

Fafulas, Stephen (ed.). *Amazonian Spanish. Language Contact and Evolution*, 2020. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins. (Issues in Hispanic and Lusophone Linguistics 23)

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The volume unites research on the different varieties of Spanish that have emerged in the Amazon region, which encompasses areas of Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname and French Guiana. To my knowledge, it is the first comprehensive volume focusing specifically on Amazonian Spanish. While the Amazon boasts an impressive amount of linguistic diversity, many of the indigenous languages found within its limits are currently being replaced by Spanish (or Portuguese). As a result, the sociolinguistic landscape of the Amazon is being fundamentally reshaped, and a number of new Spanish varieties with innovative features is emerging. *Amazonian Spanish* aims at documenting this complex linguistic situation by bringing together original contributions from a vast array of fields, including anthropological linguistics, language contact, dialectology and language acquisition. At first glance, the volume seems to include quite heterogeneous works, representing both formal and functional approaches to linguistics. However, the different chapters are very well structured and arranged, so that a really comprehensive picture of Spanish in the Amazon region is provided.

As Stephen Fafulas points out in his rather short, but informative Introduction, the first thematic section (comprising Chapters 1-5) provides an introduction to the linguistic and geographical diversity of the Amazon region as well as the main disciplines and theoretical perspectives included in the subsequent chapters. Chapter 1, by Alexandra Y. Aikhenvald, details the major linguistic families of the Amazon. The chapter reveals that Amazonian Spanish and Portuguese varieties share some strikingly similar outcomes that can be traced back to the original languages of the communities and the imprints of the Spanish and Portuguese colonists who targeted the area. In addition, Aikhenvald discusses the use of evidentials to mark information source. She argues that a pragmatic convention to state the information source, found in numerous Amazonian and Andean varieties of Spanish and stemming from the original languages of the respective regions, accounts for the uses of *dizque* across South America. As an important outlook regarding future research, the chapter highlights the impressive typology of languages in the Amazon which, due to the complex histories of the indigenous populations and the remoteness of the region, are still in need of documentation.

Chapter 2, by Kimberly Geeslin and Travis Evans-Sago, intends to “help orient the reader to the hypotheses, methodologies and discussions contained in the present volume” (p.35). Specifically, it discusses the relation between bilingualism, language contact and SLA, identifying generalizations and key distinctions between these disciplines. The second part is then dedicated to the examination of concrete linguistic phenomena such as direct object pronominal expression. It illustrates diverse outcomes across a range of different types of contact situations which, in turn, “sets the stage for the diverse cases included elsewhere in the volume” (p.44). Although this statement clearly situates the very dense and well informed chapter within the volume, the question of how the fields of research discussed here can benefit from the investigation of Amazonian Spanish could have been addressed a little more explicitly.

Chapter 3, by Manuel Díaz-Campos and Ángel Milla-Muñoz, deals with the origins and major dialectal areas of Spanish in (South) America. Its first part reviews the influence of the settlers in the formation of American Spanish, providing an explanation of present-day heterogeneity among the different varieties of Spanish on the continent. The second part then describes the major dialectal areas in South America as well as their linguistic features, paying particular attention to the influence of aboriginal and African languages. The last part is dedicated to the linguistic features that separate American varieties of Spanish from those of other areas within the Spanish-speaking world. In sum, this is a very rich and valuable chapter on the history of Spanish in America. I would have appreciated a slightly more prominent focus on Amazonian varieties of Spanish and the necessity to study them, though.

Chapter 4, by Colleen M. Fitzgerald, deals with the documentation and revitalization of languages of the Amazon. This is a highly interesting chapter, since the Amazon is at the intersection of various countries, making a thorough study of language policies and legal attitudes towards indigenous populations a challenging task. Fitzgerald presents a model in which language documentation and revitalization serve as distinct components which interact in a productive way. This model, the initial articulation of which is based on North American contexts, is applied to the Amazon context, serving as the basis of discussions of Amazonian case studies of language documentation and revitalization. The last part of the chapter is then dedicated to participatory conceptions of language documentation models. It is argued that documentation and scientific analysis which is made accessible to the respective Amazonian communities can turn into valuable support for communities engaged in revitalization efforts.

Chapter 5, by Scott Lamanna, discusses ethnolinguistic variation as a general framework for understanding Amazonian Spanish. After introducing

ethnicity as a social construct that influences people's perceptions of themselves and others, the chapter discusses the explanatory value of the concept of an ethnolinguistic repertoire (cf. Benor 2010) to account for patterns of variation observed in Amazonian Spanish. In addition, it points out the need to examine the interaction between ethnicity and other relevant social factors. Since the Amazon houses a large variety of languages and ethnicities, this is a fundamental contribution to the volume, as it helps to understand the formation of newly-emerging varieties of Spanish in the respective regions. This includes, as Lamanna points out, a better understanding of how ethnicity-based language variation arises and is used by speakers to index their multifaceted identities.

Chapters 6-10 present five original empirical studies on Spanish in the Amazon. Chapter 6, by Liliana Sánchez and Elisabeth Mayer, studies direct object clitic doubling and differential object marking among bilingual speakers of Shipibo-Spanish and Ashéninka-Perené-Spanish in the Peruvian Amazon. The study shows how typological differences in the case marking systems of the respective substrate languages influence bilingual Spanish varieties. This is an interesting study that clearly reveals bilingual speakers to be able to acquire multiple clitic-related structures.

Chapter 7, by Stephen Fafulas and Ricard Viñas-de-Puig, presents a case study of emerging ethnolinguistic varieties in the Amazon by analyzing some salient morphosyntactic features of *Yagua Spanish*, a contact variety of Spanish spoken in the Amazon. The authors discover a significant occurrence of *leísmo*, null direct objects and non-canonical use of present perfect forms and discuss alternate hypotheses for the sources of these linguistic features, ranging from substrate influence to the importation of Andean Spanish in the Peruvian Amazon. They characterize Yagua Spanish as an ethnolinguistic microvariety belonging to a larger Amazonian Spanish macrolect and reveal that Yagua-dominant bilinguals who learned Spanish as adults show higher rates of non-pan-Latin American forms as compared to Spanish-dominant bilinguals who acquired Spanish earlier in life.

Chapter 8, by Jose Elias-Ulloa, explores the intonational patterns of interrogative sentences in two monolingual varieties of Amazonian Spanish spoken in Peru. The study shows that both varieties display similar intonational contours, although the cities of Pucallpa and Iquitos are geographically separate and the underlying linguistic substrata are different. Elias-Ulloa argues that great migratory movements from the Andes to both Pucallpa and Iquitos can account for the rather striking similarities. The chapter thus concludes that Amazonian Spanish does not always emerge from an intimate contact between Spanish and local Amazonian languages. Apart from the intonational analysis,

what is particularly interesting in this chapter is the reflection on what is implied by the term *Amazonian Spanish*, which, in the case of the two cities discussed here, embodies urban monolingual, rural monolingual and bilingual Amazonian Spanish.

Chapter 9, by Erin O'Rourke, makes an interesting contribution to the question of how bilingual speakers use phonological processes in each of their languages and how one may affect the other in the development of dialects and sociolects. The contribution examines the production of the palatal lateral by bilinguals in the Ecuadorian Amazon, observing the effects of language contact and gender on speakers' productions. It reveals interesting differences between males, who maintain a distinct palatal lateral, and females, who tend to demonstrate delateralization. As potential future developments which require further observation, O'Rourke points out two possible directions: female bilinguals may come to promote the use of *yeísmo* as a more pan-Hispanic trait in Latin American Spanish, and/or males may turn the allophonic depalatalized variant into an indexical feature of their speech.

Last but not least, Chapter 10, by Nicholas Emlen, offers a fascinating ethnographic view of the emerging Spanish in La Convención, a province in the Southern Peruvian Amazon, where ongoing population movements have given rise to a rich trilingual zone that brings together the languages Quechua, Matsigenka and Andean Spanish. Apart from the case study itself, the chapter offers interesting insights into fundamental differences between Andean Spanish, which developed without a major migratory influx in the highlands, and Amazonian varieties of Spanish, which emerged as rather heterogeneous populations migrated and came together with the speakers of different local indigenous languages.

The volume concludes with an inspiring Epilogue by Miguel Rodríguez-Mondoñedo and Stephen Fafulas ("Insights for contact linguistics and future investigations of Spanish in the Amazon region"). This closing chapter summarizes the existing main contributions to Amazonian Spanish phonology, morphosyntax and typology and pinpoints directions for future research on varieties of Amazonian Spanish.

In sum, if the Epilogue states "We have tried to depict the broadest possible scenario with respect to VAS [varieties of Amazonian Spanish] research" (p.294), I would say this goal has been reached. In fact, this book discusses Amazonian Spanish as a fascinating macro-dialect which comprises a multifaceted system of dialects from a variety of language contact situations, including not only Amazonian languages, but also Quechua and Andean Spanish. It goes without saying that one single volume cannot include

contributions on each and every research topic related to Amazonian Spanish, but the chapters united here are well selected. They present primary data collected from different methodologies and language contact situations, discussing both monolingual and bilingual varieties and thus present us with a comprehensive and inspiring picture of current research on Amazonian Spanish from a variety of perspectives. The book also depicts several areas worthy of future investigation. As a researcher from Hispanic Linguistics I would have preferred a little less general background information and a slightly more specific focus on particularities of Amazonian Spanish in some of the chapters which constitute the introductory part (1-5). However, since the book will most probably be welcomed by a range of research fields and disciplines, this is really a minor and probably rather personal concern.

As a matter of fact, what makes this book a particularly valuable contribution is that the authors constantly show how research on the particular varieties of Amazonian Spanish studied here contributes to broader theoretical debates regarding language contact, language identity and language documentation. Therefore, I would recommend the book to any researcher working in the fields of Spanish sociolinguistics, contact linguistics, linguistic anthropology, language acquisition or language variation and change.

## Reference

Benor, Sarah Bunin. 2010. Ethnolinguistic repertoire: Shifting the analytic focus in language and ethnicity. *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 14(2), 159-183.