**Entrenchment, autonomy and language change: The discourse marker ¿cachái? (’you know’?) as a driver of change in Chilean Spanish**

This paper investigates the linguistic mechanisms behind language change, and questions to what degree entrenched forms may (or may not) play a role in driving gradual change. Following De Smet (2016) which tracked the gradual development from nominal to adjectival usage of English ‘key’, this study looks at a morphosyntactic variable: the second person singular (2sg) verbal paradigm in Chilean Spanish, which has undergone rapid change, and specifically the effect of the highly frequent discourse marker *cachái* ‘you know’.

While most varieties of Spanish spoken in Spain and Latin America use the standard second person singular (2sg) familiar pronoun *tú* and corresponding *tuteo* verb forms as in (1), Chilean Spanish (like some other varieties), is characterised by the co-existence of *voseo* – the use of the pronoun *vos* as a second person singular familiar form (with corresponding *voseo* verb forms as in (2)).

1. *No po si* ***tú tienes*** *razón.*

No you-tú are-tú right. (CSSS 150206-000; 868; Trinidad)

1. ***vos cachái*** *que ese estadio lo hicieron,*

You-vos know-vos they made that stadium, (CSSS 141217-000; 1216; Matías)

The 2sg paradigm in Chilean Spanish has undergone a very rapid change in the past 40 years (Morales, 1972, Torrejón, 1991, Torrejón, 1986, Lipski, 1994, Bishop and Michnowicz, 2010), whereby traditionally stigmatised *voseo* verb forms have expanded to the speech of all social classes, at the expense of the standard *tuteo.* In conversational data of young educated speakers in the 1970s (1990, Rabanales and Contreras, 1979) and 2010s (Callaghan, in prep), *voseo* verb forms go from virtually non-existent in the 1970s data (2/700), to become the majority form today (91%, 683/751).

The rise in use of *voseo* has been accompanied by the development of a new discourse marker, *cachái* ‘you know’ (literally ‘catch-vos-ind’). This form – absent in the 1970s data – accounts for over a quarter (356/1321) of all 2sg forms and a third of *voseo* verbs in the 2010s recordings. It is particularly frequent in the speech of young speakers providing further evidence that it is an innovative form.

Given this, it is a prime candidate for testing the role of entrenched forms in language change, specifically two hypotheses drawn from De Smet (2016: 83) : (1) “innovative constructions should be more likely to emerge if their analogical models are better entrenched” and (2) “an expression’s retrievability can also be improved by priming, which in the short term should have a similar effect to priming.”

Evidence for the first hypotheses was found in that those speakers who were categorized as ‘high’ users of *cachái* (those for whom *cachái* represented over 15% of their total 2sg verbs) were found to use proportionally more *voseo* verb forms than those categorized as ‘low’ *cachai* users. However, this may partly be an age effect, given the strong correlation between young speakers and high *cachái* and *voseo* usage in general.

To explore this further, all *tuteo* and *voseo* tokens were coded for the form of the previous 2sg verb. Here, evidence for the second hypothesis was found in that the probability of occurrence of subsequent *voseo* verb forms increases if there is a *cachái* in the preceding environment; the rate of *voseo* in the context of a preceding *voseo* is 88% (462/523), twice as high as that in the context of a preceding *tuteo* (46%, 51/112). *Cachái* itself also enters into the priming with a rate of 91% voseo (82/90) in contexts where the previous 2sg token was *cachái*. This shows, then, that *cachái* is not wholly autonomous, but is recognised as a *voseo* form by speakers (Cacoullos and Walker, 2009). Given the high frequency of *cachái* it certainly could have played a role in the rise of the change.

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