

# Searching for the origins of Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects: radical code-mixing as “fluent dysfluency”

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## *Abstract*

*Spoken in northern Uruguay along the border with Brazil are intertwined Spanish-Portuguese dialects known to linguists as Fronterizo ‘border’ dialects, and to the speakers themselves as portuñol. Since until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century northern Uruguay was populated principally by monolingual Portuguese speakers, it is usually assumed that Fronterizo arose when Spanish-speaking settlers arrived in large numbers. Left unexplained, however, is the genesis of morphosyntactically intertwined language, rather than, e.g. Spanish with many Portuguese borrowings or vice versa. The present study analyzes data from several communities along the Brazilian border (in Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay), where Portuguese is spoken frequently but dysfluently (with much involuntary mixing of Spanish) by Spanish speakers in their dealings with Brazilians. A componential analysis of mixed language from these communities is compared with Uruguayan Fronterizo data, and a high degree of quantitative structural similarity is demonstrated. The inclusion of sociohistorical data from late 19<sup>th</sup> century northern Uruguay complements the contemporary Spanish-Portuguese mixing examples, in support of the claim that Uruguayan Fronterizo was formed not in a situation of balanced bilingualism but rather as the result of the sort of fluid but dysfluent approximations to a second language found in contemporary border communities.*

## 1. Introduction

Among the languages of the world, mixed or intertwined languages are quite rare, and have provoked considerable debate among linguists. The most well-known cases, Michif, combining French and Cree (Bakker and Papen 1997; Bakker 1996), and Media Lengua, combining Spanish and Quechua (Muysken 1981, 1989, 1997), rather systematically juxtapose lexical items from a European language and functional items from a Native American language, in

a fashion that suggests at least some deliberate manipulation on the part of the original creators of the language. Issues of ethnic identity play a role in both languages; Michif speakers are Métis mixed-race individuals living along the Canadian-U. S. border, while Media Lengua speakers in Ecuador, while identifying ethnically as Native Americans, live in a few villages that culturally and linguistically straddle the European-Native American divide.

In the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking world, true mixed varieties are nearly nonexistent, notwithstanding numerous references to second-language contact-induced approximations that go by such unflattering names as *spanglish*, *quechuañol*, *guarañol*, and the like. In more typical bilingual contact situations, one language triumphs over the other, albeit with heavy lexical borrowing and calquing. In addition to the aforementioned Media Lengua, in which racial and ethnic identity play key roles in maintaining the linguistic integrity of the language, only one other case has been described: the Spanish-Portuguese hybrid varieties spoken natively in northern Uruguay, along the border with Brazil and extending considerably into the northern third of Uruguay. These dialects have been referred to as *Fronterizo* ‘border [dialect]’ or *dialectos portugueses de Uruguay* ‘Uruguayan Portuguese dialects’ by linguists, but the speakers themselves prefer the term *portuñol*. An examination of the sociohistorical factors that brought Spanish and Portuguese into contact in northern Uruguay provides a plausible scenario for language mixing, while the highly cognate status of Spanish and Portuguese – spanning the entire lexicon as well as most of the grammar – allows for numerous bilingual crossovers. Still eluding a satisfying explanation is the coalescence of *Fronterizo* into a series of free-wheeling dialects in which the two languages are intertwined to a greater extent than is predicted in most models of language switching and language mixing.

Thomason (2003: 26-27) declares that “there are no direct observations of any linguistic processes that have led to the emergence of stable mixed languages.” The present study will offer the suggestion that fluid but dysfluent code-mixing may be one mechanism currently observable. This will be done by analyzing examples of dense and syntactically diverse code-mixing in the speech of semifluent bilinguals in a variety of Spanish-Portuguese contact environments. It will be argued that these examples are completely consistent with Muysken’s (2000) definition of congruent lexicalization, despite significant differences between Muysken’s proposed criteria and those found in the communities under study. Furthermore, it will be asserted that these cases of code-mixing as unconstrained bilingual interference provide at least as adequate a prototype for congruent lexicalization – provided that the relevant pragmatic conditions are satisfied – as the relatively tame examples of code-switching among fluent bilinguals studied by Muysken and his colleagues. Finally, it will be suggested that Uruguayan *Fronterizo* – and possibly other mixed languages – may well have originated with the

unconstrained code-mixing of language learners or semifluent bilinguals, before coalescing into stable and natively spoken new languages.

The line of argumentation will proceed as follows. Following a brief description of *Fronterizo*, new data will then be presented, from several other communities on the Brazilian border, in Bolivia, Argentina, and Paraguay. In these communities, Portuguese (and in two instances, also Spanish) is spoken as a second language with varying degrees of proficiency, but with complete fluency (e.g. no groping for words, hesitations, self-corrections, etc.). The mixed speech occurring in these communities will be examined in the light of frequently observed syntactic restrictions, and by means of the componential criteria employed by Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007), will ultimately be presented as a special case of congruent lexicalization. It will be claimed that the “fluent dysfluency” characterizing mixed Spanish-Portuguese speech, which violates many proposed code-switching restrictions, is possible due to the fact that both Spanish and Portuguese are understood in these communities; moreover, the sociolinguistic circumstances facilitate the uncritical and un-criticized interweaving of languages. This configuration represents a distinct form of congruent lexicalization hitherto not included in the prevalent typologies of language mixing. Data from *Fronterizo* dialects will also be analyzed according to the diagnostic criteria of Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007), in a demonstration of the considerable typological similarity between natively spoken Uruguayan *Fronterizo* and dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing in Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia. Sociolinguistic circumstances similar to those currently obtaining along the Brazilian border in Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay, it will be argued, prevailed in northern Uruguay in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and the *Fronterizo* dialects most probably arose as the L2 approximations to Spanish by originally monolingual Portuguese speakers in northern Uruguay coalesced into natively-spoken varieties.

## 2. Uruguayan *Fronterizo*

Dialects of Uruguayan Portuguese or *Fronterizo* are spoken all along the Uruguay-Brazil border and in some towns well into the interior of Uruguay, but two Uruguayan border cities have been the principal focus of sociolinguistic research, and will be the source of the examples examined in the present study. The first is Rivera (approximate population 110,000), and its sister city Santana do Livramento (pop. about 83,000). The two cities form a single urban mass; the international border winds its way through the middle of the two cities, but is not marked except for a few monuments. There are no border controls or other visible presence of an international border (except for changes in street signs) and residents freely travel between the two countries. Rivera has a duty-free shopping zone that attracts many Brazilian tourists, and Portuguese is heard throughout Rivera, both as spoken by Brazilians and by

native Uruguayans. Uruguayans listen to Brazilian radio and television and many have attended Brazilian schools. On the Brazilian side no Spanish is spoken, although it is certainly understood. The local variety of Portuguese spoken in Santana do Livramento is in general closer to urban Brazilian standards than the rustic speech that forms the basis for Uruguayan *Fronterizo*, although some non-standard sociolects can still be found on the Brazilian side of the border (e.g. Meirelles 2007, also Hensey 1966).

Some 180 km. to the west of Rivera is the Uruguayan city of Artigas (pop. about 42,000), which is separated from its Brazilian counterpart Quarai (pop. around 25,000) by the Cuareim River. A half-mile long bridge joins the two cities, and vehicular and pedestrian traffic passes freely and without border controls. As with the case of Rivera, the relatively greater economic development on the Brazilian side traditionally resulted in Uruguayans' closer ties to Brazil – including the use of Portuguese – than to the central Uruguayan government in Montevideo. When the currency exchange rate has favored Brazil, Artigas has filled with Brazilian tourists, providing an ongoing source of contact with spoken Portuguese. Most residents of Artigas watch Brazilian television (representing the majority of available channels) and listen to Brazilian radio stations. Working class residents of Artigas and the surrounding towns have traditionally preferred to speak Portuguese (or "portuñol"), although the community is increasingly shifting to predominantly Spanish-based language (Douglas 2004).

One of the first scholars to deal with *Fronterizo* linguistics, the Uruguayan Rona (1965: 12) felt that *Fronterizo* was not a stable language, but rather a dynamic situation in which Spanish and Portuguese freely combined. He described the combination of both languages as follows:

Puede, sí, apreciarse un proceso de selección, pero apenas en un grado incipiente, es decir, casi individual, idiolectal, según las preferencias de cada individuo hablante. Esto no significa, naturalmente, que la selección ocurra siempre entre el sistema portugués y el sistema castellano. No se trata de elegir entre hablar en portugués o hablar en castellano. Se trata más bien de un doble juego de posibilidades que están simultáneamente a disposición de cada hablante, y entre las cuales puede elegir, en el discurso, ya unas ya otras. [A process of selection can be observed, but only in incipient idiolectal fashion, according to the individual preferences of each speaker. Naturally this does not mean that the selection always takes place between the Spanish system and the Portuguese system. It's not a matter of choosing between Spanish and Portuguese, but rather a double set of possibilities that are simultaneously available to each speaker, and between which the speaker can choose in discourse one or the other].

He insists (Rona 1965: 13) that the selection process is both voluntary and conscious:

A nuestro entender, en la mayoría de los casos en que parece haberse fijado una forma, ya sea portuguesa o castellana, o bien mixta 'fronteriza', el proceso de selección se verifica en el plano del lenguaje consciente, pero no en el fondo pasivo. Es decir que se usa un modo (se prefiere usar un modo), pero se comprenden (y pueden ocasionalmente usarse) ambos. [As we see it, in most instances where a Spanish, Portuguese or 'Fronterizo' form has become fixed, the process of selection can be verified at the level of conscious language, but not at an unconscious level. In other words one mode is used (or preferred) but both modes are understood (and occasionally used)].

This viewpoint is not shared by later researchers such as Elizaincín (1973, 1976, 1979, 1992), Hensey (1972, 1982a, 1982b), Elizaincín, Behares, and Barrios (1987), Carvalho (2003a, 2003b, 2004a, 2004b), Douglas (2004), and others, who regard *Fronterizo* speech as a language in its own right, subject to regional and social variation, tracing of isoglosses, and diachronic change. My own research in this zone confirms the observation that what the local residents refer to as *portuñol* is not bilingual code-switching but a separate language. Most of the same individuals who fluently speak *portuñol* can also switch entirely to the regional variety of Spanish, with no Portuguese admixture at all except for a handful of lexical borrowings that have entered northern Uruguayan Spanish. They cannot, however, switch to Portuguese, or to alternative registers of *portuñol* containing more or less Portuguese. For all intents and purposes, the bilingualism is not Spanish-Portuguese, but rather Spanish-*portuñol*, given that the latter language is grammatically grounded in Portuguese, as noted by Elizaincín (1976). Currently there are few monolingual speakers of *Fronterizo/portuñol*, and those who can be found are elderly and poorly educated, but according to oral testimony as recently as a generation or two ago such individuals could be found in greater numbers.

It is worth reiterating that contemporary *Fronterizo* is not a form of code-switching, but a language in its own right, spoken by northern Uruguayans alongside Spanish. Speakers of *Fronterizo* or northern Uruguayan Spanish do not engage in code-switching with Portuguese, and such switching between Spanish and *Fronterizo* that does occur is usually guided by pragmatic circumstances, such as setting, register, interlocutors, topic, and so forth. In particular, there is little or no Spanish-*Fronterizo* intrasentential code-switching, although given the large number of items cognate in Spanish and Portuguese, the purported lack of code-switching can sometimes be judged only by speakers' own perceptions, since all *Fronterizo* speakers are quite aware of when they are speaking Spanish and when they are speaking *Fronterizo/Portuñol*.

There is little accurate information on the nature of *Fronterizo* before the late 1960's, but judging by indirect references to language usage in northern Uruguay, it appears that *Fronterizo* had stabilized by the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and remained relatively stable for several generations thereafter.

Since the late 1980's, there is evidence of an increasing tendency for natives of northern Uruguay to use more or less standard Spanish with one another, with spontaneous *Fronterizo* usage gradually becoming identified with the lower working classes and rural communities. As for ongoing sources of lexicalization, contemporary *Fronterizo* draws on both Spanish (e.g. from the schools, the local university, and the increasing presence of Spanish-language media), and Portuguese (principally from Brazilian television). Speculation on the future prospects for *Fronterizo* is a risky and not particularly productive enterprise, given the many rapid and often unexpected sociolinguistic changes affecting northern Uruguay. The increasing pressure of standard (i.e. Montevideo-based) Spanish, e.g. spurred by the opening of a regional university campus, is partially offset by the relaxation of the unspoken but rigorously enforced prohibition against using *Fronterizo* in elementary and secondary schools, by an emerging published literary and culinary tradition in *Fronterizo* (e.g. Behares and Díaz 1998, Behares, Díaz, and Holzmann 2004), by the use of *Fronterizo* in popular music (see section 12.3), and by the recent inclusion of Portuguese language courses in the Rivera schools. Carvalho (2004a) has documented the influence of contemporary Brazilian Portuguese prestige norms on *Fronterizo*, and it may be that in the next few generations, more educated northern Uruguayans in urban areas will gravitate towards Spanish-Portuguese bilingualism. Such prospects will set the stage for future research.

### 3. Uruguayan *Fronterizo* characteristics

The *Fronterizo* or Uruguayan Portuguese varieties are characterized by considerable morphosyntactic and lexical variation, since they are non-prestige oral varieties increasingly under pressure from standardized Uruguayan Spanish and – both through the media and the recent opening of some bilingual programs in Uruguayan border cities – from standardized Brazilian Portuguese. The variability is most noticeable in the choice of lexical items, and also in the juxtaposition of Spanish and Portuguese morphosyntactic configurations, but there are also a number of common denominators that justify the classification of *Fronterizo* varieties as cohesive contact-induced dialects. In addition to the mixing of phonological configurations, the most consistent grammatical features of the Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects are following:

#### 3.1

Both Spanish and Portuguese articles appear in *Fronterizo*, a fact that is facilitated by the minimal differences between Spanish *los*, *la* and *las* and Portuguese *os*, *a* and *as*, respectively. Sometimes this results in combining a Spanish word with a Portuguese article or vice versa; on other occasions, both

a Spanish and a Portuguese article may appear in a single sentence (Elizaincín et al. 1987: 41):

#### (1)

- u* [= *o*] material que se utiliza en *el* taier 'the materials that are used in the shop'
- tudus lus* [= *todos los*] días 'every day'
- la importasão de automóviles* 'the importation of autos'

#### 3.2

Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese partially suspends plural marking in noun phrases, usually marking only the first element, particularly if it is an article. This trait is nearly categorical frequent in *Fronterizo*, even when Spanish articles are involved, and can even be found in vernacular Spanish of the border region (Carvalho 2006a, Lipski 2006). Some examples are (Elizaincín et al. 1987: 41f.):

#### (2)

- Aparte tengo unas hermanas, *unos* tío 'Besides, I have sisters, aunts and uncles'
- Tein *umas* vaca para tirá leite 'I have some cows for milk'
- Sai cum trinta y sei gol 'I scored 26 goals'

From my own fieldwork:

- (3) Para o problema dos *guri* na rua 'for the problem of kids in the street'

#### 3.3

Spanish and Portuguese verb conjugations are nearly identical, once allowances for pronunciation are made, and *Fronterizo* speakers freely draw on verbs from both languages. Vernacular Brazilian Portuguese frequently neutralizes all verb endings except for the first person singular in favor of the third person singular (e.g. *nós trabalha* [*trabalhamos*] 'we work,' *elés trabalha[m]* 'they work'), something which does not occur in any (monolingual) variety of Spanish. Among *Fronterizo* speakers, combinations like *nós tinha* 'we had' [standard Ptg. *nós tinhamos*] instead of *nosotros teníamos* may be heard (Rona 1965: 12, Elizaincín et al. 1987). Significantly, there are no instances of this gravitation towards the 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular as quasi-invariable verb stem in *Fronterizo* verbs produced in Spanish. At the same time some *Fronterizo* speakers occasionally employ the third person singular in Portuguese verbs, instead of the first person singular, something that does not occur in any non-creole variety of Portuguese: *entonci yo no tein [tenho] ese dinheiro* 'then I don't have that money.' As with other

neutralizations of verb person and number endings, this only occurs with Portuguese verbs. *Fronterizo* speakers have also retained an innovative first person plural verb form for first conjugation verbs ending in *-ar*; instead of the normal *-amos* (often pronounced as *-amo* in vernacular Brazilian Portuguese), *Fronterizo* speakers consistently employ the ending *-emo*, normally the subjunctive ending for Portuguese first conjugation verbs: *falemo* 'we speak,' *trabalhemo* 'we work,' *moremo* 'we live.' This conjugation has its origins in the vernacular rural Portuguese of Rio Grande do Sul, but is no longer frequent among the urban residents in Brazilian border cities.

#### 4. Spanish-Portuguese contacts along the Bolivian-Brazilian border: Cobija

The northern Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects are the only stable Spanish-Portuguese hybrid varieties in South America, but at other points along the Brazilian border Spanish and Portuguese interact under varying conditions of bilingualism. One site is Cobija, in northwestern Bolivia, on the Acre River which forms the border with the Brazilian state of the same name. Cobija (population of around 22,000 in the 2001 census) and its sister city Brasiléia (population around 16,000) are linked by bridges which carry both vehicles and pedestrians. The border crossing is unrestricted; there are no tolls and no documentation need be presented on either side of the bridges. Nowadays the main economic force in Cobija is trade with neighboring Brazil; Cobija has a large duty-free shopping area near the main international bridge, and every day hundreds of Brazilians flock to downtown Cobija to buy a wide range of imported and national products, all of which can be purchased at favorable prices due to the relative strength of the Brazilian *real* with respect to the *boliviano* as well as the absence of tariffs and duties. The sociolinguistic history of Cobija shares some similarities with northern Uruguay. Both regions were long ignored by distant central governments. In both regions the economy of neighboring Brazilian towns was more highly developed, with better schools, hospitals and clinics, and better transportation. Until the arrival of cable television and the building of local radio stations, the only radio and television stations available in northern Uruguay and northern Bolivia were Brazilian. In more recent times, the establishment of tax-free commercial zones and the relative strength of the Brazilian economy compared to neighboring countries have attracted many Brazilians to border cities in Uruguay and Bolivia.

Although life in Cobija was never as integrated with Brazilian culture as in northern Uruguay, previous generations of *cobijeños* used much Portuguese in their daily lives, and over the years incorporated many Portuguese words and expressions into the local Spanish dialect. A few cases of morphosyntactic transfer also occurred, and arguably even some suprasegmental traits reflect

contact with Portuguese.<sup>1</sup> given the daily presence of Brazilians in Cobija, the fact that most children in Cobija prefer Brazilian television programs (and many Bolivian adults watch Brazilian soap operas), most *cobijeños* can speak at least some Portuguese, usually with Spanish phonotactics and morphosyntax.

In the past decade and a half, the founding of the Universidad Amazónica del Pando in Cobija has attracted hundreds of Brazilian students, particularly in the fields of computer science and agro-forestry. Some Brazilian students marry Bolivians and establish bilingual households in Cobija. All Brazilian students are required to take intensive courses in Spanish in order to survive in the Bolivian classroom environment. As occurs in other language contact environments between the two closely related languages, Brazilians in Cobija rarely master the Spanish language, but rather speak a range of L<sub>2</sub> approximations and spontaneous hybrid idiolects that many residents of Cobija also regard as *portuñol*. Grammatically, Brazilian's attempts at speaking Spanish are characterized by the same interweaving of Spanish and Portuguese elements as found among Cobija Spanish speakers' attempts to speak Portuguese.

#### 5. Spanish-Portuguese contacts along the Bolivian-Brazilian border: Guayaramerín

A quite different sociolinguistic configuration obtains in the other major Bolivian city on the Brazilian border, Guayaramerín, in the department of Beni (Crespo Avaroma 2006). Guayaramerín (population around 41,000 in the 2001 census) is separated from its Brazilian counterpart Guajará-Mirim

<sup>1</sup> Many Portuguese words and expressions are used in the Spanish of Cobija (Saavedra Pérez 2002:143–153), and young people frequently greet each other with hybrid expressions like *¿qué tú ta fassendo aquí?* 'what are you doing here?' and *tú é muito bonita* 'you are very pretty.' These combinations reflect the use of the second person singular subject pronoun *tu* in the regional Brazilian dialect of Acre, compared with the use of *vos* and the corresponding verb forms, in northern Bolivian Spanish. Although the regional Portuguese dialect of Acre uses the pronoun *tu*, the verb forms correspond to the third person pronoun *você* used in most other Brazilian dialects: *tu foi*, *tu trabalha*, etc. Nearly everyone in Cobija says *bora* instead of *vamos* 'let's go,' from Portuguese *vamos embora*: *bora tal lugar* 'let's go to that place.' Parents are referred to by the Portuguese words *pai* and *mai*, even in families where only Spanish is spoken. As in northern Uruguay, residents of Cobija often use *ta* to indicate approval and *¿todo bien?* as a greeting. When speaking Spanish, some residents of Cobija use double negation, reflecting vernacular Brazilian Portuguese: *aquí no hay no, no sé no*. There are occasional non-inverted questions, also reflecting Brazilian Portuguese syntax: *¿dónde vo(s) vivi(s)?* 'where do you live?' as well as in hybrid sentences such as the aforementioned *¿qué tú ta fassendo aquí?* In situ questions, frequent in colloquial Brazilian Portuguese, sometimes occur in the Spanish of Cobija: *¿Vo(s) vivi(s) dónde?*

(population around 38,000) by the broad and often turbulent Mamoré river, a river so wide that from one bank the opposite city can barely be made out. The towns are serviced by a regular motor ferry service, a journey that takes around twenty minutes. The presence of a duty-free shopping zone in Guayaramerín and a favorable exchange rate result in the Bolivian city being filled with hundreds of Brazilian tourists every day, in the shopping area that stretches along the main avenue from the port terminal for some ten blocks. Relatively few Bolivians travel on a regular basis to the neighboring Brazilian city; the cost of transport, the higher prices, the reluctance to ride in small boats, and the need to present a yellow fever vaccination certificate upon entering Brazil account for the asymmetrical patterns of tourism. All Bolivians engaged in commerce with Brazilian tourists in Guayaramerín speak some Portuguese, with the same second-language traits found in Cobija. Unlike in the latter city, few morphosyntactic transfers from Portuguese are found in the Spanish of Guayamerín, although some adolescents garnish their speech with Portuguese expressions such as *bora* 'let's go' and occasionally use double negation. Outside of the duty-free shopping area few Bolivians speak Portuguese, although most watch Brazilian television (soap operas and children's programs in particular) and have passive competence in Portuguese. Brazilians visiting Guayaramerín speak no Spanish, except possibly in the case of a few lexical items that are significantly different in the two languages (e.g. Ptg. *brinquedo*-Sp. *juguete* 'toy').

#### 6. Additional border contacts: Pedro Juan Caballero, Paraguay

Additional data on Spanish-Portuguese language contact can be obtained by examining other regions along the long Brazilian border where Spanish and Portuguese come into contact. One such region is Paraguay, which has two substantial cities that border on Brazil as well as some smaller border communities. The nation's second largest city, Ciudad del Este (formerly Puerto Stroessner) is linked to its Brazilian counterpart Foz do Iguaçu by a bridge across the Paraná river. In Ciudad del Este a large number, perhaps the majority of residents have emigrated from other regions of Paraguay in search of jobs in this economic boom town, whose economy is thriving due to the large numbers of Brazilians who arrive daily to shop in the enormous duty-free zone. Although most Paraguayans involved in commerce with Brazilians in Ciudad del Este speak at least some Portuguese, the high proportion of citizens raised elsewhere in the country precludes the formation of stable Spanish-Portuguese interlects.

The sociolinguistic situation is more nuanced in Pedro Juan Caballero, a remote frontier town (eight hours by bus from Asunción) of some 100,000 inhabitants, with approximately half living in the urban region. The city was founded in 1899 during the boom of yerba mate production, but in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the city experienced an economic boom as a center of

commerce and tourism with neighboring Brazil. The Paraguayan-Brazilian border in Pedro Juan Caballero-Ponta Porã (Mato Grosso do Sul, pop. approx. 69,000) is similar to that of Rivera, Uruguay-Santana do Livramento, Brazil. By crossing a street or a grassy area between traffic lanes one crosses the border, with no border controls anywhere within the conjoined cities. Pedro Juan Caballero does not have a duty free zone, but there are many small markets and stores that sell imported items that attract Brazilian shoppers, as well as an enormous shopping mall situated right on the border. Portuguese is heard nearly everywhere in downtown Pedro Juan, and local residents do use some Portuguese words when speaking amongst themselves, although such conversations are held in a combination of Spanish and Guaraní. Although the balance of trade between the two nations favors Brazil, Paraguayans in Pedro Juan routinely enter Ponta Porã for goods and services or friendly visits. All Paraguayans who engage in commercial transactions with Brazilians speak at least some Portuguese, given Brazilians' presumed insistence in being addressed in that language; other Paraguayans may adopt the widespread strategy of speaking Spanish during occasional contacts with Brazilians, while the latter speak Portuguese.

#### 7. Language contact on the Argentina-Brazil border: Paso de los Libres

Northeastern Argentina, in the provinces of Corrientes and Misiones, has several towns that border on Brazil and share cultural and commercial ties with sister cities on the Brazilian side of the border. Most of the border is formed by the wide Uruguay river and the larger border crossings are the scene of international bridges. A prototypical case is the city of Paso de los Libres, Argentina, in Corrientes province, which is joined by a free bridge to the Brazilian city of Uruguaiana, Rio Grande do Sul. The population of Paso de los Libres is approximately 45,000, while the larger and commercially more developed Uruguaiana has some 126,000 inhabitants. Although the international bridge is toll-free, Argentina enforces entry and exit document controls and customs inspection; there are no formalities involved in entering or leaving Brazil via the bridge. Most residents of Paso de los Libres have visited Uruguaiana but those not involved in international commerce cross the river only occasionally; Brazilians, on the other hand, enter "Libres" in large numbers due to the favorable currency exchange rate, even though Uruguaiana has proportionately larger shopping areas. As in other regions bordering on Brazil, most inhabitants of Paso de los Libres watch Brazilian television and have considerable passive competence in Portuguese. Although Portuguese is not used among Argentine citizens living in Libres, numerous Portuguese words have become part of the local Spanish lexicon, often to the complete exclusion of the Spanish equivalent; some examples are *pipoca* 'popcorn,' *pirolé* 'a type of candy,' *miñoca* 'fishing bait,' *parcería* 'group of friends,' *carona* 'hitchhiking.' when attempting to speak Portuguese to

Brazilians, residents of Paso de los Libres who are not native speakers of Portuguese (e.g. who do not have a Brazilian parent) exhibit the same range of language mixture as found in the border cities of Paraguay and Bolivia.

Paso de los Libres is also home to one of the two experimental bilingual programs in Argentina, jointly sponsored by the governments of Argentina and Brazil in selected border cities. The Escuela Vicente Eladio Verón offers two days a week of Portuguese language instruction in the lower grades, taught by teachers who travel from neighboring Uruguaiana. The basic Portuguese language classes are taught by Argentine teachers fluent in Portuguese. In Uruguaiana a sister school (Escola CAIC) also receives weekly instruction in Spanish, taught by teachers who travel from Paso de los Libres. Since both schools are located in lower working class neighborhoods, whose residents are not usually destined for employment in international trade, and it is not clear what opportunities outside of the classroom exist for students to practice the second language.<sup>2</sup> As in the Uruguayan and Paraguayan communities along the Brazilian border, Argentines in Paso de los Libres who are not fully fluent in Portuguese freely mix Spanish and Portuguese in their attempts at speaking Portuguese to Brazilians.

#### 8. Language contact on the Argentina-Brazil border: Bernardo de Irigoyen

A more elaborate set of language contact phenomena can be observed in far northeastern Argentina, in the town of Bernardo de Irigoyen, in Misiones province. This community of some 11,000 inhabitants shares a land border with two contiguous Brazilian towns, Dionísio Cerqueira, Santa Catarina (pop. 15,000), and Barracão, Paraná (pop. 5,200). Along the main street of Irigoyen that leads to neighboring Dionísio Cerqueira, there is an Argentine customs post, through which local residents pass freely on foot and in

<sup>2</sup> In unpublished comments to a working document on bilingual schooling jointly prepared by the ministries of education of Argentina and Brazil, Prof. Carlos Torres observes that:

[...] hay que hacer una distinción entre los movimientos transitorios de los adultos hacia el otro país y por otro lado el contacto efectivo de los niños en estadías del otro lado de la frontera. Los niños correntinos siquiera conocen el puente (Paso de los Libres/Uruguayana) [...] mal se podría hablar de estadía entonces [...] no existe una estadía frecuente en el Brasil, por parte de los niños argentinos(al menos los correntinos) y viceversa de niños brasileños en la Argentina. [It is necessary to distinguish between the transitory movements of adults to the other country and the effective contact by children during sojourns on the other side of the border. The children of Corrientes barely know the Paso de los Libres-Uruguaiana bridge ... it is therefore not feasible to speak of sojourns ... there are no frequent sojourns in Brazil by Argentine children, at least in Corrientes, nor by Brazilian children in Argentina.]

I am grateful to Prof. Torres for providing me with a copy of this as yet unpublished document together with his own observations.

vehicles. The remainder of the border with Dionísio Cerqueira is marked by an overgrown ravine. In a peripheral neighborhood of Irigoyen it is possible to enter Barracão by simply crossing a street, with no border controls. The sociolinguistic situation of Irigoyen is unlike that of Paso de los Libres in that in several neighborhoods Portuguese is spoken as a native language more frequently than Spanish. Children from these neighborhoods speak little Spanish before beginning school, although they rapidly acquire Spanish through peer contacts and in the classroom. Bernardo de Irigoyen is home to the second Argentine-Brazilian bilingual school, the Escuela Frontera. This school has implemented a full bilingual education program; all subjects are taught in Portuguese two days a week through grade six; Spanish is used on the remaining days. As in other border towns, Argentines in Irigoyen watch Brazilian television and routinely cross into Brazil for informal visits.

Adult residents of Irigoyen punctuate their conversations with Portuguese words, and refer to their parents affectionately as *mãe* and *pai*. The level of proficiency in Portuguese is generally quite high among Argentines in Irigoyen; those with no formal study of Portuguese (the majority) typically use the vernacular dialect of the neighboring Brazilian states. This includes the use of the subject pronoun *tu* instead of *você*, the use of "stripped plurals" (marking /s/ only on the first element of plural noun phrases, usually a determiner), and the use of the third person singular verb form for first person and third person plural reference (e.g. *nós trabalha [trabalhamos]* 'we work,' *elos trabalha [trabalham]* 'they work'). Some children occasionally extend this tendency to the first-person singular, a phenomenon not usually found in vernacular Brazilian Portuguese: *eu tein [tenho]* 'I have.' The overgeneralization of the third person singular verb form is carried over into the Spanish spoken by Portuguese-dominant children, although it ordinarily does not persist into adult language. Natives of Irigoyen who are raised in Spanish-speaking households speak less Portuguese, but almost all residents of this compact town can spontaneously speak Portuguese when addressing a Brazilian. Some of the stores in the two-block long "downtown" have Brazilian employees, so Portuguese is heard on a daily basis within Irigoyen.

The map in Figure 1 shows the locations of the Spanish-Portuguese contacts described in the present study.

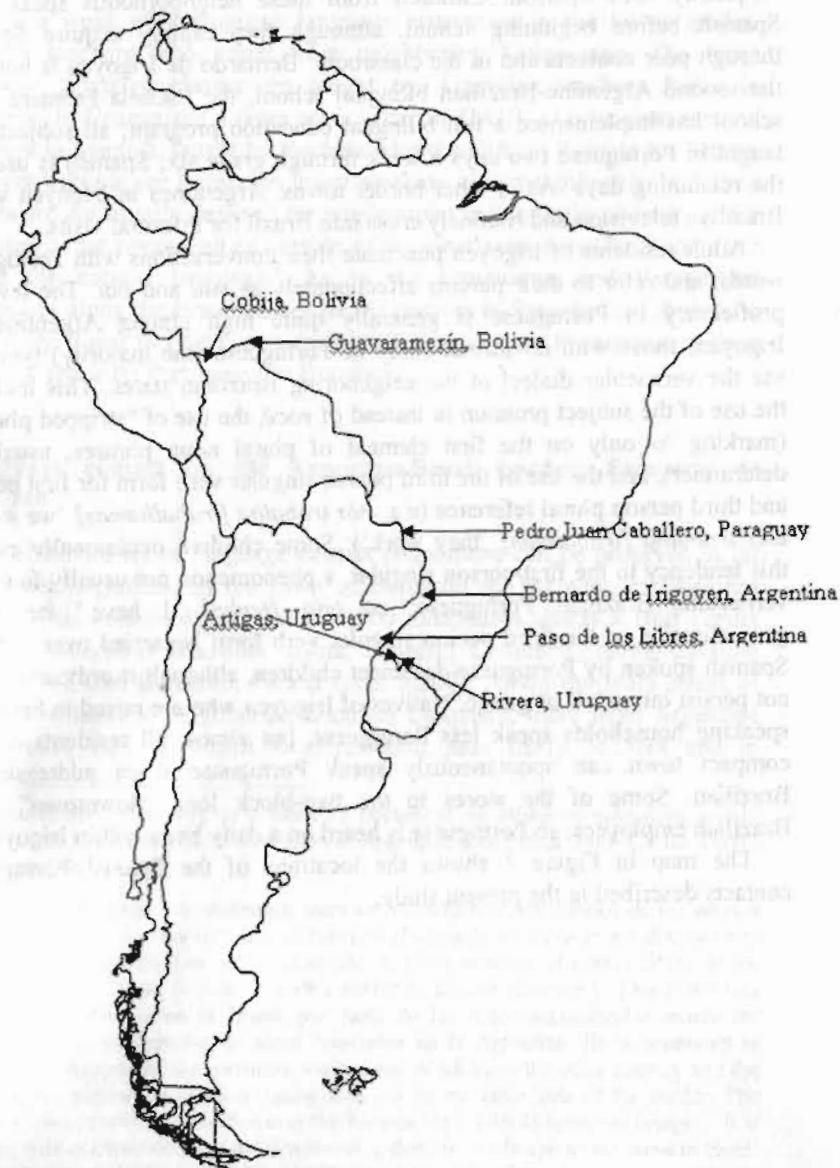


Figure 1: Approximate locations of the Spanish-Portuguese contacts

## 9. Syntactic structures in Spanish-Portuguese mixtures

The sociolinguistic situations are quite distinct in Cobija, Guayaramerín, Pedro Juan Caballero, Paso de los Libres, Bernardo de Irigoyen, and northern Uruguay; in all but the last zone Spanish is the principal language,<sup>3</sup> there is almost no Spanish-Portuguese code-switching, and when residents attempt to speak Portuguese they exhibit variable and idiosyncratic patterns of first language interference in accordance with their individual level of competence in Portuguese. In northern Uruguay, the *Fronterizo* dialects are spoken natively and consistently. Despite these differences, the superficial patterns of language mixing in the speech communities are quite similar, as shown in the selection of examples in the appendix, representing spontaneously produced speech from each community.

### 9.1

Immediately noticeable in these samples is the density of apparent language switching, or in the case of Uruguay, embedding of elements of each language in the hybrid *Fronterizo* dialect. In the case of Bolivian, Argentine, and Paraguayan speakers along the border with Brazil, this mixed language is not the result of code-switching but rather of involuntary mixing of the target language and the native language during attempts to speak entirely in the target language. The Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects are not current participants in a code-switching environment, but it will be suggested that historically they probably derive from a sociolinguistic environment similar to the characteristic speech of the Bolivian, Paraguayan, and Argentine border communities described previously.

In addition to having a high density of Spanish-Portuguese juxtaposition, the aforementioned Spanish-Portuguese hybrid combinations appear to violate well-documented syntactic constraints on intrasentential code-switching.<sup>4</sup> without wading into the quagmire of competing syntactic analyses, there are several environments for which robust observational evidence suggests that code-switching is unlikely, cross-linguistically. The dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese corpora described in the preceding sections exhibit instances of switching at these junctures, which contributes to the circumstantial evidence

<sup>3</sup> There are also neighborhoods of Bernardo de Irigoyen where Portuguese is the principal language, although all residents have also acquired Spanish.

<sup>4</sup> The literature on the syntactic constraints which govern code-switching is vast and still growing. The constraints relevant to the present study are summarized in Dussias (2003), Lipski (1982, 1985), and Toribio (2001a, 2001b). MacSwan (1999, 2000, 2004, 2005) provides refinements based on the Minimalist paradigm, while Myers-Scotton (2002) and Jake, Myers-Scotton, and Gross (2002) analyze code-switching from within the Matrix Language Framework. Most of the examples analyzed in the present study would receive similar acceptability judgments in all of the aforementioned theoretical frameworks.

that the dysfluent language mixing under study allows for a greater range of switches than the more usually described instances of bilingual code-switching. Some representative examples are given in the following sections. Spanish words are in regular typeface, Portuguese words are in italics, cognate homophones – allowing for differences in spelling and low-level phonetic differences – are in bold, and neologisms combining both Spanish and Portuguese elements are in small caps.

## 9.2

The dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese speech exhibits many switches between a pronominal subject and predicate:

(5)

COBIJA:

*sei lá* yo 'I don't know'

COBIJA, BRAZILIANS ATTEMPTING TO SPEAK SPANISH:

*ela decía "nostra"* 'she would say "nostra"

*yo tambem tive elpañol allá* 'I also had Spanish [classes] there'

**que yo saiba** parece que *vai ser por su cuenta* 'as far as I know it seems that it will be on his own accord'

GUAYARAMERÍN:

*ellos ja misturam* 'they mix (languages)'

BERNARDO DE IRIGOYEN:

nosotros **SABIA** el número (**d**e celular de la policía 'we knew the cell phone number for the police'<sup>5</sup>

nosotros se **FUE** para allá 'we went there'

nosotro se **FUE** pa El Dorado 'we went to El Dorado'

nosotro TA en un barco que tiene mi tío 'we are in a boat that belongs to my uncle'

nosotro TABA ahí 'we were there'

nosotro IBA para Posada a visitar mi abuela 'we were going to Posadas to visit my grandmother'

nosotro **TENÍA** que **segurar** las casa sino *ia f* para abajo 'we had to secure the house or else it would fall down'

PASO DE LOS LIBRES:

*eu ya fui* 'I went already'

PEDRO JUAN CABALLERO:

*ellos fala direito* 'they speak good (Spanish)'

<sup>5</sup> The verb *sabia* is being analyzed as non-Spanish because of the non-agreement between the (first-person plural) subject and the (third-person singular) verb. The same holds for the verbs *se fue*, *ia*, *taba*, *iba*, and *tenía* in the following examples. This trait is frequent in vernacular Brazilian Portuguese, but not found in any variety of Argentine Spanish.

quando **fica velho** a partir di cuarenta cinco cincuenta año **él ja no pode mais** 'when one gets old, past forty-five or fifty'  
RIVERA, URUGUAY:  
*yo não tein ese dinhero entonci yo não tein ese dinheiro* 'then I don't have that money'

## 9.3

There are also switches between negative words and main verb:

(6)

COBIJA:

*¿ mas vai o no vai?* 'but are you going or aren't you?'

PASO DE LOS LIBRES:

*não sabría decirle* '(I) wouldn't be able to tell you'

PEDRO JUAN CABALLERO:

**él ja no pode mais** 'he can't (do it) any more'

RIVERA, URUGUAY:

[3]o no *voou me aposentar* 'I'm not going to retire'

## 9.4

The dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese corpus shows examples of switches between fronted interrogative words and the remainder of the sentence:

(7)

COBIJA, BRAZILIANS' SPANISH:

**quién** QUERE *ter mah conocimiento* 'whoever wants to have more knowledge'

RIVERA, URUGUAY:

*¿Dónde fica tal cosa?* 'where is that thing?'

## 9.5

There are numerous switches between auxiliary verb and infinitive:

(8)

GUAYARAMERÍN:

entonces **ellos aprendieron** que no hay que **trocar a moeda** 'then they learned that it is not necessary to change money'

**porque** *não tem*, **como** le puedo **falar**, **vitrina** 'because there isn't how can I explain it, a show window'

PEDRO JUAN CABALLERO:

*o brasileiro que vem vem hacer compra Ciudad del Este* 'The Brazilian(s) who come come to buy in Ciudad del Este'

### PASO DE LOS LIBRES:

vine a *morar a Corrientes* 'I came to live in Corrientes'

### BERNARDO DE IRIGOYEN:

*teria que preguntar na aduana* 'you would have to ask at the customs office'

yo quería aprender falar brasileiro 'I wanted to learn how to speak Brazilian (Portuguese)'

## 10. Spanish-Portuguese mixing as congruent lexicalization

It is clear from the considerable number of mixed Spanish-Portuguese utterances that mix grammars at nearly all possible points that the "classic" definitions of code-switching are not adequate to account for this bilingual behavior. The Spanish-Portuguese language interleaving just described fits the basic profile of *congruent lexicalization*, despite the fact that none of the three cases involves fluent bilingualism, interaction with bilingual interlocutors, or any conscious decision to use more than one language or dialect in a conversation. Nor do these cases conform to the extra-linguistic criteria for congruent lexicalization proposed by Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007: 309), namely "roughly equal prestige" of the two languages, and no tradition of overt language separation. Portuguese in border regions of neighboring Spanish-speaking countries has no definite prestige value; it is spoken for purely pragmatic reasons. In all of the communities examined in this study, the languages in contact are subject to overt separation. Despite these differences, a large number of the dysfluent mixing examples coincide with instances of fluent code-switching that Muysken (2000) has characterized as congruent lexicalization. All cases conform to the notion of words "inserted more or less randomly" (Muysken 2000: 8). In fact the "more or less random" nature of language mixing is much more apparent in the Spanish-Portuguese cases examined here than in any of the instances of fluent bilingual language mixing adduced by researchers who have adopted congruent lexicalization as a category of language switching. The apparent randomness of the language mixture in border regions of Bolivia, Paraguay, and Argentina is due not only to the high degree of shared structures between the two languages but to the limited proficiency in the second language, which results in "filling in the gaps" by means of words from the speakers' first language.

### 10.1

Congruent lexicalization as defined by Muysken requires that the languages in contact be structurally congruent to a very high degree. To the extent that they are lexically similar, or at least have a high proportion of homophones, congruent lexicalization is facilitated even more. In the case of Spanish and Portuguese, not only are they highly cognate sibling languages,

but there are many shared lexical items that differ only in (sometimes quite subtle) phonetic features, and enhance the permeability of the two languages during unmonitored speech. Woolard (1999, 2007) defines *bivalency* as the existence of identical cognate elements shared between two languages and which in hybrid, mixed, or code-switched speech cannot be unambiguously identified as belonging to one language or the other. Woolard argues that rather than representing a taxonomic conundrum for the linguist attempting to place a language tag on each word, bivalent items allow for the strategic creation of virtual simultaneous use of two languages. Such conscious manipulation of the languages can serve purposes that range from comic humor (e.g. the Spanish-Catalan comedy routines studied by Woolard 1987, 1995) to affirmations of ethnic identity (e.g. the Italian-Sicilian mixtures examined by Alfonzetti (1992, 1998) and the Italian-dialect mixtures studied by Giacalone Ramat (1995).<sup>6</sup> The Spanish-Portuguese mixtures described in the preceding sections do not represent the deliberate or strategic manipulation of cognate linguistic codes,<sup>7</sup> but they do contain enough bivalent elements to smooth over many of the imperfections. Given the fluency with which such speech is produced, it creates the impression of a much higher level of proficiency in the L2 than is actually the case, whence "fluent dysfluency."

Deuchar, Muysken and Wang (2007) examine corpora from typologically diverse pairs of languages to suggest that in each code-switching environment, one of the three types of switches (insertion, alternation, congruent lexicalization) proposed by Muysken (2000) predominates, although all three may be present. They summarize the linguistic and extralinguistic factors that favor each switch type as shown in Table 1:

<sup>6</sup> In a situation that bears some resemblance to Spanish-Portuguese mixture in South America, Alvarez-Caccamo (1990, 1998) describes the (in his view at least partially deliberate) intermingling of the highly cognate Spanish and Galician in Galicia (northwestern Spain) to strike a balance between an official posture and a "plain folk" demeanor. In the Galician case, varying abilities in the recently gentrified minority language—Galician—is also an issue, since it is now de rigueur for politicians and professionals to speak a language which only a generation ago was regarded as fit only for peasants.

<sup>7</sup> An exception to this assertion is the growing body of literature produced in Uruguayan *Fronterizo* (e.g. as surveyed in Lipski 2006), and as used by *Fronterizo* activists on the Internet. Similarly manipulated "Portuñol/Portunhol" is found in whimsical Internet chat rooms and other manifestations of South American popular culture. Although the Uruguayan literary *Fronterizo* texts are generally faithful to the language mixing patterns found in spontaneous speech, the "Portuñol/Portunhol" produced by individuals who are not native speakers of border varieties of Spanish or Portuguese often deviate wildly from any occurring or readily imaginable bilingual discourse.

| Codeswitching type       | Linguistic factors favoring this type | Extralinguistic factors favoring this type   |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Insertion                | Typological distance                  | Colonial settings; recent migrant communities; asymmetry in speaker's proficiency in two languages |
| Alternation              | Typological distance                  | Stable bilingual communities; tradition of language separation                                     |
| Congruent lexicalization | Typologically similar languages       | Two languages have roughly equal prestige; no tradition of overt language separation               |

Table 1: From Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007: 309)

The above list of extralinguistic factors, while representative of typical situations, is by no means exhaustive. This is nowhere more evident than in those cases where closely related languages/dialects are in contact. In the studies summarized in Muysken (2000: chap. 5) a standard language is mixed with a regional or social dialect in a continuously variable fashion. Such cases involve languages that are both lexically and structurally similar, and which present the most favorable environment for congruent lexicalization. However in most of the cases described by Muysken, and in similar cases involving the dichotomy standard language-regional/social dialect, it is not the case that both languages have equal prestige, while there has usually been a tradition of overt language separation. Language mixing under these conditions may reflect a combination of factors, including attitudes toward the images projected by each language, relative proficiency in each language, the characteristics of the interlocutor, and momentary pragmatic issues of style and register. When a standardized language covaries with a regional or social dialect, it may not be clear to speakers in a given moment precisely which elements belong to each category. In the case of closely related languages with independent histories linked to separate nations and/or ethnic groups, awareness of the provenance of individual items in code-switched discourse is generally higher, although near-homophones may result in the blurring of category boundaries.

### 10.2

The three-way typology of language switching does not directly address the issue of code-switching during second language acquisition, although the chart mentions the correlation between insertion and "asymmetry in speaker's

proficiency in two languages." In an attempt to integrate code-switching and second language acquisition, Eliasson (1995) proposes the typology shown in Table 2, which contrasts code-switching among fluent bilinguals and interference:

|   | Interference                | Code-switching        |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Overall intent                            | unintentional               | often intentional     |
| Separation of languages in speech chain   | horizontal or vertical      | usually vertical      |
| Relation to primary language of discourse | intrusive                   | augmentative          |
| Performance mode                          | production and perception   | production            |
| Most typically characterizes              | second language learners    | proficient bilinguals |
| Likely interlocutor                       | monolingual in speaker's L2 | bilingual             |

Table 2: From Eliasson (1995), with an added category

An additional category has been added to this typology, namely likely interlocutors. Interference typifies the speech of individuals attempting without complete success to communicate with non-bilinguals in the latter's language. True code-switching on the other hand is performed with bilingual interlocutors. This typology essentially defines interference in phenomenological terms, as regards the speaker's intention, the linguistic profile of the interlocutor, and the pragmatic relationship between the two languages. Neither Muysken's model nor Eliasson's typology deals directly with the density of language switching, particularly intrasentential, i.e. the overall frequency with which languages are switched within the confines of a single clause or sentence. Judging from the scarcity of comments on the number of code-switches per phrase, there seems to be an implicit assumption that when switching involves constituents or other large chunks (rather than the insertion of individual lexical items), following the switch point the second language will be maintained at least through the end of the clause. Providing that no syntactic constraints are at stake, this generalization is not grounded in any theoretical model, but rather in an informal and as yet unverified notion that "too many" switches within a single clause or sentence would somehow tax both speaker and listener, and would not be the expected result of spontaneous bilingual speech.

### 10.3

Code-switching, often involuntary or at least unwanted, is also associated with first-language attrition. Hamers and Blanc (2000: 77) caution against

confusing code-mixing and attrition: "code-mixing in L<sub>1</sub> is triggered by the social context, whereas in the case of attrition deterioration occurs even in an L<sub>1</sub> monolingual context. Code-mixing might however be a precursor of attrition." Myers-Scotton (1992: 33) examines instances of code-switching during language attrition, and suggests that "at least some instances of language death may involve the pervasive addition or substitution of the grammar of another language in the codeswitching situation." Thomason (2003: 31-32), in speaking of the formation of mixed languages, explicitly discounts second-language acquisition strategies: "it can be said with confidence that the mechanism [of second-language acquisition strategies] is not operative in any major way in the development of bilingual mixed language, because imperfect learning – the foundation of all L2 acquisition strategies – plays no significant role in these genesis processes [...] the reason is that there is too little distortion in the components of bilingual mixed languages to support a hypothesis of imperfect learning in their creation." This may well be true in the case of Michif and Media Lengua,<sup>8</sup> the most widely studied cases, but examples like Uruguayan *Fronterizo* open other possibilities, both because it results from the mixing of two highly cognate languages, but also because *Fronterizo* exhibits departures from the structures of both Spanish and Portuguese.

### 11. A componential analysis of dysfluent language mixing

In order to support the notion that dysfluent language mixing is a form of code-switching, the Spanish-Portuguese mixed examples can be compared with the quantitative componential analyses used by Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007) to distinguish insertion, alternation, and congruent lexicalization. These authors acknowledge that whereas individual tokens of language switching can often be analyzed unambiguously as representing one of the three categories, bilingual speech in any particular speech community normally exhibits a combination of switch types. Preliminary analyses conducted on samples of code-switching from a selection of bilingual communities suggests that in most cases, one of the three switch types will emerge as predominant, which can in turn be correlated with the respective linguistic and extralinguistic factors proposed for that category. In order to assign a predominant category to code-switching in a given speech community, the authors assign individual category scores to each switch token, based on the criteria in Table 3, taken from Muysken (2000: 230). More specifically, for each category, if the observed feature in the occurring switch coincides with the expected value in the table, a score of 1 is assigned.

<sup>8</sup> Thomason does acknowledge (2003: 34) that codeswitching was probably instrumental in the creation of mixed languages such as Michif, albeit not by second-language learners.

If the opposite value is predicted by the table, a score of -1 is assigned, and if the value in the table is neutral or the feature in question does not occur in the switch, a score of 0 is assigned. The category receiving the highest score defines the predominant category for the switch, while adding up the individual category scores for all switches in a given corpus will yield composite figures that indicate the predominant switch type for the entire corpus.

|                         | Insertion | Alternation | Congruent lexicalization |
|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Constituency</b>     |           |             |                          |
| single constituent      | +         | 0           | 0                        |
| several constituents    | -         | +           | 0                        |
| non-constituent         | -         | -           | +                        |
| nested a b a            | +         | -           | 0                        |
| not nested a b a        | -         | +           | +                        |
| <b>Element switched</b> |           |             |                          |
| diverse switches        | -         | 0           | +                        |
| long constituent        | -         | +           | -                        |
| complex constituent     | -         | +           | -                        |
| content word            | +         | -           | -                        |
| function word           | -         | -           | +                        |
| adverb, conjunction     | -         | +           | -                        |
| selected element        | +         | -           | +                        |
| emblematic or tag       | -         | +           | 0                        |
| <b>Switch site</b>      |           |             |                          |
| major clause boundary   | 0         | +           | 0                        |
| peripheral              | 0         | +           | 0                        |
| embedding in discourse  | 0         | +           | 0                        |
| flagging                | -         | +           | -                        |
| dummy word insertion    | +         | 0           | -                        |
| bidirectional switching | -         | +           | +                        |
| <b>Properties</b>       |           |             |                          |
| linear equivalence      | 0         | +           | +                        |
| telegraphic mixing      | +         | -           | -                        |
| morphol. integration    | +         | -           | +                        |
| doubling                | -         | +           | -                        |
| homophonous diamorphs   | 0         | -           | +                        |
| triggering              | 0         | 0           | +                        |
| mixed collocations      | 0         | -           | +                        |
| self-corrections        | -         | +           | -                        |

Table 3: Code-switching types, from Muysken (2000: 230)

## 11.1

In order to subject dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing to the same componential analysis, instances of language switching were extracted from the data collected in each of the speech communities described in the preceding sections. All data represent recorded interviews designed to elicit free responses; all interviews were conducted by the present writer, usually accompanied by a community member known to and trusted by the interviewees. It was explained that the object of study was the manner in which Portuguese was used outside the Brazilian border. The interviews began in Spanish, and included general questions about community language use, as well as each speaker's own language background. The interviewer(s) then switched to Portuguese, and participants were asked to speak entirely in Portuguese. The latter responses, namely speech explicitly requested to be only in Portuguese, were the subject of the language-mixing analysis. Practically speaking, Portuguese is assumed to be the matrix language in these responses. In Cobija, Bolivia, interviews were also conducted with Brazilian students at the Universidad Amazónica de Pando. In this case, only Spanish was used throughout the interviews, and participants were asked to speak only in Spanish. Spanish is assumed to be the matrix language in these responses.

For each community, samples of recorded interviews containing substantial language mixing were extracted for analysis; in each sample, all consecutive tokens of language switching were analyzed, in order to avoid any potential bias in favor of a particular type of mixing. A preliminary scan of the Spanish-Portuguese data from Bolivia, Paraguay, and Argentina indicated no substantial differences in switch type among the five communities in which native speakers of Spanish produce approximations to Portuguese, which is not unexpected given the similar sociolinguistic circumstances in which Portuguese is employed in each community. After calculating the componential figures for language switches for all tokens, ANOVAs were run for each of the three scores (insertion, alternation, congruent lexicalization) across all five communities, and for each of the scores, no significant difference among the groups was detected.<sup>9</sup> The data from Cobija and Guayamerín in Bolivia, Pedro Juan Caballero in Paraguay, and Bernardo de Irigoyen and Paso de los Libres in Argentina were therefore combined into a single corpus. The tokens of Brazilian speakers' Spanish in Cobija, Bolivia form a separate corpus.

Data were also extracted from several corpora of Uruguayan *Fronterizo* speech, including my own field recordings made in Rivera in 2002 and 2006,

<sup>9</sup> For the individual insertion scores compared across the five corpora of Spanish speakers attempting to speak Portuguese, the ANOVA P-value is .56; for the congruent lexicalization scores, the P-value is .75, and for the alternation scores the P-value is .11.

the transcriptions in Elizaincín, Behares, and Barrios (1987), Douglas (2007), and recorded samples generously provided by Adolfo Elizaincín and Ana María Carvalho. No noteworthy qualitative differences were observed in these samples, so all the *Fronterizo* data were combined into a single corpus. Contemporary *Fronterizo* speech is not Spanish-Portuguese code-switching, nor is it dysfluent bilingualism, but the *Fronterizo* and dysfluent examples were analyzed using code-switching criteria, with a view toward including these forms of linguistic behavior in a broader typology of language contact phenomena.

In order to ensure compatibility with the proposals of Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007), these authors' criteria for selecting and coding examples of language-switching (explained in detail in the article) were employed in the analysis of *Fronterizo* and Spanish-Portuguese dysfluent language mixing. The composite results are presented in Table 4. For each of the corpora, in addition to providing the total scores for each of the switch types calculated over the entire corpus, the total number of switches of each type is given, together with the percentage of total switches represented by each switch type.

|  | Spanish<br>speakers'<br>Portuguese<br>(Bolivia,<br>Paraguay,<br>Argentina);<br>N = 104 <sup>10</sup> | Portuguese<br>speakers'<br>Spanish<br>(Cobija,<br>Bolivia); <sup>11</sup><br>N = 51 | Uruguayan<br><i>Fronterizo</i> ; <sup>12</sup><br>N = 128 |                    |
|--|--|---|---|--------------------|
| Insertion  | #/%  | 458<br>31/29%   | 295<br>21/41%   | 528<br>24/19%      |
| Alternation  | #/%  | -447<br>4/4%  | -254<br>0/0%  | -714<br>3/1%       |
| Congruent<br>lexicalization                                      | #/%  | 653<br>69/67%   | 332<br>30/59<br>% <sup>13</sup>                           | 835<br>101/79<br>% |
| ratio of congruent<br>lexicalization score to<br>insertion score |  | 1.43  | 1.13  |                    |
| Dominant pattern   |  | CONGRUENT<br>LEXICALIZATION   | CONGRUENT<br>LEXICALIZATION                               |                    |
|  |  | CONGRUENT<br>LEXICALIZATION   | CONGRUENT<br>LEXICALIZATION                               |                    |

Table 4: Composite scores for language mixing;

<sup>10</sup> Approximately the same number of tokens was analyzed for each of the five communities. There was one token with an equal score for alternation and congruent lexicalization.

<sup>11</sup> In the Portuguese speakers' Spanish in Bolivia, there was one token with an equal score for insertion and congruent lexicalization.

<sup>12</sup> There were six tokens with identical scores for insertion and congruent lexicalization.

## 11.2

The most important aspect of Table 4 is that it compares two corpora in which language mixing results from contemporary (dysfluent) Spanish-Portuguese bilingualism (in Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia), and a corpus of fluent native language usage (Uruguayan *Fronterizo*), evidently deriving from a previous stage of bilingual language mixing, and analyzed AS THOUGH IT WERE synchronically still a case of spontaneous language switching. The componential data in Table 4 provide support for the proposals offered in Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007) to the effect that while all three code-switching types typically appear in a given speech community, one type generally predominates. All of the mixed Spanish-Portuguese corpora exhibit similar profiles, despite the fact that none represents fluent bilingualism (two cases of non-fluent bilingualism, and one case of stable monolingual speech): a preference for congruent lexicalization, followed by insertion, with true alternation running a very distant third. The ratio of the congruent lexicalization score to the insertion score is highest in the case of Uruguayan *Fronterizo* (1.58), followed by attempts at speaking Portuguese in other Spanish-speaking border areas (1.43), then by Brazilians' Spanish in Cobija, Bolivia (1.13); the overall percentage of individual tokens that most favor congruent lexicalization also follows the same pattern: 79% (*Fronterizo*), 67% (L2 Portuguese), and 59% (Brazilians' Spanish). Despite these figures, ANOVA tests indicate no significant differences among the three groups.<sup>13</sup> Congruent lexicalization is the dominant mode despite the differing sociolinguistic circumstances. Most resident Brazilians in Cobija, Bolivia are current or former university students; they have largely learned Spanish as an academic obligation, a situation not entirely unlike the "colonial" settings postulated by Muysken et al. as favoring insertion. Residents of border towns in Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay typically learn Portuguese informally and only to the extent necessary for individual commercial or personal transactions. Uruguayan *Fronterizo* is the result of several generations of linguistic osmosis between Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking sectors of society, as social and political conditions evolved in northern Uruguay. The fact that the rates of congruent lexicalization are statistically similar in the case of two instances of dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese language mixing and one case of stable mixed language (Uruguayan *Fronterizo*) provides support for the inclusion of *Fronterizo* data as virtual *Fronterizo*

<sup>13</sup> For the individual insertion scores compared across the three corpora, the ANOVA P-value is .28; for the congruent lexicalization scores, the P-value is .65, and for the alternation scores the P-value is .69. Similarly, an ANOVA run on the predominant switch types for the three corpora (assigning a numerical value of 1 to insertion, 2 to alternation, and 3 to congruent lexicalization) yields a P-value of .52, again indicating no significant differences among L2 Portuguese speakers in Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay, L2 Spanish speakers in Cobija, Bolivia, and Uruguayan *Fronterizo* speakers.

code-switches. It has been well documented that contacts between the same two languages can produce different patterns of mixing depending upon the sociolinguistic circumstances (e.g. the overview in Gardner-Chloros and Edwards 2004), and both the dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing and the postulated historical origins of Uruguayan *Fronterizo* also share a similar sociolinguistic profile. The similarities among the three corpora also support the use of contemporary bilingual speech patterns as a diagnostic tool for the reconstruction of earlier stages of mixed languages that are no longer the product of ongoing bilingual code-mixing.

Although congruent lexicalization has heretofore been associated with fluent bilingualism, while insertion has been regarded as a frequent concomitant of nonfluent interference, the dysfluent mixing data show a close fit with congruent lexicalization across a wide range of analytical criteria. Not surprisingly, insertion – normally favored in second-language speech – comes in second place in dysfluent mixing. Also not surprising is the much lower score for alternation in each of the corpora; dysfluent language switching does not occur in the environment of two competently spoken shared languages that is typical of bilingual alternation. Uruguayan *Fronterizo*, which in its contemporary form is neither Spanish-Portuguese code-switching nor dysfluent bilingualism, also patterns with dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing, i.e. largely coinciding with the diagnostic criteria for congruent lexicalization. Since the sociolinguistic situation in northern Uruguay never conformed to the criteria set out by Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007) for congruent lexicalization, namely the roughly equal prestige of the two languages coupled with no tradition of overt language separation, *Fronterizo* must have arisen under other circumstances. By combining the comparative data from *Fronterizo* and contemporary dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing with the known sociolinguistic history of northern Uruguay, a strong case can be made for the roots of *Fronterizo* as the originally dysfluent approximations to Spanish by monolingual Portuguese speaking Uruguayans along the northern border.

## 12. The proposed origins of Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects

The preceding section has demonstrated the existence of considerable qualitative and quantitative parallels between contemporary dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese language mixing and natively spoken Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects. The Spanish-Portuguese mixing fits the diagnostic criteria for congruent lexicalization, despite the lack of total bilingual fluency as well as a sociolinguistic profile not correlated with congruent lexicalization. Similarly, *Fronterizo* dialects, in which no code-switching currently occurs, also fits the diagnostic profile of congruent lexicalization. Before further developing the proposal that *Fronterizo* dialects began with dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing in northern Uruguay, it is necessary to address the possibility that *Fronterizo* evolved from fluent bilingual code-switching

between highly cognate languages, i.e. the prototypical scenario for congruent lexicalization. Since there is no accurate sociolinguistic profile available for northern Uruguay in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the matter must be approached via negative evidence, namely the absence of any indication of fluent Spanish-Portuguese bilingualism during the formative period of *Fronterizo*.

### 12.1

Until 1862 the northern region of what is now Uruguay was a disputed territory populated almost entirely by Brazilian squatters. Beginning in 1862 the Uruguayan government began a deliberate settlement effort, sending internal colonists from the populated south in order to establish de facto occupancy of the northern border. According to all available historical records, only Portuguese was spoken in this region until well into the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Elizaincín 1992: 99-100).<sup>14</sup> A document dated 1860 indicated that some 60% of the population of what were to become the departments of Rivera and Artigas were Brazilians (Bertolotti et al. 2005: 17), and even Uruguayan citizens in northern regions wrote mostly in Portuguese, as indicated by the selection of documents anthologized in Bertolotti et al. (2005). The official national language, Spanish, was a recently injected minority language in northern Uruguay, numerically and sociolinguistically dominated by Portuguese. At the same time the resident Portuguese speakers were ethnically Brazilian and regardless of declared citizenship (a barely meaningful term in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century), many implicitly identified with the neighboring giant nation. Once villages and towns were settled in northern Uruguay, the cultural and economic domination of Brazil was even more evident; schools, newspapers, medical facilities, and even consumer goods were available principally in Brazil, and the Portuguese language dominated northern Uruguay.<sup>15</sup> Northern Uruguayans were far-removed from Spanish-language media, at first newspapers, later radio and television.

In 1877 the “Ley de Educación Común” [common education law] was passed; among its provisions was the stipulation that all educational instruction was to take place in the “national language,” i.e. Spanish. In the

<sup>14</sup> According to Rona (1965: 8) “no se trata de una influencia del portugués sobre el castellano (ya que no había aquí población hispánica antes de la llegada y establecimiento de los brasileños) sino, al revés, de la influencia del castellano sobre una base portuguesa” [It is not a case of the influence of Portuguese on Spanish (since there was no Hispanic population here before the arrival and settlement of the Brazilians) but rather, on the contrary, of the influence of Spanish on a Portuguese base].

<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the maps offered by Rona (1965), describing the linguistic situation of Uruguay in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, show the northern portion of Uruguay speaking pure Portuguese, with *Fronterizo* dialects only appearing much further to the south, well into the interior of Uruguay.

capital and the interior of the country, this law had the effect of displacing immigrant languages after the first generation, and creating an essentially monolingual society. Along the northern border, on the other hand, the failure to acknowledge Portuguese in any sphere of public or private life and the exclusive promotion of Spanish led to a situation best described as diglossic, with Uruguayan Portuguese/*Fronterizo* dialects becoming the “low” variety, deprived of any possibility of standardization or expansion. Behares (1985) characterizes the survival of the non-prestigious hybrid *Fronterizo* dialects in northern Uruguay as the unexpected and presumably undesired results of poorly thought out language planning (see also Carvalho 2006). According to Behares (1985: 17): “El bilingüismo fronterizo es un resultado extraordinario de la planificación lingüística, un error de planificación debido al carácter tácito y no evaluativo de la misma” [bilingualism on the border is the extraordinary result of language planning, an error in planning due to its tacit and non-evaluative nature]. In other words, Portuguese was not only effectively repressed by this educational policy, it was not even acknowledged, and all educational programs in the border region took place as though students were proficient monolingual speakers of Spanish, rather than nearly monolingual speakers of a vernacular variety of Portuguese, and with quite limited abilities in Spanish.<sup>16</sup>

### 12.2

A variety of written sources permit an indirect reconstruction of the linguistic profile of northern Uruguay in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most texts indicate only the use of Portuguese by natives of the northern region; no documentation has come to light that would suggest a resident population fluent in Spanish, much less any approximation to balanced Spanish-Portuguese bilingualism. In addition to documents written entirely in Portuguese, there are variety of texts written in apparently involuntary mixtures of Spanish and Portuguese, with configurations that fit the diagnostic criteria for congruent lexicalization (including some of the same putative code-switching violations found in contemporary dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing).<sup>17</sup> In each case, as with the contemporary dysfluent

<sup>16</sup> This situation is not unlike that which obtained in Puerto Rico during the early decades of the United States administration, when English-only schools were put in place and staffed with monolingual English-speaking teachers. In Puerto Rico the goal was not to create a monolingual English-speaking society but only to foster proficiency in the (newly imposed) “national language,” but the results of this ineffective policy were substantially the same as those obtaining in northern Uruguay, with the situation only changing after educational programs were placed in the hands of Puerto Rican educators.

<sup>17</sup> Ramírez Luengo (2005) analyzes some personal correspondence between a Uruguayan man and his wife, from the time period 1825-1846, both from southern Uruguay, and both of whom exhibit numerous Portuguese traits in their Spanish writing. There are also literary imitations, of questionable linguistic authenticity,

Spanish-Portuguese mixtures, the presumed intent was to write entirely in Spanish, so the Portuguese admixture should be regarded as involuntary and presumably unconscious. Some examples of mixed language from northern Uruguay extracted from Bertolotti et al. (2005) are (presented in the original orthography, with the typological conventions used in the contemporary examples cited in the preceding sections):

(9)

*Hua, Esclava, llamada Constança, naçõn Africana, idade cuarenta e cinco años 'a female slave named Constancia, of the African nation, forty five years of age' {1841; p. 98}*

*Divid[\*as] q.\* devia y algunas devo cuyas me obrigo à pagarlas [...] 'debts that I owed and some of which I was obliged to pay' {1841, p. 127}*

*[...] cuyos Bienes Moves con esta fecha pasan em poder de D. Fermiano [...] 'whose personal effects as of this date become the property of D. Fermiano' {1842, p. 133}*

*Alos dezenove dias do Mez de Abril CinCOMPRIMENTO alo mandado p.r su Senoria segundo consta del auto recaido em el escrito q~. antecede meTRASLADEI yo el Ten<sup>te</sup> Alcalde y los vezinos que commigo firmaõ a LACAZA morada de Don Florentino V. de los Santos anoti sifarle y ejecutar a su providencia [...] 'April 19, following your excellency's orders as indicated in the preceding document, I took the lieutenant mayor and neighbors to Don Florentino y Santo's house last night to stay and sign' {1856, p. 197}*

*SIVA-se poner-se de acuerdo con el comandante Mariano para passar ao territorio Oriental [...] 'please arrange with Major Mariano to travel to the eastern territory' {1903, p. 224}*

Although written language is subject to reflection and the possibility for self-correction, these examples are consistent with the spontaneous dysfluent mixed language spoken in the border communities studied above, which represent attempts to speak entirely in Portuguese or Spanish. Such evidence, when combined with known sociohistorical facts, lends support to the hypothesis that *Fronterizo* dialects originated in the "fluently dysfluent" approximations to

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but providing collateral evidence of Spanish-Portuguese mixing in northern Uruguay. These texts include the bizarre language of "Pajarito" found in Bernárdez (1877) and studied by Azevedo (2000), as well as the novels examined by López (1993). The vignettes in Giuffra (1900) come the closest to approximating contemporary *Fronterizo* speech, and the concomitant portrayals of interchanges between Brazilians and Uruguayans in northern Uruguay in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century provide indirect sociolinguistic evidence. This literary tradition has been revived among contemporary northern Uruguayan writers, as evidenced by the works in Behares and Diaz (1998).

Spanish of vernacular Portuguese-speaking northern Uruguayans in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Ridiculed by residents of the capital for their poor Spanish even after Spanish had become effectively established in the region (a situation that persists to this day), and alienated from official Brazilian politics due to issues of nationality and nationalism, northern Uruguayans ultimately opted to retain speech patterns that were theirs alone.

### 12.3

The historical and linguistic data suggest a progressive evolution, which can be roughly divided into partially overlapping stages:

STAGE 1 (UNTIL MIDDLE OF 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY): Northern Uruguay is essentially a monolingual Portuguese-speaking region. The Portuguese dialects on the Brazilian side of the border were formed under conditions of extreme sociolinguistic marginality as well as earlier bilingualism with Guarani and possibly with African languages (Behares 2005: 39). There is little access to educated Brazilian Portuguese norms, and Uruguayan Portuguese speakers use an amalgam of rustic and vernacular forms, with no counterbalancing pressure from schools or community peer pressure.

STAGE 2 (LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY): The Uruguayan government begins to impose Spanish as the "national language" in a concerted fashion. At first this produces little noticeable effect among Portuguese-speaking northern Uruguayans, but the arrival of monolingual Spanish speakers, including school teachers, marks the initial phase of Portuguese speakers' systematic attempts to communicate in Spanish. During this same time period it is not unlikely that some of the newly arrived Spanish speakers from southern Uruguay would attempt to speak some Portuguese with northern residents, perhaps contributing to the emerging dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixtures; little documentation has come to light on the linguistic behavior of internal immigrants in northern Uruguay prior to the imposition of the 1877 national language policy.

STAGE 3 (EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY): Northern Uruguayans of middle and upper socioeconomic strata begin to use Spanish on a more regular basis, including in conversations with other Uruguayans from the northern region. The Spanish spoken by these Uruguayans still reflects contact with Portuguese (e.g. the distinction /b/-/v/, occasional voiced intervocalic [z], little or no aspiration of syllable-final /s/), but increasingly fewer Portuguese structural elements. Working class and rural northern Uruguayans continue to speak the traditional vernacular Portuguese, but experience some sociolinguistic pressure to speak Spanish with members of higher social strata, and with interlocutors from other parts of the country. The "Spanish" produced by these working-class speakers is in reality a series of idiosyncratic approximations driven by the many cognate forms. Knowing full well that they will be completely understood when they slip back into Portuguese, these working class Uruguayans introduce only as much Spanish as meets their own

subjective criteria for "Spanish-ness," while relying on their interlocutors' implicitly assumed ability to understand Portuguese to bridge the remaining communicative spans.

STAGE 4 (MID 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY ONWARD): According to the sources compiled in Behares (2005: 41), the current situation dates from around 1930. The congruent lexicalizations produced by the previous generations' approximations to Spanish solidify into the "portufiol" varieties still spoken among working-class residents. The retention of these hybrid varieties is motivated at least in part by lingering resentment of the Montevideo-dominated socioeconomic system, the discrimination felt by northern residents, the many jokes and derogatory comments about their speech (speakers of *Fronterizo* are often referred to unflatteringly as *rompe idioma* 'language breakers'), and the perceived smugness of southern Uruguayans who visit or move to the border region. Currents of defiance become discernible among the sectors of society least likely to reap the benefits of a centralized economic and political system, namely the working classes and small farmers. As a manifestation of these sentiments, the popular Rivera songster Chito de Mello created – or at least gave fame to – the term *bagacera* 'detritus' (from *bagazo*, the vegetable matter left after milling sugar cane). *La bagacera* refers to the working class border residents together with their local language, and de Mello's recordings frequently use and even comment on this usage. The tone is one of stubborn pride, and the popularity of these recordings demonstrates that the sentiments alluded to continue to run deep in northern Uruguay.

#### 12.4

Myers-Scotton (1998) proposes a somewhat similar evolutionary path for the mixed language Ma'a (or Mbugu), spoken in Tanzania, and which according to Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 104, 223-228) contains approximately 50% Cushitic vocabulary and some Cushitic structural features, while the remaining vocabulary and most of the grammar is of Bantu origin. Myers-Scotton proposes that an originally Cushitic-speaking Mbugu population found itself surrounded by speakers of related Bantu languages. The Mbugu eventually became bilingual in order to communicate with their neighbors, and code-switching between Cushitic and Bantu languages ultimately became the unmarked choice among the Mbugu themselves. Eventually, the code-switched modality becomes the native language of the community. While providing striking parallels with the proposed evolution of *Fronterizo*, Myers-Scotton's hypothesis as to the origins of Ma'a also exhibit significant differences. First, because Cushitic and Bantu languages are very different in terms of both grammatical structures and lexicon, code-switching never involved ambiguity as to which language was being used at any given point in the discourse. Thus the original generations of code-switching Mbugu would mix languages consciously and voluntarily. In fact Myers-Scotton (1998: 314) explicitly proposes that mixed languages like Michif (and Ma'a)

are cases of fossilized code-switching. In northern Uruguay, on the other hand, it is proposed that originally monolingual speakers of Portuguese attempted to speak in the highly cognate Spanish, and that language mixture resulted not from conscious and voluntary code-switching but rather from inadvertent first-language interference. There is no evidence that northern Uruguayans ever voluntarily code-switched between Spanish and Portuguese when speaking with one another. According to all indications, they spoke only Portuguese among themselves and with Brazilians, and increasingly attempted to speak Spanish with Uruguayans from the south. With increasing Uruguayan control of the northern border region and the influx of monolingual Spanish speakers from the south, Portuguese-dominant northern Uruguayans were linguistically shunned by both Brazilians (for speaking non-canonical Portuguese) and by newly arriving Uruguayans (for speaking non-native Spanish). A dysfluent interlanguage that under other circumstances would have been only a transitory phenomenon was retained as a sociolinguistic identity marker, a linguistically viable option since *Fronterizo* enjoys high mutual intelligibility with both Spanish and Portuguese. The fact that *Fronterizo* mixing patterns, as well as those currently observable in dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese speech along the Brazilian border, do not correspond to typical patterns of bilingual code-switching adds to the evidence that mixed languages are not simply code-switching congealed into a single language (e.g. Backus 2004). Despite the differences between the proposed origins of Ma'a and *Fronterizo*, the numerous parallel points warrant further investigation of other mixed-language communities.

#### 13. Assessing the evidence: refining the typology of bilingual code-switching

The research reported here suggests that what is referred to as fluent dysfluency in bilingual contact environments can produce configurations that differ qualitatively and quantitatively from combinations that occur in the speech of fluent balanced bilinguals. The ease with which numerous examples of this configuration were uncovered in a relatively short period suggests that this is a frequently occurring phenomenon that deserves additional study. In particular, the three-way typology of code-switching proposed by Muysken et al. can be expanded to include the type of syntactically radical (i.e. disregarding morphosyntactic constraints) congruent lexicalization produced during fluently dysfluent bilingual speech. In effect this fourth category combines extralinguistic factors previously associated only with insertion, the (un)intentionality normally correlated with interference, and the linguistic factors proposed for congruent lexicalization. A first approximation to such a refined typology is presented in Table 5, with an additional category: "dysfluent congruent lexicalization":

| Codeswitching type                   | Linguistic factors favoring this type   | Extralinguistic factors favoring this type  |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Insertion                            | Typological distance  | Colonial settings; recent migrant communities; asymmetry in speaker's proficiency in two languages  |
| Alternation                          | Typological distance  | Stable bilingual communities; tradition of language separation  |
| Congruent lexicalization (fluent)    | Typologically similar languages   | Two languages have roughly equal prestige; no tradition of overt language separation  |
| Congruent lexicalization (dysfluent) | Typologically similar languages, incomplete L2 acquisition or vestigial L1 speaker during attrition; attempts to speak only in L2 | L2 is dominant language of the community; L1 has no established status; native L2-speaking interlocutors are competent in the dysfluent bilingual speakers' L1; no social stricture against involuntary mixing in informal contexts |

Table 5: Revised code-switching typology

Key factors providing for the high density of code-mixing in dysfluent congruent lexicalization are (1) incomplete fluency in the L2 coupled with a need to speak only in L2; (2) native L2-speaking interlocutor's passive competence in the speakers' L1; (3) lack of social consequences for involuntary mixing; and (4) the fact that the speakers' L1 has no established status in the bilingual environment, although its presence may be acknowledged. In the contemporary Spanish-Portuguese contacts in border areas of Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia, this translates in practical terms to native speakers of Spanish attempting to speak in Portuguese to Brazilians, usually for purposes of commerce, because it is generally felt that Brazilians insist on being addressed in Portuguese. Since most of the native speakers of Spanish lack full fluency in Portuguese, their attempts at speaking Portuguese are filled with involuntary incursions from Spanish, which in turn are easily understood by Brazilians. Despite recurring stereotypes of Brazilian linguistic nationalism, few if any Brazilians traveling to neighboring border communities in Spanish-speaking countries or encountering Spanish-speaking visitors in their own country object to being addressed in a mixed Spanish-Portuguese interlanguage. The main motive for Brazilians to cross into border

towns is the lure of favorable prices, and to a lesser degree for individual social contacts. Communication is the foremost goal, and the fact that the use of a mixed Spanish-Portuguese interlanguage readily fulfills all communicative needs accounts for the lack of incentives for Spanish speakers to become more proficient in Portuguese. Congruent lexicalization resulting from dysfluent attempts to speak Portuguese continues unabated, but only at the idiolectal level; there is no evidence that any dysfluent approximation to Portuguese is stabilizing in any of the border communities of Paraguay, Bolivia, or Argentina. This is precisely because none of the dysfluent bilinguals is being colonized, ghettoized, or shunned by a socially and economically dominant group that uses the bilinguals' weaker language. There is no incentive for dysfluent bilinguals to use any form of mixed language with one another and no social pressures for a community-wide language shift.

In contemporary Uruguay, on the other hand, residents of the northern border communities are not dysfluent bilinguals, but rather are native speakers of (sometimes highly vernacular varieties of) Spanish. Most are also native speakers of *Fronterizo* or at least have nearly complete passive competence in *Fronterizo*. When speaking with Brazilians, northern Uruguayans simply use their own *Fronterizo*, not any dysfluent approximation to Portuguese different from the language they might use to fellow Uruguayans. The present study has offered the proposal that *Fronterizo* arose in northern Uruguay around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when congruent lexicalization patterns originally produced by dysfluent bilinguals coalesced into a stable and natively spoken community language one or more generations later. There is currently no congruent lexicalization taking place in northern Uruguay, dysfluent or otherwise, except possibly in the case of newly arriving monolingual Spanish speakers who attempt to learn Portuguese from scratch, with no previous exposure.

This combination of factors clearly overrides purely linguistic constraints on language switching, whether they be morphosyntactic or pragmatic, and results in what can only be termed mixed language. In most circumstances, such mixed speech is a transitory and effervescent phenomenon, arising spontaneously whenever a partially fluent bilingual communicates under the circumstances just delineated, but given the proper combination of events, a stable mixed language could emerge. This is most likely what happened in northern Uruguay, as the originally Portuguese-speaking residents were forced to acquire Spanish as the Uruguayan government increasingly asserted its dominance in the hitherto neglected border region.

In the typology of Muysken (2000) and Deuchar, Muysken, and Wang (2007), insertion is classified as a category separate from congruent lexicalization, via the criterion of typological distance (favoring insertion) versus typological similarity (favoring congruent lexicalization). At the same time the criteria of recent migration and assymetrical bilingual proficiency are consistent with the scenario proposed for the emergence of northern Uruguayan *Fronterizo* beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In such

circumstances, and given the high number of Spanish-Portuguese cognates, insertion can be regarded as a proper subset of congruent lexicalization, involving individual lexical items rather than larger fragments. It may be that in the proposed Stages 1 and 2, the first incursions of Spanish into Portuguese took the form of individual lexical insertions (as suggested by a *JPL* reviewer), but precisely because of the high degree of cognateness between the two languages, it is unlikely that individual insertions chronically preceded more extensive congruent lexicalization. Rather, as suggested by the written fragments in example (9), individual lexical insertions probably co-existed with incursions of larger sentence fragments, including non-constituent "ragged" mixing, from the outset.

#### 14. Summary and conclusions

The study of contemporary speech communities can represent a powerful tool in the reconstruction of linguistic events of times past, when combined with sociohistorical data and couched in terms of a falsifiable hypothesis. In the present study, a plausible scenario for the formation of Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects has been constructed with reference to modern-day Spanish-Portuguese contact phenomena in several communities bordering on Brazil. The thread of argumentation can be summarized in the following points:

(a) Contemporary Uruguayan *Fronterizo* speech, while grounded in the grammar of vernacular Brazilian Portuguese, contains an admixture of Spanish elements that appear to defy established morphosyntactic constraints on bilingual code-mixing.

(b) *Fronterizo* speech is not Spanish-Portuguese code-switching, but rather a natively spoken hybrid language.

(c) According to the linguistic history of northern Uruguay, beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century an originally monolingual Portuguese-speaking community came under pressure to speak Spanish, through "Spanish-only" educational policies and the immigration of Spanish speakers from southern Uruguay. Portuguese, and Portuguese-Spanish hybrid forms, were demoted to non-prestigious working-class vernacular status.

(d) Several contemporary communities bordering on Brazil – in Bolivia, Paraguay, and Argentina – are characterized by spontaneous attempts at speaking Portuguese to Brazilian visitors. While such mixed speech is fluent in terms of rate of production and lack of hesitation, it typically includes massive but involuntary Spanish-Portuguese intertwining that is morphosyntactically similar to the natively spoken Uruguayan *Fronterizo* dialects. Both the fluently dysfluent Spanish-Portuguese mixing in Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia and Uruguayan *Fronterizo* fit the structural description of congruent lexicalization as defined by Muysken (2000), although, the sociodemographic factors are quite different from those proposed by Muysken.

(e) The sociolinguistic configurations in these modern border communities are similar – in miniature, among those speakers involved in Portuguese-language transactions – to those obtaining in northern Uruguay in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century: pressure to speak the other language, lack of formal instruction, implicit awareness that speakers' first language will be understood by interlocutors who are native speakers of the other language. Only the relative sociolinguistic roles of Spanish and Portuguese are reversed in contemporary South America: Spanish speakers in communities bordering on Brazil are pressured to speak to Brazilians in some approximation to Portuguese.

(f) The "fluently dysfluent" approximations to Portuguese observed in contemporary Spanish-speaking border communities provide an appropriate prototype for the linguistic behavior that obtained in northern Uruguay in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and which rather than disappearing as the population became fluent in Spanish, survived as a regional vernacular alongside more standard varieties of Spanish.

The preceding analyses and proposals are clearly preliminary and in need of additional research and refinement. These remarks are offered as a call to arms to investigate some of the less frequently mentioned bilingual encounters, which promise to be of considerable importance in achieving a full understanding of the linguistic intricacies of bilingualism.

#### Appendix: Samples of Spanish-Portuguese dysfluent mixing

Spanish words are in regular typeface, Portuguese words are in italics, cognate homophones – allowing for differences in spelling and low-level phonetic differences – are in bold, and neologisms combining both Spanish and Portuguese elements are in small caps. All examples come from my own field work, unless otherwise indicated.

##### COBIJA: BOLIVIANS' ATTEMPTS TO SPEAK IN PORTUGUESE:

*você não ta entendendu lo que* quiere decir 'you don't understand what that means'

*eu acho que* voy, *mas* primero tenho que ... 'I think that I'm going, but first I have to ...'

##### COBIJA: RESIDENT BRAZILIANS' ATTEMPTS TO SPEAK IN SPANISH:

*tamen tive*, una relación con *Paraguay*, entonces volví aquí a Cobija *toy vivindo* cuatro mese 'I also had a relationship with Paraguay, then I came back here to Cobija, I've been living here for four months'

*doh mil doh tamén empecé*, *tivi qui viajar*, *doh mil treh tamén entrei informática* 'I began in 2002, I had to travel, then in 2003 I entered the program in computer science'

##### GUAYARMERÍN: BOLIVIANS' ATTEMPTS TO SPEAK IN PORTUGUESE:

*mas algunoh brasileiro entendem lo que* hablamo nosotro *loh boliviano* 'but some Brazilians understand the way we Bolivians speak'

*vejo las novelas, o jornal* 'I watch soap operas and the news'

- PEDRO JUAN CABALLERO: PARAGUAYANS' ATTEMPTS AT SPEAKING PORTUGUESE:  
*eleh tiene que se adaptar a las REGLA, verdá tiene que tener tudo DOCUMENTASÓN ser REGULARIZADU* 'they [Brazilians] have to conform to the rules, right? they have to have all the documents in order'
- ellos *fala direito; os brasileros fala direito paraguao* 'they speak correctly, the Brazilians speak Paraguayan [Spanish] correctly'
- PASO DE LOS LIBRES: ARGENTINES' ATTEMPTS AT SPEAKING PORTUGUESE:  
*la calidad ar[x]entina gosta más* 'Argentine quality is more pleasing [to Brazilians]'
- aquí *tem muita pessoa que necesita* 'here there are many people who need [it]'
- BERNARDO DE IRIGOYEN: ARGENTINES' USE OF PORTUGUESE:  
*eu conheço un poquinho la professora Jesse y dehpueh* 'I know Prof. Jesse a little, and then'
- cuanado yo ia en la otra escuela nosotros TENÍA que ir arriba por un barranco* 'When I went to the other school, we had to climb up an embankment'
- yo miro na manhã o DI[S]ENHO animado* 'I watch cartoons in the morning'
- RIVERA, URUGUAY: FRONTERIZO/PORTUNHOL SPEECH (RECORDED 2006):  
*dónde fica tal cosa?* 'Where is that thing?'  
*voy passar pa [X]UBILAÇÃO* 'I'm going to take retirement'  
*entonci yo no tein ese dinheiro* 'then I don't have that money'  
*entonci no somos dono di nada ...* 'then we don't own anything'  
*o governo no quer a nosotro* 'the government doesn't want us'  
*fui a tres o cuatro casa a buscar [ʒ]ente* 'I went to two or three houses looking for people'  
*aquí em Rivera quando saiu plan de emer[x]encia creo que dizem, no,*  
 'Here in Rivera when that emergency plan came out, I think they call it that, right?'
- ARTIGAS, URUGUAY: FRONTERIZO/PORTUNHOL SPEECH:  
*Vamo a suponer, a vizinha do la[ð]o fala o espahnol [...] pero hai outra FAMIA que u[ʃ]a só portunhol não más* (Douglas 2004: 334)  
*e outra C[OZ]A aqui que N[O]S temos se oia muito o TELEVI[S]OR e to[d]a ca[d]ena assim é brasileira* (Douglas 2004: 333)  
*vos viste como ele fala* (Douglas 2004: 330)
- Bueno, *qui posu contá du barrio é que FASE prosimadamente cinco ano qui moro aquí, a cuando vim pru barrio era un poco SUIÑHO.* (Elizaincín, Behares and Barrios 1987: 117)

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