Multilingual constructions

A diasystematic approach to common structures*

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Language contact phenomena are often described with reference to their effect on the monolingual systems of the varieties involved, both in historical and in contact linguistics. This contribution argues that an essentially multilingual perspective on these phenomena is more adequate. Bilingual speakers in stable bilingual groups create a common system for all their languages, incorporating both interlingual links and language-unspecified elements along with language-specific structures. In a construction grammar analysis, such systems as well as changes within this type of system can be conceptualized as interlingual constructional networks, which are established, stored, and processed in exactly the same way as monolingual grammars.

Keywords: German, Danish, Old Swedish, Latin, multilingualism, diasystem, construction grammar

1. Introduction

This contribution addresses a central theoretical problem in contact linguistics: is it reasonable to assume that the languages or varieties used by a multilingual speaker group remain distinct systems even in cases of intense and stable language contact, or is it more appropriate to assume one common system? While it is a standard assumption in sociolinguistic studies that in dialect contact situations the varieties involved represent one (variable) system, the case is less straightforward when it comes to different languages.

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In the following sections, I will argue that links between language-specific elements constitute a system of overarching structures, based on the identification of elements that are perceived as equivalent by multilingual speakers. The common core of the system is used in multilingual language processing, but also facilitates innovations that lead to an increasing congruence of the respective languages. Furthermore, I sketch out how such a system can be modeled within a construction grammar (CxG) approach (Diasystematic Construction Grammar, DCxG). This is first illustrated by pairs of closely related languages and then by the case of Old Swedish and Medieval Latin, two distantly related but typologically relatively similar languages that were in contact in late medieval Sweden.

2. Theoretical focus: Diasystems and multilingual constructions

2.1 Arguments for a multilingual analysis

In contact linguistic studies the focus is often placed on the result of language contact from the perspective of one of the languages involved, rather than on the mechanisms of contact itself. While studies on (present-day) multilingualism concentrate on speakers' communicative behavior (including both their individual linguistic repertoires and multilingual communicative strategies such as code-switching or borrowing and 'mistakes', i.e. interferences) and language processing, contact as a factor in language change is primarily invoked in retrospective explanations. The story usually told is that elements and structures are transferred from one language to another, get established (possibly accompanied by additional intralingual innovations triggered by the initial transfer), and are increasingly integrated into the structural, functional, semantic, and phonological systems of the recipient language.[1]

Such descriptions are, of course, correct in the sense that they account for the changes within the individual language systems. However, they are premised on a monolingual perspective on what are, essentially, multilingual situations. Multilingual phenomena are analyzed as the result of an interaction or, indeed, a conflict between distinct language systems that are conceived of as rather static, coherent, and monolithic, much in the tradition of the structuralist view of languages as *systèmes où tout se tient*. Implicitly, such a view seems to assume that multilinguals are purists to the extent that they (consciously or unconsciously) keep their different languages apart in both their cognition and their communication with others. This is, however, an unmotivated assumption. Multilingualism is far more prevalent than monolingualism, measured

1. The terms and concepts used to describe and classify such phenomena are, of course, manifold. What I label transfer here, in a broad sense, includes what is called, for example, 'borrowing' by Thomason & Kaufman (1988) as well as Matras (2009), 'code-copying' by Johanson (2008), 'grammatical replication' by Heine & Kuteva (2005), or even 'convergence' in Myers-Scotton's (2002) model.

on a global and historical scale (Lüdi 1996: 234ff), and a multilingual communicative mode (Grosjean 2001) is the rule rather than the exception in multilingual speaker groups, i.e. a communicative mode in which more than one language is constantly used or activated in some way in the discourse (manifesting itself in *ad hoc* borrowings, frequent code-switches and the like, or multilingual communicative strategies such as accommodation, semi-communication, and similar phenomena). *Mono*lingual modes in multilingual groups, in contrast, are rather an effect of socio- or extralinguistic factors that prevent some or all kinds of multilingual phenomena.[2]

Psycholinguistic studies also emphasize that the linguistic knowledge of multilingual speakers (especially in multilingual groups) is not simply the sum of their individual monolingual competences, and that multilinguals are not 'multiple monolinguals'. Multilinguals process their languages in a way different from monolingual speakers, which suggests cognitive interaction between the languages at various levels (see, e.g., Grosjean 1989, 2008: 9ff).

If we assume that multilingualism is not only widespread but, in a way, a fundamental characteristic of the human language faculty,[3] then there is a need for a theoretical approach to multilingual language use which integrates this perspective into the grammatical description of multilingual speakers' linguistic knowledge, or at least a coherent description of the interrelations between the languages involved. This implies a multilingual system that captures both language-specific and multilingual structures as interdependent parts of *one* grammatical and lexical system.[4]

While theoretically motivated, such an approach is also relevant in, for instance, the investigation of code-switching or transfer phenomena in language contact situations. Standard code-switching models such as Myers-Scotton's (2002) Matrix Language Frame Model take considerable pains to ultimately determine the language of a particular sequence, morpheme, construction, or category within a given multilingual utterance, especially in order to figure out which of the languages at hand is dominant

2. Obvious examples are lexical purism, which can have official status (as in Standard Icelandic, but less so in colloquial varieties), or particular constructions that are stigmatized in a specific variety (e.g. [*weil* 'because' + V2 CLAUSE] in written German, while being perfectly normal in the spoken language). In addition, a monolingual mode may be demanded in certain contexts, as in the schools of the Danish minority in Germany where pupils are required to use *either* Standard Danish *or* Standard German instead of the local, German-influenced variety of Danish or the multilingual mode common in everyday conversation (Kühl 2008: 261).

3. It can be argued that the synchronic and diachronic variability of language, as well as the capability of all humans to cope with intralingual variation, indeed implies that multilingualism has the status of an 'essential universal', related to Coseriu's (1974) notion of 'historicity' (see Oesterreicher 2001).

4. This is even more obvious if we accept that there is no straightforward distinction between multi*lingualism* and multi*lectalism*, i.e. the knowledge and use of different varieties (of one language) – mono*lectalism* does not exist, as not even a monolingual speaker's competence is restricted to only one variety of his/her language.

(the 'matrix language'). This approach relies, of course, on the possibility to distinguish different languages within an utterance (and, optimally, to divide the utterance into monolingual linear segments). However, the more similar two languages are, the less feasible such an assignment becomes. Examples demonstrating this difficulty abound in the contact linguistic literature; the following three cases of bilingual (Colloquial North) High German-Low German utterances may illustrate the point:

(1) An *dat* Licht kann *de* Hausmeister nix *ännern*.
at the light can the caretaker nothing change
'The caretaker can't do anything about the light.'

(2) Keinen Muckefuck, richtigen Kaffe, *dat smeckt goot*.
no coffee substitute real coffee that tastes good
'No coffee substitute, [but] real coffee, that tastes good.'

(3) In Kiel mag Anna nich wohnen.
in Kiel likes Anna not live
'Anna wouldn't like to live in Kiel.'

In these examples, the sequences in italics are unambiguously Low German, and the underlined words are unequivocally High German, whereas the remaining part of the utterances – in fact, the majority of words – is totally ambiguous (in (3), this is true for the whole utterance).

Yet, even this analysis still greatly exaggerates the proportion of unambiguously monolingual elements, since it is only based on the lexical surface, i.e. the language of the (lexical and grammatical) morphs. Most of the abstract semantic, morphological, syntactic, and in part even phonological structures that are also present in these utterances are in fact undistinguishable between the two languages. Research on the communicative behavior of multilinguals as well as studies in areal linguistics suggests that – provided two languages are used by the same speaker group in similar communicative contexts or domains – the most prominent idiosyncrasies of the two languages will be on the level of the lexical (or, indeed, phonological) surface.[5] Conversely, the number of actually deviating (not purely lexical) structures tends to be rather low.

It would, therefore, be more to the point not to focus on whether an element in a multilingual utterance belongs (or can be analyzed as belonging) to language A or B, but rather on whether it represents some *common* structure shared by A and B or an *idiosyncratic* feature of one of the languages. Such a perspective may be less compelling in contact situations in which the languages are less similar. But even contact languages without a (close) genetic relationship often share a lot rather abstract structural

5. See Muysken's (2000: 122ff) discussion of 'congruent lexicalization', Aikhenvald's (2007: 28ff) observations on 'morpheme-per-morpheme intertranslatability' or Heine & Kuteva's (2005: 179f) remarks on 'exact structural equivalence'.

patterns, and these similarities or overlaps are not only constructible in theory, but indeed form part of a multilingual's knowledge (see Section 2.2).

2.2 Interlingual identification: Diasystematic links

The idea that shared structures are in some way accessible to and in fact utilised by multilingual speakers within their linguistic knowledge and language processing goes back to Weinreich's (1954: 390) useful notion of 'diasystem':

> A 'diasystem' can be constructed by the linguistic analyst out of any two systems which have partial similarities ... But this does not mean that it is always a scientist's construction only: a 'diasystem' is experienced in a very real way by bilingual (including 'bidialectal') speakers ...

This notion was, as is well known, developed as an attempt to introduce a structuralist approach into dialectology, and has mostly been applied to dialectal phonology (Weinreich's own examples were from Yiddish dialects): two dialects are said to be part of the same (phonological) diasystem if certain elements (e.g. phonemes) in dialect A regularly correspond to a set of elements in dialect B. However, the concept can easily be extended to also cover (a) other parts of the language system and (b) different languages in addition to different dialects.[6]

The basic process in establishing a 'real' diasystem, i.e. one that is embedded in speakers' cognition and language use, is *interlingual identification* (Weinreich 1964: 7f). Interlingual identification is based on similarity relations between different elements in different varieties, which are perceived as equivalents by multilingual speakers according to (often competing) structural, phonic, semantic, functional, pragmatic, or other criteria (see Section 3 for examples). Two elements or structures in two different varieties are thus not equivalent to each other by themselves, intrinsically or self-evidently. Rather, interlingual equivalence is to some degree arbitrary and always reflects a creative act of a multilingual community, even though it is partially motivated by one of several competing similarity relations. The result of a successful interlingual identification is an established diasystematic link between two different elements, i.e. a socially conventionalized mapping.[7]

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6. Weinreich's original proposal presupposed the existence of language-specific 'systems' in a strictly structuralist sense. For the purpose of the following discussion, this is, of course, not a necessary prerequisite.

7. Evidence for social conventionalization comes, as an example, from phonological substitution rules in loanword integration. For example, French [ɑ̃ ɛ̃ ɔ̃ œ̃)] are regularly rendered as [aŋ ɛŋ ɔŋ œŋ] in (Colloquial North) High German (e.g. French *engagement* [ɑ̃gaʒmɑ̃] > NoHG *Engagement* [aŋgaʒəˈmaŋ] 'commitment'), based on phonetic similarity. In contrast, Standard German (StG) /eː/ is usually taken to correspond to Low German (LG) /ɛɪ̯/ rather than the phonetically more similar /e/ (as can be seen in mutual loanwords: StG *System* [zysˈteːm] > LG

If we take a diasystematic link between two language-specific elements as constituting a more abstract item within an overarching system shared by the two languages, then we can assume the existence of 'dia-elements': a 'diaphoneme' would be the abstract unit of which two language-specific phonemes are variants (such as StG /aɪ̯/, Austrian Standard German /ɛɪ̯/), a 'diamorph' represents phonologically corresponding morphs conveying the same semantic information (e.g. StG *Haus* [haʊ̯s] 'house', LG *Huus* [hus]; cf. the terminology introduced by Haugen 1956: 46f), lexical 'diaconcepts' typify mutually translatable lexemes (Dan *by*, Swe *stad* 'town'), 'diasyntactic' items link different language-specific constructions that are functionally identical and structurally parallel to some extent (such as verb-initial polar questions in e.g. StG *bist du wach?* and Dan *er du vågen?* 'are you awake?'), and so forth.

Diasystematic links and dia-elements constitute a network through which two language systems used within a multilingual speaker group are interconnected. The degree to which two varieties in contact participate in the common diasystem depends, of course, on their typological similarity: closely related and typologically similar languages can more easily develop a high degree of diasystematicity – i.e. the common intersection of their systems is larger – than more distant languages, which retain a larger proportion of idiosyncrasies in their systems (Höder 2011, forthcoming).

2.3 A construction grammar perspective: Diasystematic Construction Grammar

Among contemporary grammatical frameworks, approaches from the construction grammar (CxG) 'family', such as Croft's (2001) typologically inspired Radical Construction Grammar or Goldberg's (1995, 2006) Cognitive Construction Grammar, can most convincingly adapt to the idea of a diasystematic component in the grammar, connecting more than one monolingual system. To my knowledge, only little work has been done up to now on language contact within a CxG approach (but see, as an example, Pietsch's 2010 work on contact-induced change in Irish English). However, the idea that constructions are the locus of contact-induced language change seems acceptable to many (see Heine & Kuteva 2005: 44), a view that is reinforced by the recent growing interest in CxG approaches to diachronic change in general (see, for instance, the contributions in Bergs & Diewald 2008).

Despite the existing theoretical variation among CxG approaches, they all agree on the following ideas:

Systeem [zɪsˈtɛɪ̯m] 'system'; LG *Reep* [rɛɪ̯p] > StG *Reep* [reːp] 'rope'); this mapping is based on the distribution of the respective vowels in cognates. Another hint at the existence of conventionalized correspondences is that they change over time: English /ʌ/ used to be treated as an equivalent of Standard German /ø/, while today it corresponds to /a/; this change is reflected in different renderings in earlier and more recent loanwords, e.g. English *pumps* [pʌmps] (shoes) > StG *Pumps* [pømps], but *punk* 'Punk' (music genre) [pʌŋk] > StG *Punk* [paŋk].

a. the whole grammar is organized as an inventory of constructions, i.e. form–meaning pairs, in a continuum involving everything from lexically filled constructions (such as words) via partially filled constructions (for example in inflectional paradigms) to maximally schematic ones (such as syntactic or prosodic patterns);
b. more schematic and more concrete constructions are connected through inheritance links, forming a network of interdependent elements;
c. speakers learn schematic constructions by categorizing them on the basis of the available input, resulting in an economic representation of their linguistic knowledge;
d. not all constructions are rule-based and productive, many are irregular in that they are not predictable from more abstract structures.

In other words, speakers organize their linguistic knowledge and, hence, the grammar of their varieties through abstraction and generalization processes: filled constructions that behave identically in some respect are taken to instantiate a single, more abstract construction. While this kind of usage-based grammatical organization is assumed to apply in all types of linguistic situations, and while CxG has been primarily applied to monolingual contexts, there is no *a priori* reason why such generalization and abstraction processes should be blocked by language boundaries in multilingual environments. On the contrary, it has to be expected that categorization as a cognitively economic process does include all languages (and dialects, of course) in any situation in which the available input is multilingual, too. Interlingual identification, therefore, *is* categorization in very much the prototypical CxG sense: similar constructions in two different languages are taken to instantiate a common 'diaconstruction'.

Consequently, Diasystematic Construction Grammar assumes that, within a multilingual system, some constructions are unspecified for language (such as abstract syntactic constructions and lexical concepts), while others (above all lexically and phonologically filled constructions) are language-specific. Language-specificity can be modeled as being part of the pragmatic meaning of a construction, which manifests itself in contextual restrictions of the type 'use language L_x in the pragmatic contexts $C_{x:1,2,3,\ldots}$'. This is in line with the fact that multilingual groups tend to associate their respective varieties with different communicative functions, both in terms of large-scale polyglossia within a society and the specific criteria for language choice shared by, say, a bilingual family (as well as the criteria for the choice of a variety within *any* language community). The idea of a multilingual diasystem is thus fully compatible with a CxG perspective on the organization of grammar and grammatical knowledge.

Table 1 illustrates the relation between language-specific and unspecified constructions, involving different types and degrees of schematicity:[8]

8. Conventions: Meaning and form are arranged in separate lines. Lexical meanings are marked by inverted commas (e.g. 'town'), grammatical meanings by angle brackets (<polar question>). Pragmatic contexts are abbreviated by the corresponding glottonym in curly brackets ({Swe}). Square brackets ([...]) indicate the form of a construction, with schematic components

Table 1. Language-specific and unspecified constructions

	lexical diaconcept	**diamorph**	**diasyntactic construction**
contact languages	Danish, Swedish	Standard German, Low German	German, Danish
unspecified	'town' [_]	'house' [/h_s/]	<polar question> [FINITE$_1$ + ...]
language A	'town' {Dan} [*by*]	'house' {StG} [/haʊ̯s/]	–
language B	'town' {Swe} [*stad*]	'house' {LG} [/hus/]	–

Danish and Swedish, for example, share a common diaconcept ('town'), but this concept is expressed by different and non-cognate morphs (see column 1). The Standard German-Low German bilingual speakers have a common construction meaning 'house', which is partly phonologically filled (consonantal onset and coda), whereas the language-specific constructions only specify the stem vowel (which, in turn, is based on a diaphonemic construction that defines the respective vowels [aʊ̯] and [u] as language-specific variants; see column 2). Finally, German-Danish bilinguals can do without language-specific constructions for polar questions, as *one* schematic construction (specifying the verb-initial word order) is sufficient for both languages (see column 3).[9]

2.4 Towards interlingual congruence: Pro-diasystematic change

Diachronically, diasystematic links should be expected to lead to or at least facilitate increasing interlingual congruence in situations of stable and intense language contact, i.e. a higher proportion of common structures and a lesser proportion of idiosyncrasies. This is achieved through a regularization of interlingual correspondences. In DCxG terms, this 'pro-diasystematic' change implies an increase in the number of schematic constructions unspecified for language.

From the multilingual speakers' cognitive perspective, pro-diasystematic change involves a simplification of the common system, as a construction loses its language-specific contextual restriction and, thus, can become productive in the other language

in small capitals (e.g. SUBJ), lexically filled components in italics (*by*), phonologically filled parts between slashes (/hus/). An underscore (_) indicates an unspecified component. Numerical indexes represent the linear order of elements.

9. In fact, all of the unspecified constructions given in Table 1 could in principle, given an appropriate multilingual context, apply to *any* of the mentioned languages (e.g. /h_s/ in Swedish *hus* [hʉ̟ːs], or the lexical concept 'town' in German *Stadt*, which of course is a cognate of the Swedish lexeme).

as well: a form in language B is predictable on the basis of (a) the form in language A and (b) its inheritance link to an unspecified diaconstruction.[10] Thus, pro-diasystematic change is not necessarily the same thing as transfer from language A to B, nor does it always coincide with constructional borrowing, as the two languages need not become more similar with respect to the concrete forms. In contrast, pro-diasystematic change can even result in interlingual *divergence* at the surface (for instance, the diaphonemic identification of StG /aɪ̯/ with LG /ɛɪ̯/ leads to the innovative form *Ee* /ɛɪ̯/ 'egg' in Low German, based on StG *Ei* /aɪ̯/, even though the traditional form in Low German is also *Ei*; see Höder 2011). It is crucial, though, that pro-diasystematicity is a factor relevant to the social selection rather than the initial emergence of innovative forms: a bilingual group will preferably accept pro-diasystematic innovations, but, of course, other innovations are not ruled out and may even be preferred if favored by system-external factors (as, for example, with emblematic idiosyncrasies used to express linguistic identity or group affiliation in bilingual contexts).

In the following section, I will discuss, from a diasystematic perspective, a language contact situation in which both contact-induced language change and diachronic stability occur.

3. Case study: Latin-Old Swedish contact

3.1 Background: Written Old Swedish

In medieval Sweden, Latin – the fossilized variety of Classical Latin used in ecclesiastical institutions – is the predominant written language, used mainly for administrative, religious, and literary purposes, while Old Swedish is used in the domains of everyday life as a non-standardized and primarily spoken language. From the 13th century onwards, however, Swedish is also used in written communication, a process starting out in a highly multilingual environment: the scribes are mainly Latin-Swedish bilingual clerics, organized in close-knit monastic communities, the texts are often translated from Latin sources, text types are adapted from Latin models, and Latin textual norms are used even when writing in Swedish, a process that opens the door for a wide range of contact-induced language change phenomena (see Wollin 1981/1983). The result is the emergence of a distinct, written variety of Late Old Swedish (ca. 1375–1526).[11]

Latin and Old Swedish represent rather distantly related branches of the Indo-European family and are, therefore, not very similar in the lexicon. Grammatically,

10. This type of multilingual simplification includes cases in which the monolingual systems of the individual languages get *more* complex due to the innovation (Dahl 2009; for examples, see Sections 3.2 and 3.3).

11. For a comprehensive discussion and analysis of syntactic innovations in written Old Swedish see Höder (2010).

however, their typological distance is rather low. This includes a relatively complex inflectional system in both languages, as the inherited system of Old Swedish is still quite intact around 1300, though slowly giving way to a more agglutinative system as found in Modern Swedish. However, there are discrepancies in different parts of the languages' morphology and syntax, in which a common system is impossible to construct. The following sections illustrate the diachronic development of different multilingual phenomena from a diasystematic point of view.

3.2 Category mapping in nominal inflection

Old Swedish and Latin nouns are inflected for three categories, viz. case, number, and gender. It is not surprising that bilingual speakers identify these categories interlingually, as can be inferred from code-switching phenomena in Old Swedish texts, in which Latin words and phrases are assigned a Swedish gender or syntactically integrated in (and inflected according to) Swedish constructions:

(4) æst thu helias so*m* koma scal for domadagh
are you Elijah-NOM(Lat) who come shall before Doomsday
'Are you Elijah, who will come before Doomsday?' (SsS 95)

(5) ey ær helie p*er*sona min p*er*sona
not is Elijah-GEN(Lat) person my person
'Elijah's person is not my person.' (SsS 95)

(6) scippadh*i*r ... til confessorem generalem
invested to confessor-ACC.SG(Lat) general-ACC.SG.M(Lat)
'[after he is] invested ... as general confessor' (OCG 113)

The underlined forms illustrate bilingual case mapping: the name *helias* in (4) and (5) is marked as nominative or genitive by the corresponding Latin suffixes depending on the Swedish construction it occurs in (expressing a predicative complement or a possessor, respectively); in (6), the Latin accusative *confessorem generalem* is governed by the Swedish preposition *til*.[12] The loanword *persona* in (5), whether an *ad hoc* borrowing or already established, is assigned feminine gender (cf. the agreeing pronoun *min* 'my' [M/F]).

Interestingly, the interlingual identification of nominal inflectional categories is based on different similarity relations. Number is clearly mapped on a semantic basis, whereas gender assignment is partly based on semantic and partly on formal equivalences: the correspondence between gender and sex in nouns and proper names referring to humans (such as Lat *femina* ↔ OSw *kona*) suggests a functional equivalence even for (the majority of) nouns in which gender assignment is largely arbitrary; this equivalence is reinforced by formal similarities, especially in the feminine gender, as feminine nouns typically contain a suffix *-a* in both languages.

12. In Early Old Swedish (like in Old Norse), *til* normally governed the genitive; in Late Old Swedish, however, the accusative was frequently used after this preposition.

Case is mapped on the basis of similar functions and distributions across syntactic constructions (such as the genitive in the possessive construction). As for the dative (OSw and Lat) and ablative (Lat), the mapping is more complex and in parts diffuse, the more so because dative and ablative are frequently homophonous in Latin, which makes an interlingual identification on the basis of formal similarity easily possible. As prepositional constructions in Latin never contain a dative, the ablative is used even after Old Swedish prepositions that usually take the dative case (such as *moth* 'against' in (7)), whereas the Latin dative is used in the ditransitive construction (e.g. *sancte birgitte*[13] in (8)).

(7) [han] wende sik moth seniore
[he] turn-SBJV REFL against senior-ABL(Lat)
'[he] shall turn to the senior [a church official]' (OCG 113)

(8) Maria gwdz modher kwngør sancte birgitte
Mary God's mother tells holy-DAT.F.SG(Lat) Birgitta-DAT.SG(Lat)
'Mary, God's mother, tells Saint Birgitta' (Bir 137)

Additional evidence comes from participial constructions, more precisely from *absolute participles* (see Ahlberg 1942, Höder 2010: 222ff). Absolute participles represent a marginal but productive construction in Written Old Swedish, modeled on – and used as an equivalent of – a functionally and structurally corresponding construction in Latin, the so-called 'ablative absolute'. In this construction, a verb takes a participial form in the ablative case, and the agent (with active participles) is also expressed as an ablative ([NOUN_{ABL} + $\text{VERB}_{\text{PTCP.ABL}}$]). The Swedish construction follows the same pattern, except that participial forms are uninflected and the ablative is replaced by the dative case ([NOUN_{DAT} + $\text{VERB}_{\text{PTCP}}$]):

(9) iach scriffwar eder aff gwdelikom kærlek gwdhy tet vetandhe
I write you of divine love God-DAT it knowing
'I write to you out of divine love, with God knowing it.' (Bir 146f)

The nominal inflectional categories (encoded morphologically in both languages) are thus treated by the bilingual speakers as representing language-specific variants of common, unspecified categories. The possessive construction [NOUN + NOUN_{GEN}], for example, is language-unspecific, as it can be filled by either Swedish or Latin nouns and genitives. The same holds for the ditransitive construction [VERB + NOUN_{DAT} + NOUN_{ACC}]. The prepositional construction [PREP + NOUN_{DAT}] is exclusively Swedish but linked to the corresponding Latin construction [PREP + NOUN_{ABL}] via a more schematic diaconstruction [PREP + $\text{NOUN}_{\text{DAT/ABL}}$]. Similarly, schematic absolute participle constructions are language-unspecific ([$\text{NOUN}_{\text{DAT/ABL}}$ + $\text{VERB}_{\text{PTCP}}$]), but language-specific constructions are needed to account for the actual case marking.

13. The suffix *-e* is often used in Medieval Latin as a graphical variant of (Classical) *-ae*.

The interlingual mapping of the nominal inflectional categories is, from a diasystematic point of view, almost perfect in the sense of morpheme-based intertranslatability. Once established, it is thus a case of *stable diasystematicity* in a contact situation; no changes are observable during the Old Swedish period.[14]

In contrast to diasystematic stability as a result of a near-perfect congruence between two language systems, the existence of a fourth morphological category in Old Swedish causes *stable idiosyncrasy*: definiteness. Definiteness in Late Old Swedish is a complex category, applying to nominal constructions rather than nouns and expressed by different and in part optional markers (both determiners and adjectival/nominal suffixes), as is illustrated in (10):

(10) Tha gømdhis æn then gambla laghen
then observed-PASS still DEF.M.SG old-SG.DEF law-DEF.M.SG
'At that time the old law was still in effect.' (Bir 166)

Latin did not have a formally or functionally similar category (even though demonstratives such as *iste* 'this', for instance, evidently imply definiteness).[15] Consequently, the Latin-Old Swedish bilinguals do not treat any Latin structures as equivalents to Swedish definiteness, neither in translating (definiteness markers are used depending on the [implicit] context) nor in code-switching (*ad hoc* borrowings from Latin are not marked for definiteness). Definiteness thus represents a language-specific construction. Latin nouns in Swedish nominal constructions are accordingly treated as unspecified for definiteness and, hence, occur both in definite and non-definite contexts, as illustrated in (11) by the form *confessore* used in a definite context:

(11) abb*atisson*ne wal ra*nz*sake ...
abbess-GEN.PL-DEF-GEN.PL election investigate-SBJV
biscope*n* m*ädh* confessore
bishop-DEF.M.SG with confessor-ABL(Lat)
'The bishop shall investigate the abbesses' election together with the confessor.'
(OCG 122)

Even this behavior is stable during the Old Swedish period, except when conventionalized loanwords are integrated morphologically, with Swedish suffixes being used in

14. In the later development of Swedish, however, the interlingual mapping becomes less unambiguous and less stable (see Wollin 2007); a likely explanation is that other factors (such as phonologically based gender assignment) become more dominant as the relevance of bilingual diasystematicity decreases when the written language is no longer used exclusively by educated, bilingual speakers.

15. The earliest written sources in Old Swedish deviate from the later norm in that definiteness is not obligatorily marked; this system is thus closer to Latin than the later one. However, by about 1400, definiteness seems to be fully established as a (mandatory) grammatical category in Written Old Swedish.

general (cf. the Swedish genitive suffix *-o* along with the definiteness marker *-nne* in *abbatissonne* in (11); the corresponding Latin genitive would be *abbatissae*).

3.3 Pronominal relative clauses

An example of *increasing diasystematicity* is the emergence of pronominal relative clauses in Old Swedish (for a detailed analysis see Höder 2010: 199ff, see also Lindblad 1943). In Early Old Swedish (prior to 1375), relative clauses with an antecedent are exclusively introduced by uninflected relative particles (such as *sum*; see example (12)) or gaps. Latin, on the other hand, has only pronominal relativizers (with full-fledged inflectional paradigms), mostly homophonous with interrogative determiners (e.g. the most frequent *qui*). However, Swedish and Latin relative clause constructions are easily identifiable as interlingual equivalents, based on their similar meaning (providing additional information about a given referent) and structural similarities (finite clauses, clause-initial relativizers, coreference with an antecedent).[16]

In Written Old Swedish (after 1375), bilingual speakers increasingly use inflected relative pronouns along with the inherited relativizers, predominantly the pronouns *hviliken* (originally an interrogative 'which'; see example (13)) and *þän* (otherwise demonstrative 'that'). The innovative relativizers are particularly frequent in appositive relative clauses, which also constitute an innovative functional relative clause type (as opposed to restrictive and generalizing relative clauses).

(12) The p*re*ste <u>som</u> væl fo*re*sta sino ræmbete
the priests REL well govern POSS.3SG.REFL-DAT office
'The priests that administer their office well ...' (SsS 101)

(13) ... kærlekin <u>hwlkin</u> høxth ær j allom dygdom
love-DEF REL-NOM.SG.M highest is in all virtues
'... love, which is the highest of all virtues' (Bir 149)

The emergence of pronominal relativizers can be interpreted as an instance of grammatical replication (Höder 2010: 218ff), presumably reinforced by the increasingly common practice of formally equivalent translation from Latin sources (Kranich, Becher & Höder 2011) and the social prestige of that language.[17]

From a bilingual point of view, though, this process is at the same time a highly pro-diasystematic and thus a cognitively economic change. Before the innovation, bilingual speakers have to store and process language-specific relative clause constructions which are diasystematically linked, but only through very abstract, schematic, and

16. For a typological overview of possible relativization strategies beyond this type, see Lehmann (1984: 43ff and passim).

17. Quantitative analyses show that appositive relative clauses in Latin sources are usually rendered as pronominal relative clauses in Old Swedish translations (Höder 2010: 216f).

semantically unspecific diaconstructions, viz. a 'relative clause diaconstruction' (specifying the clause-initial position and clause-internal function of the relativizer) and a 'relativizer diaconstruction' (representing the grammatical concept of a lexically expressed relativizer). Anything else is language-specific, in particular the morphological properties of the relativizers (uninflected vs. marked for case, number, and gender):

Table 2. Old Swedish and Latin relative clause constructions (pre-change)

unspecified	**{Old Swedish}**	**{Latin}**
<relative clause> [REL$_1$ + ...]	<restrictive relative clause> [REL.PARTICLE$_1$ + ...]	<relative clause> [REL.PRON$_1$ + ...]
<relativizer> [_]	<relative particle> [_]	<relative pronoun> [INTERR.PRON$_1$ + CNG$_2$]

But with pronominal relativizers in Old Swedish, as a result of the innovation, bilingual speakers can construct relative clauses in both languages based on common constructions (reflecting the originally Latin model), including (a) relative clause constructions that allow for appositive clauses, (b) an exactly equivalent complex grammatical meaning of the pronominal relativizers (specifying case, number, and gender rather than just signaling relativization), and (c) even a lexical diaconstruction in the case of the relative/interrogative pronouns OSw *hviliken* and Lat *qui*, which correspond to each other in any clause type. The combined system can be summarized (in a somewhat idealized fashion) in the following way:[18]

Table 3. Old Swedish and Latin relative clause constructions (post-change)

unspecified	**{Old Swedish}**	**{Latin}**
	<relative clause> [REL.PARTICLE$_1$ + ...]	–
<relative clause> [REL.PRON$_1$ + ...]	–	–
<relative pronoun> [INTERR.PRON$_1$ + CNG$_2$]	–	–
'which (REL/INTERR)' [_]	'which (REL/INTERR)' [*hviliken*]	'which (REL/INTERR)' [*qui*]

18. The devil is the details that are not included in the table: hybrid relativizers (consisting of both a pronoun and a particle), frequency differences in the distribution of pronominal and non-pronominal relativizers across different texts, and suchlike (discussed in detail in Höder 2010: 203ff). Still, the overall picture can be captured neatly in a set of constructions such as the ones in Table 3.

As pronominal relativization does not replace the particle strategy, the idiosyncratic Swedish constructions are preserved but no longer obligatory; this is reflected in the language-unspecific pronominal relative clause construction as compared to the idiosyncratic non-pronominal relative clause construction in Old Swedish. This point illustrates nicely that the simplification of a multilingual system can lead to a complexification of a monolingual system. Old Swedish is becoming more complex: two alternative constructions (±pronominal) are possible in Written Old Swedish, whereas earlier only one construction (–pronominal) was possible. However, if we assume a bilingual system with language-specific and unspecified elements, the same development – i.e. the emergence of an alternative relativization strategy – is obviously a simplifying change.

4. Conclusion

Language contact involves, as a rule, long-term, stable, intense multilingualism, socially embedded in multilingual speaker groups. Consequently, all kinds of interlingual transfer and contact-induced change require, at some stage, a form of conventionalized multilingual communicative behavior and some kind of cognitive interaction between the languages. Therefore, I have advocated an essentially multilingual perspective on language contact in this contribution. Multilingual speaker groups know (though not necessarily consciously), utilize, and conventionalize diasystematic relations between their languages. They establish and expand regular correspondences, generalize and abstract on the basis of language-specific structures, and eventually organize their languages into a common system. Within a DCxG framework, this system, consisting both of diasystematic and idiosyncratic elements, can be modeled as an interlingual network of constructions with different degrees of schematicity.

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