-mos*. Beginning in the late 18th century a new group of texts appears in Latin America, representing newly arrived Africans in the three regions in which the highest concentrations of *bozales* or African-born L₂ speakers of Spanish were to be found: Cuba, coastal Peru, and Buenos Aires/Montevideo. Particularly in the first two regions, conjugated verbs (often in the invariant 3 s. form) did alternate with bare infinitives, suggesting the rapid acquisition of Spanish by freshly arrived Africans who could not always tap into a previously established Afro-Hispanic community language. Spanish may have briefly creolized in the slave barracks of 19th century Cuban sugar plantations, but such cases were exceptional. Another source of creole-like structures in Cuban *bozal* Spanish is the influx of cane-cutters from other Caribbean islands, most of whom spoke Afro-European creole languages with a high degree of structural similarity (Lipski 1996, 1998c, 1999a). Descriptions of actually occurring Afro-Cuban Spanish were given in the 19th century (Pichardo 1848, Bachiller y Morales 1883), and in the 1960's (Barnet 1966). Imitations of *bozal* Spanish also form part of the rituals of the *negros congos*, Afro-Hispanic communities along Panama's Caribbean coast, who during the annual Carnival season speak a deliberately modified language which combines fanciful wordplay with what they claim to be remnants of earlier Afro-Hispanic pidgin (Lipski 1989). Ortiz López (1998) traveled to Cuba and interviewed elderly Afro-Cubans, who recalled the time when *bozal* Spanish was still to be heard, and who produced examples similar to those found in literary texts. A number of examples from 19th century Buenos Aires and Montevideo (Fontanella de Weinberg 1987, Lipski forthcoming) confirm the tendencies noted for Afro-Cuban Spanish. All of these actual observations--and most of the literary imitations--portray the last century of Afro-Hispanic pidgin as a series of idiolects which converged to a

greater or lesser degree with vernacular Caribbean Spanish (cf. Lipski 1986a, 1986c, 1998b).

In the modern world, the only stable interface between Spanish and sub-Saharan African languages occurs in Equatorial Guinea, formerly Spanish Guinea, which still maintains Spanish as the official national language. Grammatically, Guinean Spanish has no systematic differences from Peninsular Spanish, but is rather characterized by a considerable instability with regard to proper verb conjugation, syntactic formation, prepositional usage, sequence of tenses and nominal agreement (Lipski 1985, Quilis & Casado-Fresnillo 1995). In contemporary Angola, Portuguese is spoken as a second language in the *musseques* or working class neighborhoods of Luanda and other cities; this L₂ Portuguese shares many of the characteristics of Equatorial Guinean Spanish, for similar reasons. Although most Angolans use finite verb forms (gravitating toward the 3 s. as unmarked form), there is documentation of the use of the Portuguese infinitive in the most pidginized forms of Angolan Portuguese, for example:

- (3) *Senhor, já ter estado escola aqui, agora já não estar mais aqui
escola, já escola n'outra parte*
“Sir, there was a school, now there's no school, the school is
somewhere else” (Vidal 1916:426)

2. 'Moorish' Spanish

The use of Ibero-Romance as a second language by speakers of Arabic and Berber began as early as the Moorish invasions of the 8th century, but written documentation of such speech does not come until the expulsion of the last of the Moors from Spain at the end of the 15th century. Appearing nearly simultaneously with Afro-Hispanic imitations, the speech of the *moro* or *morisco* became a literary stock in trade for Spanish writers during the 16th and 17th centuries (Sloman 1949). In the 20th century a similar stereotype was revived in parts of Latin America in the speech of the (usually Arabic-speaking) *turco* “Turk,” in reality natives of Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine (Biondi Assali 1992). Grammatically, the *morisco* verb is almost always in the infinitive, and some 16th century texts exhibit use of *mi* as subject pronoun. Non-agreeing null subjects are frequent, articles are often eliminated, and the verb *estar*, which in 16th century Spanish had fewer purely copular functions than in modern Spanish, became the default copula, used even with predicate nominatives, for example:

- (4) GIL VICENTE, *Cortes de Júpiter* (ca. 1520): *Mi no xaber que exto extar, mi no xaber que exto xer. Mi no saber onde andar.* "I don't know what this is, I don't know where [I] am going"

Contemporary Latin American literary imitations of the Arabic-speaking Middle Eastern immigrant rely predominantly on phonetic distortions, but occasional grammatical modifications are also found. Only very occasionally are the bare infinitive or generic copula *estar* used, and *mi* as subject pronoun is not present:

- (5) JOSÉ ROMÁN (1978), *Cosmapa* [Nicaragua]: *Usted sabe, badrón, yo estar en este bueblo de Chinandega, porque combro granos baradísimos* "You know, boss, I am here in this town of Chinandega because I buy grain cheaply"

3. *Anglo-Spanish pidgin*

A common element in much 20th century Latin American literature is the representation of pidginized Spanish as used by speakers of English. The typical pidgin speaker hails from the United States, and is often portrayed as the domineering *gringo* or *yanqui* (expatriate travelers, entrepreneurs, and military personnel), but similar linguistic traits have been attributed to natives of England, and to West Indians in Central America. Most of the examples are derisive and macaronic, but occasionally the English speakers are cast in a sympathetic light. Although there is considerable variation among texts, use of the uninflected infinitive is a common denominator, as is use of *mi* as subject pronoun. The infinitive sometimes alternates with finite verbs, usually in the third person singular. Many texts exhibit no articles and few prepositions, suggesting a phrase structure composed entirely of lexical projections.

- (6) a. BENITO LYNCH (1926), *El inglés de los güesos* [Argentina]: *mi trabaca ... mi busca huesas antiguos, viecas.*
"I work, I look for old bones,"
b. JOAQUÍN GUTIÉRREZ (1977), *Puerto Limón* [Costa Rica]: *No, mi no pueda llevar. Mi llevar y después joden a Tom. Mister, yo sabe bien*
"No, I can't take [you]. I take you, and then Tom gets screwed.
Mister, I know very well"
c. JOAQUÍN BELEÑO (1963), *Curundú* [Panama]: *¿quién mandar aquí? si tú no saber, ¿quién sabe?*
"Who's in charge here? If you don't know, who knows?"

These examples contrast with more realistic literary representations of English-influenced Spanish, as well as by actual field observations. In the Dominican Republic, the creole-English speaking contract laborers from the Anglophone Caribbean frequently appear in regionalist literature. Their L₂ variety of Spanish bears great resemblance to the Spanish of Anglophone students in the United States and stands in contrast to the previously mentioned literary stereotypes. Another source of second-language Spanish data comes in the speech of descendants of black Americans, in the Samaná Peninsula of the Dominican Republic. Samaná by native speakers of English (Ferrerías 1982):

- (7) *Yo se sabe lo que tú se quiere decir, pero para que tú se consigue ese cosa que tú se dice, yo se va a dar un buen consejo.*
"I know what you're trying to say, but in order for you to get what you want, I'm going to give you some good advice"

Examples of the L₂ Spanish of West Indians actually recorded by myself in Puerto Rico include:

- (8) a. *yo conoce Trinidad, yo fuite de vacacione*
"I know Trinidad, I went on vacation" [Jamaica]
b. *yo vengo pa cá y yo aprende*
"I came here and I learned" [St. Kitts]

Literary imitations of Haitian cancutters in the Dominican Republic and Cuba, who speak a pidginized Spanish similar to that of English-speaking West Indians, coincides substantially with actual observations of Haitians' Spanish, although early literary attempts were only crude parodies. In general, finite verb forms are used to instantiate Spanish finite verbs, with a noteworthy preference for the third person singular. Some Haitians occasionally use the Spanish infinitive instead of a conjugated verb, perhaps reflecting the widespread homophony between Haitian Creole verbs and French infinitives, but such examples are not common. Actual examples of Haitians' L₂ Spanish recorded in Cuba (Ortiz López 1999) are:

- (9) a. *Yo prende habla catellano con cubano*
"I learned to speak Spanish among the Cubans"
b. *yo hacel mucho trabajal; coltal caña balato; recogel café a sei kilo*
"I worked hard; I cut sugar cane for little money; I picked coffee for six cents"

Vestigial Spanish as spoken by transitional bilinguals or semi-speakers, e.g. in the United States, shows the same characteristics as pidginized L₂ Spanish, including overuse of the 3s. verb form, and unstable agreement systems (Lipski 1986b).

4. *Philippine pidgin Spanish*

The Spanish language was present in Philippines for more than 350 years, although only a very small proportion of the Philippine population ever spoke (non-creolized) Spanish either natively or as a strong second language (Lipski 1987, 1988). Philippine Creole Spanish has survived as a viable first and strong second language in several cities; in addition to creole and quasi-native Philippine Spanish, several Spanish-based pidgins evolved, particularly as spoken by Chinese residents, but also used by non-fluent Filipinos when addressing Spaniards. This was a rough pidgin, and contained few if any of the consistent grammatical structures which characterize Creoles; pidgin Spanish as spoken by Chinese immigrants in the Philippines is typified by:

- (10) *sigulo, señolia ... como no tiene ahola talabajo; como no tiene capé, y ha de ganalo la vida, sigulo tiene que hace tabaco*
 "of course, sir; since {I} do not have a job now, and since {I} don't have any coffee, and {I} have to earn a living, of course {I} have to make cigars" (López 1893:58)

There are many examples of Philippine pidgin Spanish as used by native Filipinos, with some creoloid characteristics but still representing an imperfectly acquired second language, e.g. *Bueno, señor, aquí comer* "Well, sir, here [you can] eat" (Feced 1888:24).

5. *Chinese pidgin Spanish*

In the second half of the 19th century, Cuba received at least 150,000 Chinese laborers, while more than 90,000 Chinese workers were imported into coastal Peru. Smaller numbers arrived in Panama, Venezuela, and Central America. The Chinese worked in the sugar plantations and mills as virtual slaves, side by side with Africans and--in Cuba--workers from other Caribbean islands. The linguistic conditions surrounding the lives of Chinese laborers closely parallels that of African *bozales*, and Chinese workers' acquisition of Spanish followed similar paths (Lipski 1998a, 1999c). Verbs--which almost never agreed with subjects--were sometimes based on the third person singular, sometimes on the infinitive:

- (11) a. ANTONIO ORTEGA, "China olvidado" (Bueno 1959:54-73) [Cuba]:
Yo no sabel. Chino olvilalo, chino no tenel palientes ... no tenel amigos ... chino estal solo ...
 "I don't know. Chinese man forgets, Chinese man has no relatives, has no friends ... Chinese man is alone"
- b. TRAZEGNIES GRANDA (1994:238) [Peru]: *tu cleel que sólo negro hacel velso. Pelo pala chino sel palte de su elucació ...*
 "you think that only blacks can make up verses. But for [us] Chinese, it's part of [our] upbringing"
- c. CARLOS LUIS FALLAS, *Mamita Yunai* (1975) [Costa Rica]: *Yo levanta templano pelo quela mucho lato convelsando co Lamilo.*
 "I got up early but I stayed a long time talking to Ramiro"

Nowadays there is little authentic Chinese pidgin Spanish remaining. Individual speakers of Chinese learning Spanish exhibit significantly different characteristics, particularly the use of articles and copulas, as well as conjugated verbs instead of bare infinitives; an actually occurring example from one Chinese speaker's L₂ Spanish (Clements 1999) is: *yo dise tío conmigo hablando, puede fueela China* "I said, uncle was telling me I could leave China".

6. *'Basque' Spanish*

In the Basque Country of northern Spain, Spanish was a recessive second language for many centuries, and, even today, Basque-dominant and even Spanish-dominant bilinguals exhibit linguistic traits which set them apart from monolingual speakers in other regions. In earlier centuries the literary stereotype of the *vizcaíno* or Viscayan took its place alongside the other well-developed parodies of second-language Spanish speakers: Moors, Gypsies, black Africans, Galicians and Portuguese, French, Italians, and speakers of non-prestige regional dialects of Ibero-Romance. Major Spanish writers such as Cervantes and Lope de Vega, as well as numerous writers of skits, poems, and longer plays, incorporated the *vizcaíno*, consolidating a stereotype which eventually needed no preamble to clue the audience as to the characters' identity (Legarda 1953, Herrero García 1966:chap. IX). The linguistic features of the Basque-Spanish stereotype center around incorrect subject-verb agreement, with an overwhelming preference for the second person singular (-s) as invariant verb form. Bizarre word-order alteration frequently occurred, as did unstable gender and number agreement. These humorous lapses were often combined with an extensive command of Spanish vocabulary and syntactic structures, not a likely combination in actually occurring bilingual speech. The impression of *vizcaíno* Spanish is more chaotic and even

demented than its closest relative, Afro-Hispanic pidgin, due to the startling juxtaposition of sophisticated vocabulary and improbable syntactic transpositions:

- (12) MELCHOR DE SANTA CRUZ (1996:321-9), *Floresta española* {1574}:
Juras a Dios, andas por arte del diablo
 “[I] swear to God, [the mill-wheel] is turning by the Devil’s artifice”

Although it is impossible to completely rule out the possibility that the *vizcaíno* imitations may once have been accurate imitations of Spanish-Basque bilinguals, contemporary Basque-influenced Spanish shows strikingly different characteristics (Urrutia Cárdenas 1995). There is no evidence of the 2s. or other verb form being overextended in an invariant verb paradigm.

7. Amerindian pidgin Spanish

Throughout the Americas, reduced forms of Spanish are spoken by isolated indigenous populations, with characteristics different from the more fluent Spanish-based interlanguage used, e.g. in the Andean region, Paraguay, and central Mexico. At times, the pidgins are used only by indigenous residents when speaking to native Spanish speakers or members of other language groups, while in other cases native Spanish speakers consciously adopt the pidgin when speaking to members of an indigenous community. In the Amazonian basin (Colombia, Peru, Ecuador), Spanish is used as a recessive second language by speakers of various indigenous languages. The latter’s L₂ Spanish exhibits overgeneralization of the 3s. finite form, but no systematic use of the infinitive (Rodríguez de Montes 1981). In the Venezuelan Orinoco basin, members of the Panare group have used a stable Spanish-derived pidgin for interchange with fluent Spanish speakers as well as indigenous groups speaking other languages (Riley 1952). In this pidgin, the verb is represented in the gerund form, few articles or prepositions are used, and Spanish subject pronouns are used in all cases: *yo no sabyendo ke tu disyendo* ‘I don’t know what you are talking about.’ Another Spanish-based pidgin spoken in the Venezuelan Orinoco region is used by the Marquitaré and appears in the novel *Canaima* by Rómulo Gallegos (1991). Like the Panare pidgin, the gerund is used to represent verbs: *Yéndote con Marcos, que no siendo maluco* ‘Go with Marcos, who isn’t sick.’ Another Orinoco group, the Guaraúños, also speaks with the *jerga de gerundios* ‘gerund-jargon’: *Yo dándote chinchorro, tú dándome sal* ‘[if] I give you a fishing net, you will give me salt.’ The novel *Juyungo* by the Ecuadoran writer Adalberto Ortiz (1976) provides examples of the pidginized Spanish of the Cayapa of northwestern Ecuador. The Cayapa

also prefer the gerund as invariant verb form: *Tú, compadre, chiquito, gustándome. Tú, sabiendo números, ¿no? Yo necesitándote aquí* ‘I like you, fellow. You know about numbers, don’t you?’ At another point, Ortiz imitates the pidginized Spanish of the Colorados, another indigenous group from northwestern Ecuador (1976:93): *Eso estando bueno, entren en mi casa, yo llamando otra gente* ‘That’s good, come into my house. I will call some other people.’ Even the less fluent Spanish as used by speakers of Quechua and Aymara in the Andean region contains an overuse of the gerund as well as other anomalies of word order and verb morphology. As with the earlier examples, the bare infinitive is never used instead of a finite verb (Laprade 1981, Stratford 1989): *¿Qué diciendo nomás te has venido?* ‘Just why have you come?’ The L₂ Spanish of Otomí speakers in Mexico, which is not imitated by native Spanish speakers, contains many non-agreeing verbs, with the 3 s. being the preferred form. The gerund occasionally appears in lieu of finite verbs (Lastra 1995): *Tú siguiendo trabajando* ‘You keep on working.’

8. The evidence from Spanish child language

Given the popular equation PIDGIN LANGUAGE = BABY TALK, it is useful to gather data from Spanish early child language to judge the likelihood that adult imitation of child Spanish lies at the root of some or all Spanish-based pidgins. Careful examination of Spanish child language reveals that, whereas articles may be missing in the earliest stages, the other recurring features of Spanish pidgins are not common in child language. In particular, the choice of the infinitive and *mi* as subject pronoun are not typical of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese early child language (e.g. López Ornat et al. 1994). In Spanish, the finite-non finite distinction is morphologically no more complex than the difference between other members of the verbal paradigm; the infinitive morpheme, consisting of the theme vowel + /r/ takes the place of another suffix. There is no sense in which the infinitive is morphologically simpler or more ‘basic’ than finite forms. Thus it is not accurate to speak of the Spanish infinitive as ‘uninflected’ as opposed to ‘conjugated’ verbs, since all Spanish verb forms consist of at least a stem, a theme vowel, and some other indication of tense, mood, person, and number. The infinitive appears as the dictionary representation of a Spanish verb and is used as a citation form by native speakers, when discussing verbs in an abstract sense. In terms of frequency of usage, Spanish infinitives are considerably less common than many other members of the verbal paradigm, particularly the present indicative forms. The situation in Italian child language is similar (Pizzuto & Caselli 1992, Guasti 1993/4). The same holds for other Ibero-Romance languages, including Catalan and Galician. French child language is exceptional in this regard, in

exhibiting a significant use of the bare infinitive in lieu of finite verbs (Clark 1985, Pierce 1992, Ferdinand 1996). *Moi* is also common as subject in child French (Ferdinand 1996:201-2). There is also evidence that in French, as in English, objective case is the default case when a non-finite verb fails to assign nominative case to a subject (cf. Ferdinand 1996:142-4; Haegeman 1996:286-7; Friedemann 1994 suggests that the case filter is not yet operative in this stage of child language). L₂ French may also show some use of *moi* and *toi* as subject, with both finite verbs and root infinitives (White 1996). German, Dutch, and Scandinavian child language also frequently exhibits root infinitives instead of finite verbs (Harris & Wexler 1996, Wexler 1994, 1998, Rizzi 1993/4, Hoekstra & Hyams 1998, Haegeman 1996). Wexler (1994, 1998) affirms that the optional infinitive (OI) stage is not found in early child speech of languages in which INFL licenses null subjects: Italian and Ibero-Romance. OI does occur in languages where INFL does not fully license null subjects: English and other Germanic languages. It is not coincidental that in the latter languages the infinitive is morphologically indistinct from some members of the finite paradigm; in the terminology of Jaeggli & Safir (1989), only languages with morphologically uniform verb paradigms permit null subjects.

9. Sources of the uninflected infinitive

The repertoire of simplified or reduced forms of Spanish contains some striking dichotomies as regards morphosyntactic patterns, in particular phrase structure, use of articles, and verbal morphology. One group of reduced languages, typified by 'Moorish' speech, some contemporary Native American contact varieties, and pidgin Spanish as attributed to speakers of English, is characterized by the use of the bare infinitive, use of *mi* as subject pronoun, minimal use of articles and prepositions, and in general a phrase structure consisting only of lexical categories. The second group, represented by Afro-Iberian pidgins, Philippine pidgin Spanish, and to a certain extent Chinese pidgin Spanish, has a verb stem based largely on the third person singular (present indicative), some use of articles and prepositions, and general evidence of functional projections and limited use of subordinate clauses. Objectively, when contemporary L₂ varieties of Spanish are brought into the equation, they align more closely with the second group. True Spanish child language, often implicated in 'baby talk' theories of pidgin formation, is not identical to either group of reduced languages; early child Spanish shares with the first group the limited use of functional projections. It shares with the second group a verbal morphology based on finite forms and proper use of subject pronouns. Due largely to differences in the morphology of verb

paradigms, the use of bare infinitives is more common in French-derived pidgins and Creoles, in the Caribbean, Africa, and the South Pacific (Goodman 1964:105; Holm 1988:16; Hollyman 1964, Reinecke 1971, Stageberg 1956, Nguyen 1977, Schuchardt 1888, Göbl-Gáldi 1934:271; Chaudenson 1978, Poyen-Bellisle 1894:43; Niedzielski 1989, Duponchel 1979, Makouta-Mboukou 1975, Kokora 1983, Véronique 1994).

10. Use of *mi* as subject pronoun

Perhaps even more than the uninflected infinitive, the choice of *mi* as subject pronoun defines the most xenoglossic forms of Spanish foreigner-talk. Spanish speakers throughout the world associate the subject pronoun *mi* with 'Tarzan talk' and infantile pidgin, almost as much as do English speakers, despite the lack of ready models in actually occurring colloquial or child speech (Pensalfini 1995). *Mi* as subject is not a mindless creation out of ignorance: Portuguese-based creoles in Africa and Spanish/Portuguese-based creoles in the Americas (e.g. Papiamentu and Afro-Colombian Palenquero) use pronouns derived from *mi*. Unlike French, Ibero-Romance subject pronouns have not evolved to phonological clitics. In French, the disjunctive object pronouns *moi*, *toi*, etc. are used as free-standing pronouns or for emphasis. This is reflected in all French-based creoles. Colloquial English also uses *me* as an alternative to *I* in answer to questions or (together with the subject pronoun) for emphasis. English-based creoles have adopted *mi* as the generic first person singular pronoun, but in some areas this may also have been influenced by English speakers' stereotypes of foreigner-talk or early pidgin English. Spanish and Portuguese subject pronouns may stand alone, with contrastive stress, although due to their redundant status in the face of a rich verbal inflection, they do not ordinarily receive strong tonic stress. In any situation where emphasis is required, or when a free-standing subject pronoun is called for (e.g. in response to a question), it is invariably the subject pronoun which is used. By the same token, overt subject pronouns are by definition emphatic, and are never replaced by disjunctive object pronouns for emphasis, to answer questions, etc.

11. In search of sources: *Mediterranean Lingua Franca*

The search for the origins of contrived Spanish moves one step closer to a solution upon consideration of a series of Romance-based contact vernaculars which antedate the reduced Spanish examples discussed above. For more than half a century, 'monogenetic' theories of creole formation and their less explicit precursors have implicated another language, which apparently stretched at least from the early medieval period through the turn of the 19th

century: the Mediterranean Lingua Franca. Much has been written about this elusively unwritten contact language, but tangible and trustworthy attestations are as scarce as hens' teeth (Bonaparte 1877, Cifoletti 1978, 1989, Coates 1971, Collier 1976, Cortelazzo 1965, 1972, 1977, Coutelle 1977, Fronzaroli 1955, Grion 1891, Hadel 1969, Harvey & Whinnom 1967, Kahane & Kahane 1976, Lang 1992, 2000, Schuchardt 1909, Vianello 1955, Whinnom 1977, Wood 1971). Only a handful of texts or descriptions of Lingua Franca antedate the 19th century, making reconstruction speculative and venturesome. Surviving texts are suspect as true specimens of a pan-Mediterranean Lingua Franca, rather than local attempts at mimicking broken Romance spoken by foreigners or derogatory stereotypes of 'infidel' Arabs and Turks. All known Lingua Franca texts employ the infinitive as invariant verb stem to instantiate the entire verb paradigm, although occasional conjugated verbs crop up in some texts. The subject pronouns *mi* and *ti* predominate except in the very earliest Lingua Franca examples, in which null subjects occur:

- (13) a. ANON., ITALY [ca. 1353]: *come ti voler parlare?* "how do you want to speak?"
 b. GIGIO GIANCARLI, *La cingana* [ca. 1550]: *mi no saber certa* "I am not sure"
 c. DIEGO DE HAEDO, *Topografia e historia general de Argel* [ca. 1612]: *mirar como mi estar barbero bono y saber curar, si estar malato y ahora correr bono* "Look what a good doctor I am and how I know how to cure [him], if [he] is sick, and now [he] runs well"
 d. MOLIÈRE, *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* [ca. 1671]: *Mi star Mufti; ti qui sar qui?* "I am Mufti; who are you?"
 e. [ALGIERS, 1884] (Faidherbe 1884): *Moi meskine, toi donner sordi* "I am poor; you [will] give me money"

The choice of the infinitive in Lingua Franca is not a natural consequence of the imperfect acquisition of Italian by speakers of Eastern Mediterranean languages, but reflects an originally conscious choice by speakers of Italian and other Romance languages to simplify their verbal system when speaking to foreigners deemed incapable or unworthy of learning a full version of these languages. The use of *mi* and *ti* as subject pronouns in Lingua Franca has a more straightforward explanation (Lipski 1991). These pronouns are linked to regional dialects of medieval Italy, particularly Venetian and Genoese, which shortly before had begun to employ *mi* and *ti* as subject pronouns (Vanelli 1984, 1987).

12. *Lingua Franca as a model for 'foreigner' Spanish*

Lingua Franca was in the right place at the right time to serve as a model for Moorish pidgin Spanish, as it appears in Golden Age literature. Many Spaniards and Portuguese had traveled to the eastern Mediterranean. Continuing skirmishes with the Barbary Coast put Spaniards and Portuguese in contact with the westernmost varieties of Lingua Franca, which according to Haedo (1927) already contained more Spanish than Italian. Lingua Franca strategies became implanted as a powerful national image of 'foreign' Spanish and gave native Spanish speakers a template upon which to base their own foreigner-talk, when such was necessary. So indelible was the imprint of Lingua Franca that it has remained in the collective consciousness of the Spanish-speaking world as the most 'savage' form of foreigner-talk, to be used when more 'civilized' approximations to Spanish are felt to be inappropriate.

The same basic Lingua Franca patterns found in Moorish imitations formed the basis for the earliest Afro-Iberian pidgin, from 1455 to the early 1500's. The use of (*ami*) as subject in early Afro-Iberian language was reinforced by the fortuitous similarity among the first person singular pronouns in a wide variety of West African languages, all of which center around the forms *mi/emi/ami* (Lipski 1991). French colonists continued to use Lingua Franca models (known as *petit mauresque*), combining French and Italian words, in North Africa until the final decades of the 19th century. Continuing well into the 20th century, reduced forms of Italian have been spoken in North Africa and the former Italian East Africa, particularly Libya, Ethiopia (Eritrea) and Somalia (Migliorini 1963:696; Marcos 1976). The bare infinitive is used for non-past reference, while the Italian past participle forms the basis for past-tense forms. Lingua Franca was reborn not far from its original birthplace; in Libya, it is possible that the Lingua Franca of the Barbary Coast corsairs evolved seamlessly into colonial Afro-Italian.

13. *Additional sources for Spanish foreigner talk*

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that reduced Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian could not come directly from L₂ learners' spontaneous acquisition of these languages, nor from early child language, although some similarities with the latter can be observed. In Italy and Spain, contact with German (Mühlhäusler 1984) and French dialects, respectively, in which root infinitives occur in child speech and foreigner talk since at least the Middle Ages, may well have spurred the use of root infinitives and disjunctive object pronouns as subjects in contrived foreigner talk. Given the condescending nature of much Romance-based foreigner talk and the negative attitudes extended to the intended recipients, another source of inspiration is likely: the

speech of adults with language disorders. Developmental dysphasia, particularly the cluster of phenomena known as specific language impairment (SLI), is characterized by the prolongation into late childhood and even adulthood of morphological and syntactic mismatches characteristic of early child language. In particular, extended optional infinitives are frequent in impaired English, German, and French (Clahsen 1989, 1991, Wexler 1996, Rice & Wexler 1996, Leonard 1998). Adult agrammatism, a form of aphasia, is typically caused by strokes and other brain lesions, and like other forms of aphasia covers a wide gamut of speech impairments, many of which are familiar to unsophisticated members of Romance speech communities. Some of the traits of aphasic speech coincide with child language and vestigial speech (Menn 1989, Menn & Obler 1990:1372-3). Since the Romance infinitive, particularly in Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian, is a morphologically rather marked form, it does not commonly appear in aphasic speech in substitution of finite forms. Miceli & Mazzuchi (1990) do describe some root infinitives in impaired Italian. The stereotype of the *simple* or *bobo* 'simpleton' was a frequent concomitant of Spanish Golden Age literature, although such characters usually made inopportune or accidentally perspicacious remarks rather than producing SLI Spanish. However, awareness of language disorders, although not referred to as such, is as old as the human species, and the abundant models of child language, delayed language development/SLI, and adult agrammatism converge with the more grotesque foreigner-talk stereotypes, to an extent which suggests more than coincidence.

14. *Was Spanish deliberately simplified?*

The data from reduced Spanish define a fundamental typology, based on attitudes, power and influence, and urgency of communication. Deliberately reduced foreigner talk--replete with infinitives, null subjects, default copulas, and lack of functional categories--is used when communication with another group is felt to be essential to native speakers, while the L₂ either have little opportunity to learn Spanish or are felt to be incapable of or unwilling to do so. This occurs regardless of the power differential: Spaniards to Moors, Latin Americans to 'gringo' expatriates, Turks to German tourists (Hinnenkamp 1984), and possibly Portuguese sailors and traders to West Africans (Naro 1978). Lingua Franca was used by speakers of Romance to a variety of Eastern Mediterranean speakers, regardless of relative social status, based on the need (commercial, military, religious) to communicate and the unlikelihood that the non-Romance speakers would ever acquire a full variety of Italian, French, or Spanish. Similarly, Spaniards may have used *morisco*

language when speaking to the despised Moors or at least expected the latter to be incapable of rising above such language. At once unwanted and essential to economic prosperity, post-Reconquest Moors were reluctantly assigned their own foreigner-talk register. Reduced Spanish is not used when speaking to groups who will ultimately have to acquire fluency in Spanish and/or when communication can be mediated through a biletal group (overseers, slavedrivers, teamsters, traders): Spanish speakers to African slaves and Chinese indentured laborers, Dominicans to Haitian cane cutters, Spanish-speaking Central Americans to West Indians. This comes despite the observation of Naro (1978:324-6) that attitudes of superiority were irrelevant in the decision to use (Portuguese) foreigner-talk, facilitating comprehension always being foremost. Only the case of 'Basque' Spanish apparently breaks the rule; Spaniards had no essential need to communicate with Basque speakers in a reduced language, and the wildly improbable nature of *vizcaino* parodies makes it quite unlikely that any such reduced language ever existed.

Lingua Franca and colonial Italian were not directly based on Italian child language, in which the infinitive is much less frequent than, e.g. in Spanish or French. Rather, the choice of the infinitive as verb stem was an early foreigner-talk strategy employed by fluent speakers of Italian and other Romance languages as being the verb form most likely to speed along communication with the many linguistic groups of the eastern Mediterranean. Once inaugurated via the Lingua Franca as the vehicle for verbal expression, the infinitive acquired a life of its own, becoming a juggernaut which propelled subsequent reduced versions of Italian, French, and Ibero-Romance whenever accommodation of non-Romance speakers was required. The Lingua Franca paradigm of the bare infinitive was put back into play, having served admirably to discredit potential speakers of Spanish in earlier centuries. Afro-Hispanic pidgin emerged at a time when Lingua Franca was fresh in the minds of southern Europeans, and these pidginized Romance dialects coexisted for at least two centuries. Unlike Lingua Franca, Afro-Hispanic pidgin--except for the very earliest examples--shows little evidence of deliberate modification by Europeans, an exception being the 15th-16th century training of African interpreters in Portugal (Naro 1978). Awareness of the basic features of Afro-Hispanic pidgin was high among Spaniards and Portuguese living in cities with large African *bozal* populations, but nothing suggests that Europeans ever used *bozal* pidgin themselves or otherwise modified their speech when speaking with Africans in their midst. Substantially the same was true of Chinese workers taken to Latin America. The Chinese laborers were imported to replace African slaves in the most demanding and degrading plantation work; when they first arrived, they were despised by blacks and whites alike; they

were forced to learn Spanish from fellow plantation workers, many of whom were African-born *bozales*, creole-speaking cancutters from other Caribbean islands, or marginalized free blacks who may have retained some *bozal* traits in their spoken Spanish. Thus not only did Chinese workers acquire a makeshift pidgin in the absence of sustained contact with native speakers of Spanish, but they built their pidgin upon foundations already laid by speakers of African and Afro-American languages. The result was a reduced form of Spanish bearing more than coincidental resemblance to *bozal* and Afro-Caribbean Spanish, but with some uniquely Chinese traits.

Consistently pidginized Spanish has developed in isolated communities when trade with the dominant Spanish-speaking population was expanded. The enticement of trade or missionary activity provided the impetus for fluent Spanish speakers to deliberately adopt a reduced form of the language. In areas where no particular attempt was made to accommodate the language of indigenous speakers (e.g. the Andean region, Paraguay, Guatemala), a spontaneous interlanguage with significantly different characteristics is the result.

15. *Conclusions*

The overview of reduced Spanish varieties yields the unmistakable conclusion that a collective stereotype of imperfect Spanish has existed for several centuries, independently of the existence of actual specimens of such language. This remarkable survival stems from the convergence of several factors, including a nearly unbroken--if unflattering--literary tradition, a poignant if inaccurate awareness of early child language, and a conscious decision to homogenize Spanish grammar to a degree not found in spontaneous second language acquisition. It is the latter phenomenon which sets Spanish foreigner talk apart from the majority of L₂ Spanish varieties, in whose evolution native speaker simplification has played an insignificant role. At the root of the decision by native speakers to use a contrived language is the perceived status of the pidginizing group, the likelihood that the L₂ speakers can and will acquire and understand complete Spanish, and the necessity for sustained communication between native speakers and the L₂-speaking group. Non-interference with second language speakers' acquisition of Spanish is the unmarked case, and results in varieties such as Afro-Hispanic *bozal* language and the actually occurring L₂ Spanish of Anglophone Central Americans, Chinese speakers, and North Africans (Casado-Fresnillo 1995, Tarkki 1995). The original Lingua Franca, a comprehensive Romance-based contact language formed with the active collaboration of speakers of languages cognate with Spanish, never fully disappeared beneath the horizon as the

Spanish language evolved and spread to other continents. In circumstances in which communication with groups felt--if only grudgingly--to be essential trade partners, Spanish speakers have always been able to slip back into a form of discourse which owes little to coincidental similarity or the meanderings of universal grammar. The ready availability of this artificially generated but culturally potent linguistic template has at times deflected attention away from contact languages formed through natural selection, and in which substratum and universal features predominate over intentional simplification.

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