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## 27. Non-convergence despite language contact

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### 1. Introduction

Most research into the linguistic consequences of the contact of two or more languages has been concerned with contact-induced convergence (or advergence; cf. Mattheier 1996: 34). Much less scientific effort has been dedicated to the equally important and theoretically perhaps even more interesting question why convergence does not happen (but cf. Martinet's [in Weinreich 1953: viii] historically interesting counter-claim that "linguistic research has so far favored the study of divergence [e.g., the Romance languages; G. K.] at the expense of convergence"). At least partly, the reason for this neglect seems to be that convergence implies change, whereas the lack of it often implies stasis, which may be considered less interesting (cf. Backus 2005: 328). Besides this, it is rather

easy to explain contact-induced convergence, firstly because the target structure of such a change is known and can be easily analyzed, and secondly because the sociolinguistic motivation for contact-induced convergence – normally a high(er) overt prestige of the source language (cf. Auer and Hinskens 1996: 11–12) – can be directly connected to extralinguistic factors such as the number of its speakers and their material, political and/or cultural power. For non-convergence, on the other hand, there is neither a structural target available for analysis, nor does there exist a similarly obvious connection to extralinguistic factors (see section 2.3). In spite of these difficulties, I will attempt to shed some light on sociolinguistic and structural factors for non-convergence despite language contact. First, however, it is necessary to discuss the central concepts of this article, namely *contact*, *language* and *(non-)convergence*.

## 2. Contact, language and (non-)convergence

### 2.1. Contact

After fifty years of research in sociolinguistics it is commonplace knowledge that the term *language contact* is a somewhat misleading metaphor and should be replaced by *contact of speakers*. But even *contact of speakers* is a rather superficial description for what is happening when speakers of one language borrow linguistic material, structures or rules from speakers of another language. Because of this, Martinet's (in Weinreich 1953: viii) conviction that "contact breeds imitation and imitation breeds linguistic convergence" has to be questioned. German and French-speaking people, for example, have been in contact for many centuries, but speakers of German have incorporated much more French vocabulary (not to mention French phonemes, stress patterns and grammatical structures) than vice versa. Usually, this imbalance has been explained by the high overt prestige (speakers of) French enjoyed for several centuries. This line of reasoning seems sensible enough, but it overlooks the important detail that French-speaking people did not even have the chance to borrow more German words or structures simply because they did not know enough German in order to do so. The contact of German and French did not happen somewhere along the Rhine River but in the minds of a substantial number of Germans who felt the need to learn French (cf. Weinreich's (1953: 6, 67) dictum that "the individual is the ultimate locus of contact"). Obviously, the reason for learning French was its high prestige, but this prestige was only one condition for borrowing, the other condition – and one may say the more important one – was bilingualism. On the eastern edge of the German-speaking area, the situation was quite different. Here it was West Slavic speakers who learned German and borrowed German words and rules (e.g., initial stress in Czech words), while these languages hardly affected German. Nowadays, the international prestige of French, German and the West Slavic languages is low, at least lower than that of English. The number of French speakers in Germany has been decreasing and there have never been that many speakers of German in France or of Polish or Czech in Germany. Even the previously large number of speakers of German in Poland and the Czech Republic is diminishing (but cf. the still high numbers in StADaF 2006: 2, 14, footnote 18). The consequence of the shrinking number of speakers of the other languages is the almost complete lack of current mutual borrowing along the French-German and German-Polish/Czech borders. But in all these coun-

tries there are many speakers of English and, consequently, there are many English words and structures being borrowed into French, German, Polish and Czech in spite of the fact that none of these countries shares a common border with an English-speaking country. From this, we can conclude that geographical contact of speakers of different languages does not automatically imply language contact (Martinet's "breeds" should, therefore, be replaced by a more cautious "can breed") and that the lack of geographical contact does not automatically impede language contact, especially in an increasingly globalized and media-struck world.

## 2.2. Language

I will not dwell long on the rather fruitless attempt to distinguish languages from dialects on structural grounds (but cf. some measures of distance in Bechert and Wildgen 1991: 105–108). Suffice it to say that it is not at all clear whether Spanish and Portuguese, two different languages, are linguistically more different than Standard German and Low German, a standard and a dialect of the same language (cf. Weinreich 1953: 105), or whether Low German might not, in some respect, be considered closer to Dutch or English than to Standard German. In spite of doubtful or even absurd groupings (Low German as a German dialect; Catalan as a Castilian dialect under Franco; Nahuatl as a dialect, albeit not a Spanish one, in Mexico), one can expect linguistic consequences from such politically motivated categorizations. For example, had the Catalan people not had such a long and independent political and cultural history and, even more importantly, had they not had such a strong economy, Catalan might not have survived as an autonomous language but converged towards Castilian (cf. the somewhat different case of Galicia [Villena Ponsoda 2006: 1807]). Converging languages can become dialects (e.g., Aragonese and Leonese in the Iberian Peninsular) and diverging dialects can become languages (the current developments separating Serbian and Croatian [Auer, Hinskens and Kerswill 2005b: 7]) or develop into varieties of different languages (the dialects along the Dutch-German border [Auer and Hinskens 1996: 16]). Regardless of these considerations, it should be clear that for the analysis of convergence and non-convergence in language contact it is more important to gauge the difference in linguistic subsystems than the one between languages *per se*. From this point of view, Low German word order is closer to Dutch and Standard German than to English, whereas its consonantal system and nominal morphology are closer to English and Dutch than to Standard German.

## 2.3. (Non-)convergence

With regard to (non-)convergence in language contact, five points have to be made: Firstly, Salmons (1990: 454) writes that "the now common use of 'convergence' goes at least back to Weinreich [...], where it is understood as 'partial similarities increasing at the expense of differences'". Weinreich sees convergence as a process, but convergence can also describe the result of a (past) language contact. What these two views have in common is that both describe the linguistic changes due to language contact and not the mechanism which causes them, i. e., borrowing. Poplack (1993: 256) defines both,

convergence and borrowing, as mechanisms of change: “[c]onvergence also involves the process of borrowing, although we reserve this term for the transfer of grammatical structure [...]”. The difference she makes between the two concepts lies in their extension: convergence is equivalent to structural borrowing whereas borrowing proper is reduced to the lexicon. For the purpose of this article, I will consider convergence as the consequence of (past/ongoing) change which occurs when speakers of one language borrow linguistic material, structures or rules from another language, regardless of the linguistic level involved. Non-convergence, consequently, is the result of a lack of such a transfer. This can, but need not imply linguistic stability.

Secondly, not divergence but non-convergence is the opposition of convergence (cf. Auer and Hinskens 1996: 3). Divergence is just one element of non-convergence and in language contact, it is probably a rather rare one (see section 5.2).

Thirdly, from a purely structural point of view, even languages whose speakers never come into any type of contact can converge or diverge. There are/were, for example, tendencies in some Germanic varieties to develop an adpositional case. Kaufmann (2008: 94–95, footnote 4) describes the use of the definite article *dem* in Mennonite Low German in Texas. *Dem* (etymologically dative) appears more frequently in nominal phrases governed by prepositions than in those governed by verbs. Lass (1992: 112) describes a similar case with regard to the suffix *-e* on Middle English nouns. Such developments make these varieties converge structurally with Hindi, which, too, has a specific adpositional (postpositional) case. But obviously, there is no connection whatsoever between Mennonite Low German, Middle English and Hindi and, therefore, this exclusively structural convergence (or divergence from other Germanic varieties) may be interesting for typologists, but not for us. From a structural point of view, four different types of non-convergence can be distinguished, namely contact-induced divergence, contact-induced simplification (mostly an indirect consequence of the functional loss of low-prestige languages, cf. Silva-Corvalán 1991: 165–166), linguistic stability (which may be contact induced; cf. Labov’s [2001: 297] sociolinguistically motivated “retreat of lower working class males from a female-dominated change” or Thomason and Kaufman’s [1988: 58] structural conserving influence of contact languages) and non-converging endemic change (often linguistic drift or change towards less marked forms).

Fourthly, convergence is not an independent linguistic phenomenon. It is the consequence of and interacts with other contact phenomena, such as code-switching, language attrition, second language acquisition, bilingual priming and linguistic accommodation (cf. Muysken 1995: 188; Backus 2005: 315; Poplack 1993: 255). In section 2.1 it was claimed that bilingualism, the consequence of second language acquisition, is a highly important condition for convergence, be it lexical, semantic or structural. For structural convergence, bilingual priming might be a decisive cognitive factor. Learning a second language creates or activates structures and mental representations hitherto unknown to the learner or less frequently used. Misfiring in language production, i. e., the priming of structures in the speaker’s first language by structures of the newly acquired second language, is bound to happen in such a situation (cf. Loebell and Bock [2003] and Backus’ [2005: 326] similar concept of *entrenchment*, but also the doubts mentioned in Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson [2006: 208]), especially when code-switching and/or linguistic accommodation to the speakers of the contact language are frequent. Language attrition can lead to negative convergence (different from non-convergence; cf. Auer and Hinskens’ [2005: 354] concept of *negative accommodation*), because marked

structures, which are often language specific, disappear first in language attrition (cf. Silva-Corvalán [1991, 165] and, for dialect contact, Schirmunski's [1930] concept of *primary dialect features*). Negative convergence causes differences between the contact languages to be leveled not due to the addition of a new word or rule in the converging language but due to the loss of an old word or rule (cf. Salmons 1990 with regard to discourse markers in Texas German). In the case of non-convergence, one can assume that most other contact phenomena mentioned do not appear or only appear in a reduced form. One would expect such a constellation either when the contact of the groups is conflictive or when the languages involved are of comparable prestige. The latter case can be currently found on the French-German border. The former one is interesting because it shows that although convergence and divergence are contrary linguistic reactions to language contact, they both occur in comparable sociolinguistic settings; both presuppose the contact with a language of high overt prestige. After all, why should speakers change their verbal behavior because they come into contact with a language they consider inferior? Unless, of course, the speakers of this supposedly inferior language start converging. Therefore, the different linguistic behavior of converging and diverging speech communities, i. e., the existence of language loyalty or the lack of it, must be explained by the characteristics of these communities (cf. section 5.2). From a sociolinguistic point of view, these questions are quite interesting, but they do not tell us much about structural restrictions on convergence or about less obvious sociolinguistic factors.

This leads us to the fifth and final point: With regard to linguistic theory, non-convergence in language contact is most interesting when we find non-converging speakers or non-converging structures in a situation where we would normally expect convergence. In the light of this, only two of the four types of non-convergence mentioned in point 3 are of interest to us, namely linguistic stability and contact-induced divergence. Our basic questions are: (1) What are the structural reasons for the fact that some linguistic structures remain (relatively) stable in a situation which is otherwise marked by converging structures (cf. Loudon 1994: 73), and (2) what are the sociolinguistic reasons for the fact that some speakers do not converge or even diverge from a prestigious source language in a generally converging group?

### 3. Some general considerations

In section 1, the comparatively small amount of research into non-convergence was mentioned. This does not mean, though, that no efforts at all have been undertaken. Weinreich (1953: 3), for example, meticulously compares the surface forms of languages in contact in order to find possible points of interference, but his approach is necessarily pre-generative and pre-Labovian and thus remains somewhat superficial and lacks a more modern empirical foundation. Most current researchers distinguish between core grammar features ("deep" syntax, inflectional morphology, phonological rules), which are relatively stable both with regard to outside influences and with regard to endemic change, and peripheral grammar features ("superficial" syntax [word order], derivational morphology, pronunciation, lexicon), which are more open to outside influences and change more rapidly (but cf. section 5.2 for a different view). Such general comparisons

do not have much explanatory power, though. Other research projects are too specific. They represent important linguistic levels with rather exotic phenomena (e.g., non-standard emphatic pronoun tags as major representative for syntax in Cheshire, Kerswill and Williams 2005: 159–163), a fact which is bound to undermine the validity of far-reaching conclusions (Cheshire, Kerswill and Williams 2005: 166). Abstracting from these more methodological problems, the following structural factors are often mentioned as facilitating or restricting convergence or related phenomena: typological distance of the languages involved (Altenberg 1991: 191; cf. also the related concept of *isomorphism* [Sanchez 2005: 234]), markedness, linguistic saliency or naturalness of the elements in question (Altenberg 1991: 191; Kristiansen and Jørgensen 2005: 288; Mattheier 1996: 41) and questions of cognitive complexity (either with regard to language processing [Altenberg 1991: 191] or with regard to the multilingual speaker's cognitive load [Sanchez 2005: 235]). These concepts will only be helpful, though, if they are clearly defined and analyzed in a specific contact situation. Even Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) ground-breaking work fails with regard to the second point, because they compare very different situations. Within a few pages, for example, they address literary Indic-Dravidian language contact dating back thousands of years (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 79) and present-day Low German as spoken in Nebraska (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 81–82), categorizing both cases as *slight structural borrowing*. Thomason and Kaufman (1988: 50, table 3, 74–76) try to cover all possible contact situations. They distinguish three basic cases (language maintenance [entailing borrowing in their narrow sense], language shift and pidginization) and five different degrees of contact (from *casual contact* to *very strong cultural pressure*). However, if one wants to know more about structural or sociolinguistic restrictions on convergence in a general converging constellation, situations where the speakers of one language maintain their language and borrow linguistic material, structures or rules from a contact language should be the main focus. Concentrating on borrowing in Thomason and Kaufman's narrow sense is justified by the fact that this is the unmarked case of language contact (cf. Backus 2005: 326). Although language shift is quite a common phenomenon, the linguistic consequences in the target language mostly disappear within one or two generations. In addition, one should not forget that the highly complex psychological and linguistic interaction of language contact, language death and second language acquisition in a shift situation further complicates the picture. Besides this, it also seems sensible to restrict one's research to intermediate levels of contact in order to learn more about structural and sociolinguistic restrictions on convergence. Thomason and Kaufman's (1988) extreme scenarios are not very helpful in this regard: category 1 only allows for lexical borrowing (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 77–78), while in category 5, the very strong cultural pressure will override any existing restrictions on convergence (Thomason and Kaufman 1988: 91–95). Therefore, in order to answer questions (1) and (2) in section 2.3 we need to concentrate firstly on more fine-grained analyses of several phenomena for each linguistic level, and secondly, we should do this in specific and well-defined contact situations, where the sociolinguistic setting (albeit not the reactions to it) is identical for the entire speech community. In such a situation, the overall pressure for convergence will be identical for all linguistic structures and for all speakers. This means that the different behavior of converging and non-converging structures can be analyzed as a function of their structural characteristics. Likewise, the different behavior of converging and non-converging speakers can be analyzed as a function of their different sociolin-

guistic dispositions. Another problem with Thomason and Kaufman is their strong relativization of the importance of structural restrictions on convergence – “it is the socio-linguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact” (1988: 35; cf. also 4, 15, 19). This conviction is certainly true for situations with extreme differences in the power relations between the groups in contact; for less extreme situations, however, it might detract from the structurally interesting points with regard to convergence and non-convergence (cf. also the critique in Sanchez 2005: 239–240). Obviously, even if we follow all these suggestions, success is not guaranteed: in code-switching, the language contact phenomenon most thoroughly studied, the search for structural restrictions is still far from offering unambiguous results. Muysken (1995: 178) states that “we should aim for universal explanations when looking for grammatical constraints” (cf. also Myers-Scotton 1995: 252), but so far the pursuit of this goal has not yet produced any clear results. Muysken (1995: 177) still wonders “to what extent restrictions on the code-switching process [are] seen as absolute or relative” (cf. section 6).

## 4. Some examples for structural factors in (non-)convergence

### 4.1. (Non-)convergence beneath the surface

In sections 1 and 2.3 it was argued that non-convergence can imply linguistic stability. But often a more detailed analysis shows that even complete stasis on all linguistic levels may coincide with an intrinsically dynamic situation. Hamel (1997: 113), for example, writes about the contact of indigenous speakers of Otomí with the majority culture in Mexico: “[t]he second kind of shift starts with a transformation of the ethnic group’s interpretative basis, that is, with a change of cultural schemes, of patterns of verbal interaction, and of interpretative procedures, while the indigenous language remains on the surface”. What this study shows is that in the contact between a minority and a majority group, it could be highly deceptive to define the status of the minority language exclusively by analyzing its linguistic system (cf. also Poplack 1993: 257). Hamel (1997: 113) continues: “[o]nce the cultural and pragmatic basis of the indigenous is eroded [...], the substitution of the language as such can occur much more easily”. Obviously, restrictions on convergence with regard to cultural schemes, patterns of verbal interactions and interpretative procedures are not grammatical in nature; therefore, they will be dealt with in section 5.2. Another case of a somewhat hidden type of convergence is calquing. Sinner (2005a: 564–566) mentions the semantic extension of *cada* in Spanish as spoken and written in Catalonia by people with or without Catalan as mother tongue. *Cada dia* (in Standard Spanish ‘each day’ in a distributive sense) infringes more and more on the semantics of *todos los días* (‘every day’ in a generalized sense), and it seems to do so under Catalan influence. With regard to semantic borrowing of prepositions and idioms, Loudon (1994: 84) writes about the contact of Pennsylvania German and English in the USA: “in spite of such heavy semantic influence from English on Plain Pennsylvania German, including borrowings, the lexicon itself remains primarily German”. Whether the lexicon can still be called “primarily German” in the case of “heavy semantic influence from English” could be debated; Loudon’s conviction is interesting, though, because in a certain way, it coincides with the fact that speakers in a contact

situation are more aware of (and more sensitive to) borrowing complete words than of just borrowing the meaning of a word. It seems that a certain amount of metalinguistic awareness is necessary in order to refrain from borrowing new meanings (cf. section 5.2), especially if the words in question already share part of their meaning (as in the case of *cada* and *todos los*; cf. also Berruto 2005: 82). Another group of words facilitating semantic borrowing are bilingual (near-)homophones in related languages (cf. Weinreich 1953: 48–50). For Portuguese spoken in the Brazilian-Uruguayan border region, Blaser (1995: 134) mentions *estranhar* (Standard Portuguese ‘to find [something] weird’) with the Spanish meaning of *extrañar* (‘to miss’); Kaufmann (2000: 171–172) mentions *embaraçada* (Standard Portuguese ‘embarrassed’) with the Spanish meaning of *embarazada* (‘pregnant’). It is difficult to give structural restrictions on convergence with regard to semantic borrowing; what one can say is that facilitating factors seem to be a phonetic and/or a semantic overlap. A different consequence of calquing, which might lead to dramatic changes, is not connected with the meaning of a particular word but with its subcategorization frame. Kaufmann (2005: 77–81) cites an example of Mennonite Low German as spoken in North and South America. Indirect objects in German varieties are normally marked by the dative or a general object case. In contrast, all contact languages of Mennonite Low German, i. e., Spanish, Portuguese and English, at least partially use prepositions to mark this syntactic function, and this characteristic has already had an influence on Low German. In the USA, indirect objects are realized with prepositions in 37.5 percent of the cases (mostly with *tu* ‘to’ or *no* [< *nach*, ‘after’]), whereas in Brazil *für* ‘for’ and *tu* are used in 19.6 percent of the cases (cf. Portuguese *falar para as crianças*, ‘talk for the children’, i. e., ‘talk to the children’). Interestingly, the four colonies in contact with Spanish show less prepositional marking (between 4 and 16.7 percent). The reason for this could be the inconspicuous and frequently contracted preposition *a*, which Spanish uses in this context. Such light forms seem to function as a restriction on convergence. King (2005: 237) sees in this kind of calquing the only way of acquiring foreign grammatical structures (cf. also Backus 2005: 309); she writes: “I argue that grammatical borrowing has a lexical basis. This approach is compatible with calquing as a process of contact-induced change, given that calquing involves change in the properties of lexical items, rather than the direct importation of grammatical structure [...]”. Interestingly, in her example of Prince Edward Island French in Canada, calquing leads to convergence and divergence at the same time. This French variety has borrowed many English prepositions which have caused an increase in the application of a rather rare phenomenon in French, namely preposition stranding (cf. King 2005: 243–248). At first sight, it appears that we are dealing with a clear case of lexical convergence towards English and an ensuing structural convergence connected to a specific rule of the borrowed prepositions. At the same time, however, this new rule is generalized for all prepositions in Prince Edward Island French, i. e., restrictions on its application in English have not been borrowed, and this leads to subsequent structural divergence.

#### 4.2. (Non-)convergence on the surface

It is rather difficult to name clear structural restrictions on convergence in the parts of language which are not phonetically realized. For phonetically realized parts, this will be somewhat easier. With regard to entire words, the most intensively studied type of



borrowing, there is a well-known ban on closed-class items (articles, pronouns, etc.) in comparison to open-class items (especially nouns). A high frequency of a word in the recipient language also seems to make borrowing less probable (cf. Weinreich 1953: 57). As for pronunciation, Louden and Page (2005: 1389) state: “[i]t appears that convergence is suppressed where it would involve contrastive sounds [...]” (cf. also Weinreich 1953: 23). The fact that Pennsylvania German has adopted the English retroflex *r* is no counter-example to this rule, because “the system of phonological contrasts in the lexicon is unaffected by this phonetic substitution” (Louden and Page 2005: 1390; cf. also the same development in Canadian French [Poplack 1993: 261–262]). Bullock and Gerfen (2004: 99) mention the substitution of the “only marginally contrastive” French vowels in *deux* ‘two’ and *neuf* ‘nine’ by the English vowel of *bird* in Frenchville, Pennsylvania. This is another example for non-system-affecting phonetic convergence enabled by similarity: “[t]he shared structural properties across French-English that are at the locus of this change are similarities in vowel height, roundness, and position along the front-back articulatory dimension” (Bullock and Gerfen 2004: 102–103). Such a substitution will consequently not occur if the elements in question do not share at least some structural properties. The fact that these speakers converge to an English vowel, which is strongly marked and does, therefore, not seem to be an attractive target for borrowing, can be explained by the reduction of overall complexity for this bilingual speech community (one instead of two marked vowels [Bullock and Gerfen 2004: 103]). Another interesting point is the phonetic shape of borrowed words (nonce or established): Poplack, Sankoff and Miller (1988: 72) write that “phonological integration proceeds as a function of the social integration of the loanword”. One could also claim that pronouncing a borrowed word in the way of the recipient language is an act of non-convergence within convergence. As for morphology, one can say that the more integrated/synthetic a linguistic form is, the less probable is its transfer (Weinreich 1953: 35, 41; Backus 2005: 323), i. e., the direct borrowing of affixes is a rather rare event. If affixes are borrowed, they are almost always borrowed as part of words. Sometimes they will then be analyzed, and only in this case can they be used productively with stems from the recipient language (e.g., German *-ieren* < French *-(e)r* in verbs with a Germanic stem like *inhaftieren*, ‘in custody-ieren’, i. e., ‘to imprison’). What is more frequent in morphology is a functional change or a merger of forms in the recipient language under foreign influence (cf. Louden 1988: 146–152). With regard to (morpho)syntax, Louden’s (1988, 1994) research comes pretty close to the desiderata formulated in section 3; he compares different (morpho)syntactic phenomena in a precisely defined contact situation. Because of this, he (1988: 227) can make valid comparative statements:

What data we have of change in PPG [Plain Pennsylvania German] word order is limited to minor surface phenomena. These minor changes entail the generalization of certain patterns, such as the placement of infinitival complements in clause-final position. However, despite the intimate contact of PPG, an SOV language, with AE [American English], an SVO language, there is no evidence to indicate a major shift of PPG word order away from an underlying verb-final structure.

This quotation illustrates the importance of analyzing several phenomena of each linguistic level, because – as Louden shows – these phenomena can behave differently. The only problem with Louden’s work is that he does not analyze his data quantitatively.

In the following, I will try to demonstrate with examples from Mennonite Low German (cf. Kaufmann 2005; Kaufmann 2007) what such a quantitative analysis might look like.

As Louden writes, German verbs govern their complement to the left, i. e., different from English, Spanish and Portuguese, German is an OV-language (*den Hund schlagen*, ‘the dog beat’, i. e., ‘to beat the dog’). In two of the five Mennonite colonies, namely in Brazil and the United States, the lexical influence of the majority languages on Low German is so strong that one would also expect some structural borrowing. Nevertheless, like in Plain Pennsylvania German there are hardly any cases where the informants produced Low German embedded clauses with the complement occurring to the right of its governing verb (cf. Kaufmann 2005: 87–89; Kaufmann 2007: 196). Only a robust number of such tokens would prove a structural influence on Low German. The sequence of verbs and their complements is apparently so deeply ingrained in the system of the language that it functions as a powerful barrier against convergence (but cf. the contact-induced change of Rimella German from an OV to a VO-language (Louden 1994: 88)). In other subsystems of Low German, however, some cases of word order change can be found. The sequence of nominal attributes and their governing heads, for example, shows some influence of the majority languages (cf. Kaufmann 2005: 84–86): in the USA, *min Bruder sin Lewen* (‘to my brother his life’), with 72.7 percent of the cases the most frequent variant (in Brazil only 23.2 percent), seems to follow the English sequence ‘my brother’s life’, while in Brazil *daut Lewe von min Bruder* is used in 41.1 percent of the cases, probably a consequence of Portuguese *a vida do meu irmão* (‘the life of my brother’; not a single token in the USA). Two factors might have made this convergence possible: first, the respective variants had already existed in the recipient language, i. e., the influence of the contact language did not create a new variant, but only strengthened an already existing one (cf. Mattheier 1996: 34), and second, the position of a nominal attribute seems to be more superficial than the position of a verbal complement. Looking at the two Paraguayan colonies (Menno and Fernheim), there are more interesting things to learn: in Paraguay, the influence of the linguistically distant majority language Spanish is restricted to lexical borrowing, while the strong presence of less distant Standard German has a significant effect on many structural levels, among them the ordering of verbal elements in clause-final clusters. The Mennonites in Menno and Fernheim use the variant also used in Standard German (... *dat hei imma sine Mame helpe mut*, ‘... that he always his mother help must,’ i. e., ‘... that he always has to help his mother’) in 92.4 and 93.7 percent of the cases respectively, while the Mennonites in the United States, who have hardly any contact to Standard German, use this variant in just 29.9 percent. Again, two factors can account for the difference between the Paraguayan Mennonites who converge to the Standard German variant and the US-American and Brazilian Mennonites who do not converge to English and Portuguese structures: firstly, the linguistic distance between Standard German and Low German with regard to word order is smaller than the one between English or Portuguese and Low German; secondly and more importantly, the nonstandard sequence of verbal elements in verb clusters (... *dat hei imma [sine Mame] mut [sine Mame] helpe*) is the result of a rather superficial movement of nonfinite verbal elements to the right (with or without scrambling of the complement; cf. Kaufmann 2007: 156–157), whereas the basic ordering of verbs and their complements is a much more fundamental characteristic of Germanic varieties. Granted, right now we are comparing two different contact situations, not following the desiderata in section 3, but there are interesting comparisons within

the same situation as well: in verb clusters with three verbal elements, convergence to the Standard German variants in Paraguay is less strong: in Menno, the rate drops from 92.4 to 43.5 percent; in Fernheim from 93.7 to 39.8 percent (USA: from 29.9 to 2.4 percent). The reason for this drop lies in the higher complexity of clusters with three verbal elements. Even Standard German, a language with left-branching sequences in most of its verbal syntax, requires in the context in question (modal verbs in the perfect) more parsing-friendly, partly right-branching structures, i. e., the finite verb appears before the nonfinite verbs (... *daß er immer [seiner Mutter] hat [seiner Mutter] helfen müssen*, ‘... that he always [his mother] had [his mother] help must,’ i. e., ‘... that he always had to help his mother’). The Mennonites in Menno and Fernheim do not always succeed in converging to these variants. They produce completely right-branching structures (... *dat hei imma [sine Mame] hat [sine Mame] mut [sine Mame] helpe*) in 50 and 56 percent of the cases respectively. We can therefore conclude that the more complex a structure of the source language is, the less convergence there will be.

## 5. Some examples of sociolinguistic factors in (non-)convergence

### 5.1. Age and gender

Auer and Hinskens (1996: 4) write: “[e]mpirically rich, well-documented and quantitative investigations of processes of convergence and divergence, and not just of their outcomes, are rare; investigations into the links between social changes and the linguistic developments they can trigger are even rarer” (cf. also Mattheier 1996: 31; Cheshire, Kerswill and Williams 2005: 141). The interaction between social factors (if not changes) and linguistic developments can be illustrated with regard to the Mennonites in Paraguay: as Standard German is a language with a high overt prestige in these colonies, convergence of Low German towards Standard German variants must be classified as change from above. Labov (2001: 274) characterizes this type of change in the following way: “[i]n linguistic change from above, women [and especially young women, one may add; G. K.] adopt prestige forms at a higher rate than men” (cf. also Cheshire, Kerswill and Williams 2005: 143). Young women in Fernheim converge, as expected, most strongly to the Standard German variant in clusters with two verbal elements (100 percent as opposed to 92.2 percent for the five other subgroups;  $p = 0.022$ ). Young women in Menno rank second (94.6 as opposed to 91.9 percent; non-significant). The situation with regard to clusters with three verbal elements is somewhat different. In Fernheim, young women still use the two Standard German variants more often than most of the other subgroups (45.2 as opposed to 38.5 percent), but they only rank third and the difference is not significant any more. Young women in Menno still rank second, (52.5 as opposed to 40.8 percent; non-significant). As the wish to use Standard German variants hardly depends on the number of verbal elements, we must either explain the different behavior of young women in Fernheim, i. e., their relative non-convergence in clusters with three verbal elements, with difficulties identifying the standard variant(s) or again with the complexity of this structure. In Menno, there is another interesting sociolinguistic development. Young men there seem to converge less strongly to the Standard German variant in cases of clusters with two verbal elements. While young women

did not converge in only 5.4 percent of the tokens (the older women do not converge in 10.8 percent; non-significant), the rate of non-convergence for young men is more than twice as high (11.6 percent; the older men 3.7 percent;  $p = 0.049$ ). Although the difference between young men and young women is not significant, it is highly suggestive that the older men use the Standard German variant significantly more often than the young men, while the older women use it less often than the young women, at least with regard to absolute frequency. The difference is even more striking with regard to clusters with three verbal elements. In this context, young women use the two possible standard variants in 52.5 percent of the tokens (older women 29.5 percent;  $p = 0.032$ ), whereas young men do so in only 33.3 percent (older men 56 percent;  $p = 0.038$ ). The difference between young women and young men shows a statistical tendency ( $p = 0.092$ ). For several reasons connected to the history of Menno (cf. Kaufmann 2007: 180–182), one must classify the behavior of young men as a “retreat [...] from a female-dominated change” (cf. Labov 2001: 297). This divergence from the prestigious Standard German variants is only present in part of the speech community and is caused by a special sociolinguistic disposition. This shows clearly that in studies of convergence and non-convergence neither languages nor speech communities should be analyzed as if they were monolithic blocks (cf. sections 2.2 and 3).

## 5.2. Language loyalty, identity and types of bilingualism

In section 2.3, a high degree of language loyalty was mentioned as an important characteristic for a non-converging speech community. Language loyalty is generally not only linked to a positive attitude towards one’s language but also to a positive attitude towards one’s culture. Especially this cultural loyalty is a condition for non-convergence in the less conspicuous areas of language where cultural schemes, patterns of verbal interaction and interpretative procedures are involved (cf. Hamel 1997 in section 4.1). In the context of language enclaves, Mattheier (1994: 334–335) calls such culture loyalty a *Sprachinselmentalität*, a sociopsychological disposition of the members of a minority group, by which they mark their difference from the majority group. In Canada, both types of loyalty seem to exist because neither English as a minority language in Quebec (cf. Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson 2006: 207) nor French as a minority language in Ontario (cf. Poplack, Sankoff and Miller 1988: 57; Poplack 1993: 261) show much lexical or structural borrowing or much code-switching. Besides this, even if, for example, French speakers code-switch or use borrowed words, they make sure that the listener realizes that this is not their normal behavior: “[...] Ottawa-Hull francophones draw attention to, or ‘flag’, their switches, by different discourse devices: metalinguistic commentary, English bracketing, repetition or translation” (Poplack 1993: 263; cf. for lexical borrowing Poplack 1988: 114). Again we are faced with an act of non-convergence within convergence (cf. section 4.1 and 4.2). The most important restrictive factor on convergence in this situation seems to be social pressure exerted by people with a high socioeconomic status (cf. Poplack, Sankoff and Miller 1988: 81; Poplack 1988: 111). Such a status seems to correlate with high metalinguistic awareness which enables speakers to monitor even more hidden types of convergence like semantic borrowing (cf. section 4.1). Other restrictive, but apparently less important factors on convergence are the status as a minority or a majority group (“linguistic security”; cf. Poplack 1988: 95) and the lack

of bilingual proficiency (cf. section 2.1; Poplack, Sankoff and Miller 1988: 97; Poplack 1988: 100, 110–111). Theoretically, in more conflictive contact situations – Poplack, Walker and Malcolmson (2006: 209) describe the almost non-converging situation in Canada “as maximally conducive to convergence” – one could even imagine diverging tendencies, at least with regard to typologically related languages. One sociolinguistic condition for such a development could be a behavior which Sinner (2005a: 561) calls “linguistic paranoia”. He writes about some speakers of Spanish in Catalonia: “[d]icha paranoia lingüística puede manifestarse, por ejemplo, en la tendencia a ver catalanismos ‘por todos lados [...]’”. Once people see borrowed words everywhere, i. e., once they feel their linguistic identity threatened, they might well want to avoid using any word or structure which could possibly belong to the threatening contact language. But different from dialect contact, such cases seem to be rare in language contact. Sinner (2005b: 46–48) mentions some possible examples for lexical divergence in Catalan. There is one more sociolinguistic factor worth while mentioning: the type of bilingualism dominant in the speech community. Louden and Page (2005: 1391) write: “[t]he lexicon is the most cognitively salient component of the grammar. Therefore lexical items are more easily borrowed than grammatical morphemes, phonemes or syntactic patterns in casual language contact” (cf. section 3; Bechert and Wildgen 1991: 69; Villena Ponsoda 2005: 314). But Louden and Page (2005: 1391–1392) continue:

Conversely, in stable bilingual situations, the phonological shapes of lexical items are the most salient markers of the code being spoken and are therefore resistant to convergence. Maintenance of the Pennsylvania German lexicon, including Pennsylvania German morpho-phonemic alternations, serves to mark one’s identity as an Old Order sectarian.

Louden (1994: 74) defines a situation of stable bilingualism as a situation where both languages “are acquired sufficiently early and completely”, both languages have “substantial and productive domains of use”, and both languages “enjoy more or less [...] equivalent prestige”. One often finds such a situation (stable bi- or multilingualism, no or little borrowing of phonological features and words, massive convergence of syntax) in *Sprachbund* contexts (Balkans, Kupwar in India) (cf. Bisang in this volume; Louden 1994: 76–79).

## 6. Conclusion

Our partial analysis of Mennonite Low German and some of the case studies mentioned may have convinced the reader that working in specific and well-defined contact situations enables us to compare the restrictive power of structural and sociolinguistic factors on convergence in a meaningful way. The question whether one day we will be able to universally determine absolute values for these factors cannot be answered yet. It may well be that this is not a consequence of incomplete or faulty analyses but of the nature of these factors. They simply might not have any universal value and might be better represented by an approach within the framework of Optimality Theory. Structural and sociolinguistic factors could then be ranked according to their restrictive power for specific contact situations. The ranking of the structural factors would be a function of their interaction within the recipient language and the typological interaction between

the contact languages. Therefore, the ranking would necessarily be language specific and language pair specific, i. e., not universal. The sociolinguistic factors could then be ranked according to their situational strength. Such an approach would not have much explanatory power with regard to single structural or sociolinguistic factors, but could tell us a lot about the interaction of these factors.

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