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Spanish-English contact in the Falkland Islands: an ethnographic approach to loanwords & place names

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Summary

This dissertation provides a thorough description of the lexical outcomes of the contact between the arguably young American Spanish and the youngest variety of Southern Hemisphere Englishes, thus closing a gap in the literature on Spanish and English as contact languages. The study is confined to the lexical sphere since unlike other contact situations between these languages the contact has only reached early stages.

Today, English is the most used language in the Falkland Islands, however, Spanish was also spoken in the 19th century when beef livestock farming was one of the economic engines of the Islands. Such businesses used to be managed by *gauchos* from South America, and their presence is still evident in the lexicon of Falkland Islands English. In order to understand the socio-historical context of the Islands, Chapter 2 takes us back to the 18th century, when Bougainville took livestock animals to the Falklands (Strange, 1973) and explains how almost a century later, Lafone, a businessman, and the British Crown exploited cattle with the help of Spanish-speaking people from the River Plate region (Beccaceci, 2017). Such enterprises set up the beginning of a language contact arena between English and Spanish. Falkland Islands vernacular is regarded as the result of dialect contact only, which entails an exception compared to the other colonial Englishes (Trudgill, 2004). However, a somehow neglected or unknown aspect of its history has been its contact with Spanish. This thesis aims to amend its contact history and demonstrate that contact with Spanish has played its part in the shaping of the archipelago's official language. I resort to a range of sources, i.e., archival research, literature reviews, and ethnographic fieldwork.

Spanish-English contact in the Falklands has left mainly two linguistic products: loanwords and place names. Concerning the latter, it has been argued that no Spanish toponymic inventory is used in the Falkland Islands (Woodman, 2016). Chapter 3 delves into how maps do attest to the presence of several Spanish names. The existence of these place names reflects the history of the area. Even though the Falklands currently host an English-speaking community, the Islands have a long history of Spanish-speaking settlers. The former Spanish administration as well as contact with 19th-century Spanish-speaking *gauchos* left quite a few Hispanic toponyms. Mostly coined after 1833, these toponyms collectively reflect the need for orientation, delimitation, and land management for livestock. However, there is another group of Spanish place names that is not used in the Islands. These toponyms are partly a result of the ongoing Argentinian claim of sovereignty over the Falklands. This thesis accounts for the existence of Spanish place names used locally to refer to the Islands and presents a novel classification system for the Spanish-language toponymic inventories of the Falklands into *Gaucha*-heritage and Argentinian. Chapter 4, follows with an analysis of the second

group. Argentina has assigned the archipelago different names than those used in the Islands. Place naming phenomena like this one have not received much attention. No one has examined place naming in the Falklands within the framework of critical toponomastics nor have they looked into language attitudes. This thesis is a preliminary attempt to do so, by looking into the Spanish place names used in Argentinian maps but not in local ones. I resorted to *in situ* interviews, participant observation, and social media data. The analysis suggests that these Argentinian toponyms receive neither official nor societal approval by Islanders, whose attitudinal factors in connection to Argentinian toponyms are negative in obvious connection to an unresolved conflict. On the other hand, American Spanish gaucho toponymy in the Falkland Islands is mostly the result of a former South American gaucho presence, the main workforce when it came to the cattle industry in the Islands. These toponyms had not received exclusive attention yet. Until now they had been only mentioned in gazetteers with reference to their Spanish origin. Chapter 5 looks into how they work; and analyses how Islanders perceive them. This is done under the assumption that studying Islanders' attitudes contributes to revealing historical facts as well as relationships between the Islands and the mainland.

In Chapter 6 a novel methodological approach to the elaboration of loanwords corpora is presented. Loanwords are analysed in terms of their occurrence, frequency, appearance in dictionaries and the semantic fields they have penetrated, attempting to account for the volume of words that Spanish speakers lent to the Islands' English. The findings reveal that Spanish loanwords are mainly -though not exclusively- related to horse tack and horse types. Furthermore, it is clear from the data that most words are tightly connected to gauchos vernacular and not exclusively with their equestrian duties. Chapter 7 focuses on those loanwords that, despite being the result of English and Spanish contact, are originally from autochthonous South American languages. This chapter highlights the relevance of the study of loanwords under the assumption that they can bring to light unsuspected aspects of the types of encounters between immigrants, criollos and indigenous people (Ehret, 2010). The Indigenisms are words from the Quechua and Guarani languages found in a corpus presented in Chapter 6 and the local dictionary. This is the first case study on Americanisms in the English spoken in the archipelago, for which methods from anthropology, sociolinguistics and corpus linguistics are employed.

Overall, the studies presented in this dissertation have shown that language contact studies are advantageous when it comes to understanding history and social phenomena. Moreover, studying the contact between English and Spanish in the Falklands, both synchronically and diachronically, allows one to conclude that the products of such contact are mainly constrained to loanwords and toponyms. Moreover, this dissertation has not only been the first to study a South American Spanish variety in contact with a British variety of English, but it has also been the first scholarly work to study Native South American words in a Southern Hemisphere English variety.