Article

Feature Borrowing in Language Contact

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Abstract: In this paper, we consider mood selection in embedded clauses by focusing on a German-based minority language, Cimbrian, which is spoken in a northern Italian enclave. Mood selection in Cimbrian relies on the presence of two different complementizers, *az* and *ke* (the latter being borrowed from Romance varieties), each of which selectively require a specific mood. *Az* selects the mood subjunctive in modal sentences introduced by non-factive verbs, whereas *ke* co-occurs with the indicative in purely declarative clauses introduced by factive and semi-factive verbs. However, this binary distribution is challenged in the two following contexts, and it is precisely at this point that feature borrowing comes into play: (i) with the verb *gloam* 'to believe/to think', the expected binary pattern appears (irrealis *az* + subjunctive and the realis *ke* + indicative), but, crucially, a third construction emerges, namely *ke* + subj.; (ii) surprisingly, *az* + subj. displays some 'gaps' in its paradigm, specifically in the first person, which appeared in the data we collected via translation tasks from Italian into Cimbrian. Both phenomena shed light on how language contact works, not in terms of structural borrowing but rather in terms of the transfer of the specific features of a given lexical item.

Keywords: root-embedded word order asymmetry; lexical complementizers; subjuntive mood; Cimbrian syntax; language contact

1. Introduction

Cimbrian is a dialect of Bavarian origin which has lost the well-known Germanic linear V2 restriction allowing more than one constituent on the left of the finite verb (cf. 1):

(1)   [In balt]   [haüt]   [dar pua]   hatt   gesek   in has
       in-the woods   today   the boy   has   seen   the hare
       'In the woods today, the boy saw the hare'.

In the literature devoted to Cimbrian[1] syntax, there is, nevertheless, general agreement regarding the assumption that it still maintains structural V2, i.e., mandatory finite verb movement into the C domain, even after centuries of isolation from the German-speaking area in a Romance environment. This assumption is based on two traditional arguments:[2]

(i)   Subject–finite verb inversion, although this is limited to the pronominal subject:

(2)   a.   Gestarn   in balt   **hatt**=*ar*   nèt   gesek   in   has
             yesterday   in-the wood   has=he.CL   not   seen   the.ACC hare
             'Yesterday, he didn't see the hare in the wood'.
       b.   *Gestarn   in balt   **hatt**   *dar pua*   nèt   gesek   in   has
             yesterday   in-the wood   has   the.NOM boy   not   seen   the.ACC hare

(ii)   Residual asymmetry between the root and the embedded word order pattern, essentially based on the relative order of the negative particle (*nèt*) with respect to the finite verb (Vfin NEG versus NEG Vfin):

(3)   Haüt   **geat**=ar   *nèt*   ka   Trento
      today   go=he.CL   not   to   Tria
      'Today, he doesn't go to Trento'.

(4)   (I speràr),   az=ar   *nèt*   **gea**   ka Tria   haüt
      I hope   that=he.CL not   go.SBJV   to Trento   today
      'I hope that he doesn't go to Trento today'.

Of interest, Cimbrian is characterized by a dual system of lexical complementizers.[3] In fact, Cimbrian presents both a class of low complementizers such as *az* that realize the lower functional field within the C domain, i.e., FinP (see Rizzi 1997), and a second class of higher complementizers that realize the highest portion of the C-domain (let us say SubordP, following Bhatt and Yoon 1991)[4] to which the loanword *ke* belongs to. The most important diagnostic feature to detect the different position of the two classes of complementizers is the asymmetrical word order pattern triggered by *az* as already shown above in (4) and exemplified again in (cf. 6a) in clear contrast to sentences introduced by *ke*, which are characterized by the root word order pattern (cf. 5 with 6b):

(5)   Dar   **geat**   *nèt*   ka   Tria
                 he   go   not   to   Trento
                 'He doesn't go to Trento'.

(6)   a.   (I speràr),   **az**=ar   *nèt*   **gea**   ka Tria
                 I hope   that=he.CL not   go.SBJV   to Trento
                 'I hope that he doesn't go to Trento'.

      b.   (I boaz),   **ke**   dar   **geat**   *nèt*   ka Tria
                 I know   that   he   go   not   to Trento
                 'I know that he doesn't go to Trento'.

The opposition between *az* and *ke* does not simply rely on the maintenance versus the dismantling of the asymmetry between root and embedded word order, but is reinforced by a clear specialization of two lexical items:

-   *az* always requires the subjunctive mood, and typically introduces a declarative clause selected by non-factive (volitional) verbs such as *bölln* 'to want' and non-assertive (affective) verbs such as *speràrn* 'to hope' (see 6a above).
-   *ke* introduces embedded declarative clauses in the indicative mood that are selected by strongly assertive verbs such as *khön* 'to say' or semi-factive (knowledge) verbs such as *bizzan* 'to know' (see 6b above), perceptive verbs such as *seng* 'to see' and weakly assertive (epistemic) ones such as *pensàrn* 'to think'.

The specialization of *az* versus *ke* is extremely interesting with regard to both the way in which the borrowing of functional words first affects the target system (cf. Section 2) and how it could further develop favoring the occurrence of *ke* and hence the gradual dismantling of the root-embedded word order asymmetry. In Section 3, we discuss a potential innovation in the occurrence of *ke* that was produced during the translation tasks by some native speakers which unexpectedly admit *ke* + subjunctive mood; in Section 4, we consider an evident weakness of *az* in connection with the first-person plural in the subjunctive paradigm. In the concluding remarks (cf. Section 5), we emphasize the coherence of our observations with recent assumptions about the relevance of heritage language studies to a theoretical approach to language contact in the bilingual brain and, ultimately, to a theory of language change (see Polinsky and Scontras 2020; Lohndal et al. 2019).

2. The Specialization of *az* versus *ke*

The specialization of *az* versus *ke* per se represents clear evidence of how the borrowing of functional words[5] impacts on the target system from both a structural and a morphological point of view:

A. From a structural point of view:

(i) *az* represents the [-WH] counterpart of [+WH] *ob* 'if' in the introduction of argumental subordinate clauses and competes with finite verb movement with regard to the

same structural position within the C domain; that is, Fin^0. This is completely in line with the well-known German pattern whereby *dass* 'that' and the finite verb compete for the lexicalization of the so-called *linke Satzklammer*; that is, the head of the CP resulting in the root-embedded word order asymmetry.

(ii) *ke* does not compete with *az* with regard to the low C head but enters the Cimbrian Split-C domain lexicalizing its highest portion; that is, SubordP, and requiring the root V2 word order pattern (see also Padovan et al. 2016).[6]

B. From a morphological point of view:

(i) *ke* does not interfere with either the position or the morphology of the finite verb, as the latter displays the default indicative mood and always raises to Fin^0, thus dismantling the root-embedded word order asymmetry (see 4a above).

(ii) *az* always requires the subjunctive mood and inhibits verb movement by reproducing the traditional word order asymmetry displayed by V2 Germanic languages.

The following graphical representation (see Bidese et al. 2013, p. 55) illustrates the structural difference between *az* and *ke*:

(7) a.

CP
Subord   …
Fin   TP
az [+Tense]
[+Mood]

b.

CP
Subord   …
ke
Fin   TP
Vfin
VP
V^0
V
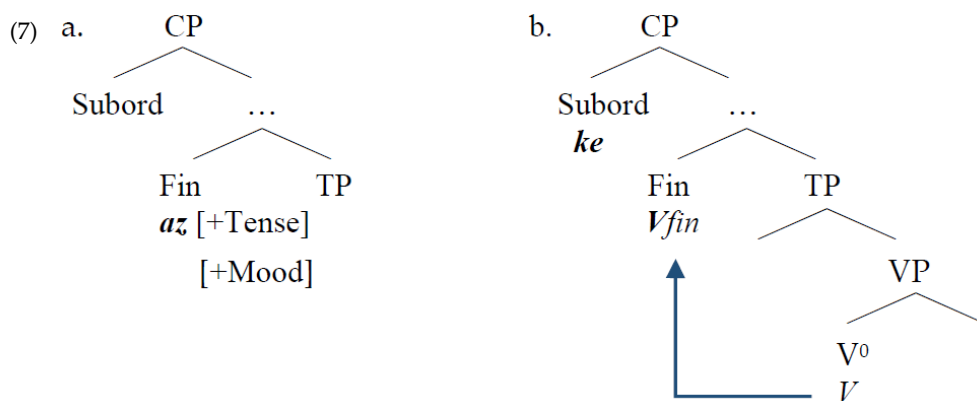
Argumental clauses introduced by *az* imply the selection by a non-factive verb, and the embedding is overtly marked by the following phenomena:

(a) the lexical complementizer;

(b) the morphology of the finite verb, which displays the subjunctive mood; and

(c) the word order pattern; that is, the delayed position of the finite verb (=no verb movement = no subject–verb inversion).

By contrast, argumental clauses introduced by *ke* are generally selected by factive or semi-factive verbs, and embedding is signalled only by the lexical complementizer as there is no word order asymmetry nor subjunctive mood; that is, the finite verb raises to Fin and displays the default indicative value, as in the root declarative clause.

These clear-cut differences between the syntactic behavior of *az* with respect to *ke* force us to assume a double system of complementizers—in line with a large body of literature (see, among others, Grewendorf and Poletto 2009, 2011; Padovan 2011; Bidese et al. 2012, 2014; Padovan et al. 2016). There is, indeed, no historical evidence for a high *az*, as we would coherently expect for a Germanic V2 variety; on the contrary, high complementizers has been assumed for medieval Romance languages (see Wolfe 2019). The insertion of *che* into the Cimbrian C-system must be interpreted as a consequence of the splitting of the C-domain—i.e., the loss of linear V2 which opened the door to the borrowing of the Romance functional word.

The specialization of *ke* with regard to *az* shows that the borrowing of a functional word in the Cimbrian complementizer system resulted in a situation that is uncommon in both the Italian and the German systems, as both rely on a single lexical complementizer (that is, *che—dass*). Nevertheless, the choice of a different lexical complementizer determined by the class of factive versus non-factive verbs is well known in the literature, since it is attested in different language systems.[7]

If our analysis proves to be correct, we can assume that the borrowing of the lexical complementizer *ke* favoured the specialization of the paradigm that relied on a single

lexical complementizer for the introduction of an argumental clause (the lack of a 'high' complementizer; that is, no lexical item in the highest structural position in the C domain), thus necessitating a restructuring of the system via the specialisation of the autochthonous *az*.[8]

The actual situation reveals two signs of a potential diachronic development in favour of *ke* (see Section 3 below) with a parallel reduction of the occurrence of *az* (see Section 4 below).

3. A First Exception to the System: *ke* with the Subjunctive Mood

The data obtained during the translation task from Italian into Cimbrian revealed an interesting exception to the general system discussed in the previous paragraph: On one hand, our informants never connected *az* to the indicative mood; on the other hand, the choice of *ke* could unexpectedly co-occur with a subjunctive verbal form. The first context in which this occurred was with the semi-factive and assertive-epistemic verb *gloam* 'to believe/to think', which can select both the sequences *az* + SUBJV and ke + IND depending on the grade of certainty/veridicality. Let us consider the following examples:[9] (8) shows the stimulus sentence in Italian to be translated into Cimbrian and (9) shows the examples of the translated sentences:

(8) *Italian stimulus sentence*:

	Loro	credono	che	(lui)	sia	arrivato	tardi
	they	believe	that	(he)	be.SBJV	arrived	late

'They believe that he arrived late'.

(9) a.

Sa	gloam	**ke**	dar	iz	gerift	spet	(ke + IND)
they	believe	that	he	is.IND	arrived	late	

b.

Sa	gloam	**az**z=ar		*sai(be)*	gerift	spet	(az + SUBJV)
they	believe	that=he.CL		is.SUBJV	arrived	late	

c.

Sa	gloam	**ke**	dar	*sai(be)*	gerift	spet	**(ke + SUBJV)**
they	believe	that	he	is.SUBJV	arrived	late	

d.

*Sa	gloam	**az**z=ar		iz	gerift	spet	*(az + IND)
they	believe	that=he.CL		is.IND	arrived	late	

A further context in which we elicited the string **ke** + SUBJV was with the negative expression *'z iz nèt khött* 'it is not certain' (see 10), which triggered a non-veridical interpretation:

(10) *Italian stimulus sentence*:

	Non	è	detto	che	Gianni	venga	con	noi
	not	is	said	that	Gianni	come.SUBJV	with	us

'It is not certain that Gianni will come with us'.

(11)

'Z	iz	nèt	khött	**ke**	dar Gianni	*khemm*	pit	üs
it	is	not	said	that	the Gianni	come.SUBJV	with	us

We are aware of the fact that, from a methodological point of view, the collected data are not statistically significant and that translation tasks are an extremely unusual way to collect data pertaining to bilingualism. Nevertheless, this approach allowed us to reproduce a strong 'artificial' attrition in the L1 that favored the borrowing of features. In addition, it should be noted that the data were confirmed by a follow-up questionnaire and that Tyroller (2003, p. 238), who questioned many more speakers, also mentioned that *ke* could select the subjective mood; unfortunately, he did not provide any examples.

The data presented above were notable due to at least three aspects:

(a) The exception to the *az* + SUBJV − *ke* + IND distribution (see 9c and 11 above) only goes in one direction, namely *ke* + SUBJV, but *az* + IND;
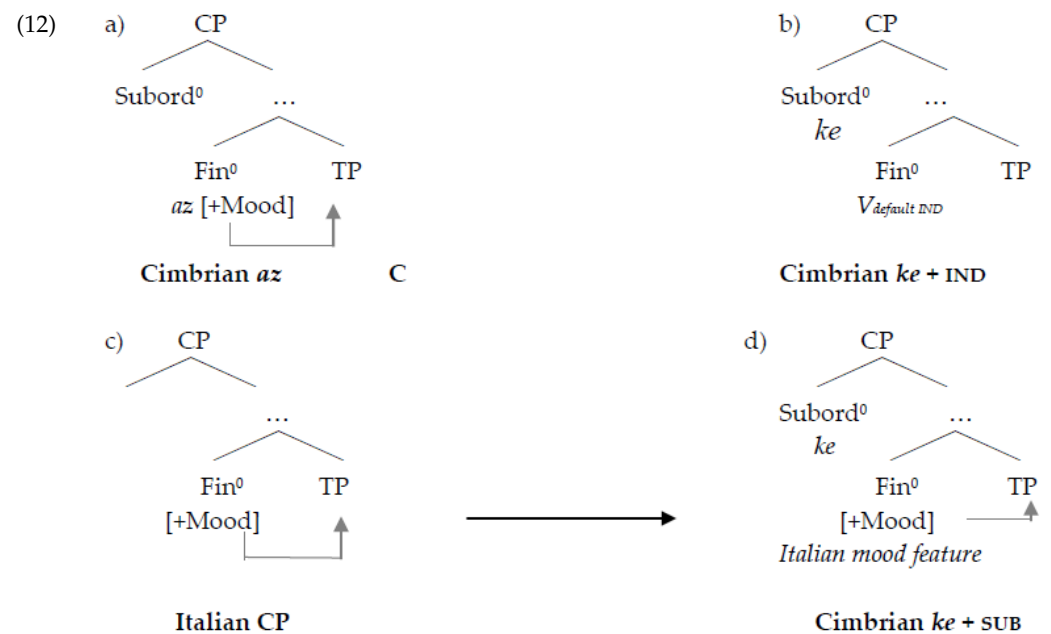
(b) the possibility of combining *ke* with a subjunctive verbal form does not imply a word order variation. The subordinate clauses introduced by *ke* always display a root word order pattern; that is, no asymmetry root versus an embedded clause (see 7c and 9), unlike the sequence *az* + SUBJV; and

(c) in our data, the combination *ke* + SUBJV was only attested in translation tasks using the Italian model sentence and was not present in spontaneous production (but see Tyroller 2003, p. 238).

The innovation concerning the extension of *ke* within the specialization space of *az* is not as unusual at it may seem at first glance. On the contrary, it is coherent with the process of the gradual dismantling of the root versus embedded word order asymmetry, as noted previously in the literature on Cimbrian syntax (see Bidese and Tomaselli 2016), and acts as a further potential step towards the loss of V2. Furthermore, the pressure of Italian on Cimbrian morpho-syntax appeared to follow a precise path:

(i) The borrowing of a functional word, that is, the lexical complementizer *ke*, as a holistic lexical brick with no modal features that realises the highest position in the Cimbrian C domain; and

(ii) the functional feature [+MOOD] enters the system by replacing the default value of an empty (that is, unlexicalized) Fin^0, which is c-commanded by *ke*. These two steps are represented in the following schema (see Bidese et al. 2013):

(12)　a)

```
            CP
           /  \
      Subord⁰   ...
              /    \
           Fin⁰     TP
        az [+Mood]   ↑
           |_____|

        Cimbrian az         C
```

b)

```
            CP
           /  \
      Subord⁰   ...
        ke      /  \
            Fin⁰    TP
         V_default IND

        Cimbrian ke + IND
```

c)

```
            CP
           /  \
         ...    \
              /    \
           Fin⁰     TP
         [+Mood]     ↑
           |_____|

          Italian CP
```

d)

```
            CP
           /  \
      Subord⁰   ...
        ke      /  \
            Fin⁰    TP
         [+Mood]    ↑
      Italian mood feature

        Cimbrian ke + SUB
```

If we are correct, the impact of the model language on the functional C domain in the target language complies with the following requirements:

(a) It affects the highest functional layer, as a new functional word enters the system from above;[10]

(b) the borrowing of functional elements implies the absence of specialization of the paradigm at both the lexical and the morphological level in the target system. In fact, our analysis suggests that

(i) there is no substitution of the lexical element (*ke* instead of *az*), but rather the filling of an empty structural position in the target language. In other words, a new item taken from the Romance dialect is inserted into the Cimbrian C domain in a high 'free' position (SubordP); and

(ii) the change in the feature specification in a functional head only applies to the default value. In other words, the subjunctive mood co-occurring with *ke* realizes a non-selected default value in Fin^0. In fact, we consider the Cimbrian *ke* to be a lexical (that is, semantic) subordinator that does not select the mood feature in Fin^0, thus allowing feature borrowing from the Italian system.

The assumptions in (a) and (b) allowed us to draw our first conclusion: the coexistence of two grammatical systems in the bilingual brain supports the borrowing of abstract features and their recombination in the bilingual mind (see Aboh 2015, p. 5).

4. A Gap in the Paradigm of the Subjunctive Mood: The First-Person Plural

We found an interesting confirmation of what we have developed thus far in a second phenomenon that concerns the embedded sentences selected by the non-factive (or, more precisely, the semi-factive) verb *gloam* 'to believe/to think'. If the embedded verb selected by *gloam* is in the first-person plural, the embedded sentences are always introduced by *ke*. In other words, in our data, the speakers systematically choose *ke* with the first-person plural in the embedded sentence. Consider the following examples:

(13)   *Italian stimulus sentence*:   Credono   che   (noi)   siamo   arrivati   tardi   [+/− realis]
                               believe.3PP   that   we   are   arrived   late
                               'They believe that we arrived late'.

(14)   a.   Sa   gloam   **ke**   bar   *soin*   gerift   spet
           they   believe   that   we   are   arrived   late
      b.   *Sa   gloam   **az=**par   *soin*   gerift   spet
           they   believe   that=we.CL   are   arrived   late

To understand the problem in depth, let us consider the stimulus sentence and the entire paradigm of both possible expected translations: **az** + SUBJV and **ke** + IND (see Bidese et al. 2013, p. 54):

(15)		Credo	di	essere	in ritardo		I	goabe	zo soina			spet
		believe.1PS	to	be	late		I	believe	to be.INF.FL			late
(16)	a.	Credo	che	tu	sia	in ritardo	I	gloabe	az=to	sai(be)st		spet
		believe.1PS	that	you	be.SUBJV	late	I	believe	that=you.CL	be.2S.SUBJV		late
	b.						I	gloabe	ke	du	pist	spet
							I	believe	that	you	are.IND	late
(17)	a.	Credo	che	lui	sia	in ritardo	I	gloabe	azz=ar	sai(be)		spet
		believe.1PS	that	he	be.SUBJV	late	I	believe	that=he.CL	be.3S.SUBJV		late
	b.						I	gloabe	ke	dar	iz	spet
							I	believe	that	he	is.IND	late
(18)	a.	**Credo**	**che**	**noi**	**siamo**	**in ritardo**	*I	gloabe	az=par	soin		spet
		believe.1PS	that	we	be.**IND/SUBJV**	late	I	believe	that=we.CL	be.1P.**IND/SUBJV**		late
	b.						I	**gloabe**	**ke**	**bar**	**soin**	**spet**
							I	believe	that	we	are.IND	late
(19)	a.	Credo	che	voi	siate	in ritardo	I	gloabe	azz=ar	sait		spet
		believe.1PS	that	you	be.SUBJV	late	I	believe	that=you.CL	be.2P.**IND/SUBJV**		late
	b.						I	gloabe	ke	dar	sait	spet
							I	believe	that	you	are.IND	late
(20)	a.	Credo	che	loro	siano	in ritardo	I	gloabe	az=ze	soin		spet
		believe.1PS	that	you	be.SUBJV	late	I	believe	that=they.CL	be.3P.**IND/SUBJV**		late
	b.						I	gloabe	ke	se	soin	spet
							I	believe	that	they	are.IND	late

As it can easily be seen, Italian verb *credo* 'to believe' only selects the complementizer *che* with the subjunctive form which is morphologically different from the indicative one in all persons of the paradigm but the first-person plural. On the other side, Cimbrian has two possibilities depending on whether the action in the embedded clause should be interpreted as [+irrealis] (*az* + subjunctive) or [+realis] (*ke* + indicative). In Cimbrian, the morphological difference between subjunctive and indicative is visible only in the singular persons, and in the plural ones it exhibits syncretic forms. Cimbrian manifests the contrast through the specialization of the complementizers in a very consistent way with one exception. The first-personal plural is the only person in which the subjunctive and indicative forms are homophonous in Italian (for example, *siamo* 'we are.SUBJV/IND', *abbiamo* 'we have.SUBJV/IND', *arriviamo* 'we arrive.SUBJV/IND', *leggiamo* 'we read.SUBJV/IND' and *finiamo* 'we finish.SUBJV/IND'). This is the only context in which the Cimbrian complementizer system exhibits a 'gap'; that is, the choice of *az* is ruled out and *ke* represents the only possible choice (cf. 16). It should be stressed that the problem is not the homophonous forms in the Cimbrian mood system, in which, actually, all plural forms are syncretic between the indicative and the subjunctive; the real point is the syncretism in Italian, which is exclusively in the first-person plural.[11]

We assume that the exclusion of *az* in the first-person plural depends on the choice of IND induced by homophony in Italian. In other words, the lack of SUBJV was contact induced in the grammar of our bilingual speakers who assumed these homophonous verbal forms to be a 'default IND', thus forcing the choice of *ke*, as represented in the following schema (see Bidese et al. 2013, p. 56):

(21)　a.

IND

siamo　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*che*　(Italian 1st pers. plur.)

SUBJV

b.

IND　　　　　　*ke*

soin　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Cimbrian 1st pers. plur.)

~~SUBJV~~　　　　　　*az*
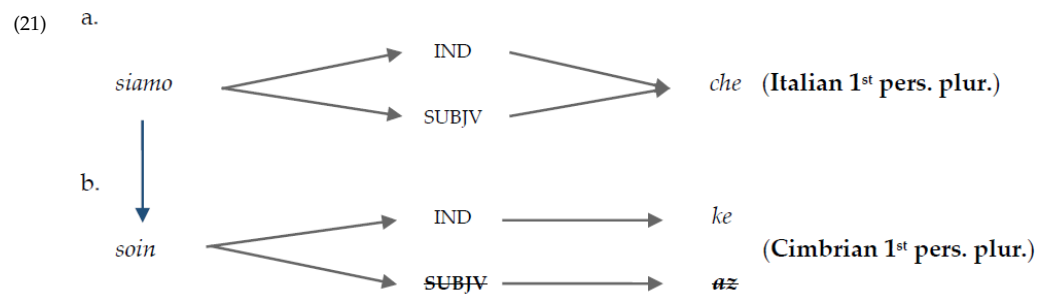
The notion of 'default' was revealed to be crucial once again, despite its formal definition not yet having been provided.

In the translation task, the influence of *che* in the model language was the indirect result of the morphological homophony of the suffix in the first-person plural. Of the two morphological values, the indicative exponent prevails leading to the logical selection of the appropriate lexical complementizer, which is *ke* as opposed to *az*, which is the specialized form for the subjunctive mood.

5. Conclusions

Cimbrian is a German(ic) variety that has been spoken in isolation in a geographical and linguistic Romance-language context for centuries; furthermore, the number of its native speakers has decreased dramatically in recent decades. In fact, it is included in the list of 'definitely endangered' languages (see Moseley 2010, p. 24). Its status as a heritage language is not entirely canonical because a larger community that maintains this variety (or rather its historical evolution) in a different geographical area does not exist, as is the case for the native varieties spoken by immigrants, nor is there a standard variety for reference. In fact, the process that resulted in Standard German followed the Cimbrian settlements in the north-eastern Italian regions by at least three centuries.

Nevertheless, Cimbrian complies fully with the three fundamental aspects of heritage languages on which there is general agreement in the scientific literature (see Lohndal et al. 2019, p. 4):

A. Heritage speakers are minority language speakers in a majority language environment. In this regard, Cimbrian is a severely endangered minority language of Germanic origin that is spoken in northern Italy.

B. Heritage speakers are bilingual. This is also true for Cimbrian, as all Cimbrian speakers have full competence in both the Italian dialect of the surrounding environment and in Standard Italian, which is the language of school education.

C. By the time they are adults, heritage speakers tend to be dominant, or more proficient (in a productive way) in the language of their larger national community.

The results of our analysis of the Cimbrian complementizer system support this and provide new insights into the following theoretical generalizations about stable and vulnerable domains in language contact situations in terms of multilingual competence (see the surveys proposed and discussed by Polinsky and Scontras 2020 and Lohndal et al. 2019, among others):

(i)　Syntactic knowledge, particularly the knowledge of phrase structure and word order, appears to be more resilient to incomplete acquisition under reduced input conditions than is inflectional morphology. In other words, the structure of the C domain is not only maintained, but is even enriched due to the pressure of the model language. In fact, the borrowing of the lexical complementizer *ke* resulted in an innovation within the Cimbrian system that is not found in either Italian or German, namely a specialized introduction for embedded clauses selected by factive versus non-factive verbs; furthermore, an embedded sentence introduced by *ke* does not manifest root-embedded asymmetry, but maintains the root word order pattern characterized by structural V2.

(ii) The relative stability of syntactic features compared to morpho-phonological exponents. Our research revealed that the feature characterization of C as [+Fin], [+Mood] was definitely more stable than were the corresponding morpho-phonological exponents (subjunctive versus indicative)

(iii) A prevalence for 'defaults'; that is, the prevalence of the indicative mood with respect to the subjunctive mood and the dismantling of the root versus embedded word order asymmetry in favor of the root word order pattern.

Even if the formal definitions of crucial notions such as 'default' and 'unmarked' are still far from being determined, it seems clear that this theoretical question will find an answer precisely in the test ground of language contact situations that manifest a sufficient degree of both complexity and transparency.

Notes

1 Tyroller (2003), Bidese (2004), Panieri et al. (2006), and Bidese (2021), among others, provided a general introduction to the formation of the Cimbrian language-islands in the north-eastern Alps and to the main linguistic features of Cimbrian.

2 See, amongst others, Grewendorf and Poletto (2011), Bidese and Tomaselli (2018), and Bidese et al. (2020).

3 Again, we refer to a large amount of research on this topic. In particular, see Grewendorf and Poletto (2009, 2011), Padovan (2011), Bidese et al. (2012, 2014), Padovan et al. (2016), Bidese and Tomaselli (2016), and Bidese (2017).

4 We follow the proposal by Grewendorf and Poletto (2011, based on Bhatt and Yoon 1991), who differentiated between complementizers that act as indicators of mood, such as the Cimbrian *az* 'that', and complementizers that act as pure subordinators (see Grewendorf and Poletto 2011, p. 318, Note 10 and Bidese 2017).

5 More precisely, we should describe the borrowing of functional words in terms of lexicalization or spelling out of the highest structural position of the Cimbrian C-domain by a lexical item taken from Italian functional lexicon. What matters to us is that the transfer of functional words does not imply the borrowing of a chunk of structure, but it works just like a filler of a new position created by the internal development of the language.

6 In this sense, we assume that the functional loanword *ke* enter the system 'from above' into the Cimbrian clause spine, affecting the highest portion of the C-domain. This assumption is supported by several facts, already discussed.

7 For example, this is the case in the Salentino dialect, which uses the complementizer *ca* + IND in declarative or epistemic contexts and *cu* + SUBJV in modal contexts (see Calabrese 1993; Damonte 2010). The same phenomenon can be found in southern Calabrian dialects (*ca* versus *mu/ma/mi*; see Rohlfs 1969, § 786a and Trumper and Rizzi 1985), as well as in some other southern Italian varieties (see Ledgeway 2004, 2005, 2007). A differentiation between declarative and volitional contexts and complementizer selection has also been identified in Romanian (see Farkas 1992), Albanian, Bulgarian (see Krapova 2010; Metzeltin 2016, p. 157), and Greek (see Giannakidou 1998, 2009, 2013). For a general overview of different complementizers depending on factive versus non-factive (modal) predicates in Slavonic, see Hansen et al. (2016).

8   The acquisition of embedded clauses in Italian–German bilingual children displays a similar phenomenon. Traute Taeschner's (1983) study of her four- and five-year-old daughters showed that bilingual children produced the first embedded clauses in German earlier than did corresponding monolingual children, approximately at the same time as in Italian, but in the 'wrong' order; that is, with the root word order pattern: the lexical complementizer *dass* 'that' was used to introduce a V2 clause allowing subject–finite verb inversion. The correct asymmetrical word order, that is the final position of the finite verb, appeared later than it did in monolingual children, who apparently produce embedded clauses with the correct word order from the first attestations. In other words, the contact with Italian in the bilingual brain fills in a 'gap' in the process of acquiring German (characterized by a late maturation of the embedded structure) with a temporary innovation that will be dismissed at the appropriate acquisition stage (for a discussion of the data, see Alessandra; Carpene 1999).

9   The empirical data have been already published and discussed in detail in Bidese et al. (2013). We refer to this study for further explanations; also see Bidese (2017, pp. 143–45).

10 An anonymous reviewer notes that it is rather stipulative to assume that the complementizer *che* enters the Cimbrian system without a mood feature resulting in default indicative marking as in (10b), whereas only later on the mood feature of the Italian system is imported (cf. 10d), and asks for evidence for such a stepwise process instead of a single transfer of *che* plus subjunctive from the Italian system into the Cimbrian one. Let us put it more precisely in the following way: the evidence for this stepwise assumption is based on the fact that the verbs selected by *ke* in Cimbrian are only factive or semi-factive and that they are only compatible with the default (not selected/ not specified) value. On the contrary, *che* in Italian selects either indicative mood with factive verbs or subjunctive with non-factive verbs; when *che* enters the Cimbrian C-domain it specializes for the introduction of embedded clauses selected by factive verbs. Later on [+subjunctive] is imported as mood feature (cf. 12d) under the pressure of Italian (cf. 12c) in translation tasks which involve non-factive verb plus *ke* plus subjunctive, violating the Cimbrian 'specialized' system (cf. 12a,b).

11 An anonymous reviewer surmised that the Cimbrian speaker translated the sentence using the complementizer *ke* since only this complementizer is compatible with both indicative and subjunctive forms; hence, s/he believes that these data do not indicate any deep property or change in the Cimbrian system, but simply constitute a conscious decision in the translation task. We totally refuse this interpretation. The complementizer *ke* is not compatible with both mood forms, but only with the indicative one. The syncretic interpretation is present only in Italian. The deletion of the sentence with *az* in the first-person plural (cf. 18) is rather induced by the attrition with Italian during the translation task in the bilingual mind/brain of the speakers. It shows, nevertheless, in which direction the change of the Cimbrian system may evolve, namely, expanding the domain of *ke* with respect to *az* and spreading the symmetric word order. In fact, we never find *az* plus indicative. Remember that *ke* introduces a clause that does not display word order asymmetry with the root clause; hence, its expansion to subjunctive and perhaps non-factive verbs reduces the specialization space of *az*, weakening the whole V2 system, as root-embedded asymmetry is one of the fundamental correlates of the V2 phenomenon.

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