

Workshop on Judeo-Spanish

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Book of abstracts

Aldina Quintana (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Description of Samokov's Judeo-Spanish vowels, according to Ms. Biografia Arie (1900–1914) by Moise Abraam Arié

The *Biografia Arie* chronicles the history of the Arié family, starting from the arrival of Abram M. Arié in Samokov in 1793 until 1900. Written by Moise Abraam Arié between 1900 and 1914 in Latin characters and generally in French spelling, the text provides an opportunity to analyse the behaviour of vowels in the Judeo-Spanish spoken in Samokov, especially the rise of medial vowels /e, o/ in unstressed positions, a feature that characterised the Judeo-Spanish spoken in the Sephardic communities of western Bulgaria.

In my presentation, I will reconstruct the vowel system of Samokov's Judeo-Spanish and undertake a comprehensive analysis of the contexts where the rise of /e, o/ occurs and those where it is blocked. This analytical approach will allow us to discuss the potential influences of the local variety of Bulgarian on Judeo-Spanish.

Jonas Grünke, Mitko Sabev, Bistra Andreeva, and Christoph Gabriel

(Mainz/Saarbrücken)

The impact of language contact: stress placement in Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish

This contribution aims to deepen previous analyses into BJS prosody (Andreeva et al. 2021; Grünke et al. 2023) by investigating stress placement and syllabic prominence in comparative structures, preverbal negation-clitic sequences, and elative structures on the basis of a new set of semi-spontaneous data recorded from 14 BJS-BG bilingual speakers, 14 mono-lingual speakers of BG, and 6 monolingual speakers of Spanish in 2022–2023 using a dialogue play including these structures. A perceptual judgement analysis of the target items (approx. 500) carried out by four trained phoneticians shows that BJS tends to follow BG in realizing main stress on the comparative particle or the intensifier instead of the adjective (e.g., BJS *MAS fuerte*, BG *PO-silen* vs. Sp. *más FUERte* 'stronger'; BJS *MUY ermozo*, BG *MNOgo hubavo* vs. Sp. *muy boNito* 'very nice') but does not move stress from the negation particle to following object clitics as in BG (BJS *NO lo VImos*, Sp. *NO lo VImos* vs. BG *ne GO viDJAHme* 'we didn't see him'). Since the negation-clitic sequences merely spell out grammatical features, whereas the other constructions also involve semantic/pragmatic components, this result supports the Interface Hypothesis according to which external interfaces are more vulnerable in language contact (Sorace 2011).

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Sandro Sessarego (Austin/Freiburg)

Agreement Variation at the Interface: A Look at Istanbul Judeo-Spanish and the Afro-Andean Dialects of Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia

This paper presents an analysis of gender agreement in Istanbul Judeo-Spanish (IJS) and three little studied Afro-Andean dialects: Chinchano Spanish (Peru), Yungueño Spanish (Bolivia) and Chota Valley Spanish (Ecuador). Data show a variety of DP gender agreement configurations significantly divergent from standard Spanish. A unified account for these phenomena is proposed by combining a quantitative methodology to data collection with a formal approach to data explanation and interpretation.

The provided analysis charts evolution and variation of gender agreement, arguing that the parallel development of gender agreement across these contact varieties can be explained by an approach in which change is driven by social factors (e.g., age, education, mobility, etc.) along paths set by universal properties of grammar (e.g., feature valuation, locality of agreement, gradience of fitness in grammatical development, etc.).

I account for this grammatical evolution by proposing a model of cross-generational contact-induced language transmission that is grounded in current theoretical assumptions on the architecture of the faculty of language, its modularity, and the vulnerability of modular interfaces (Sessarego 2021).

Travis G. Bradley (Davis)

Dissimilation in Diminutive Suffixation: Comparing Judeo-Spanish and Colombian Spanish

Diminutive suffixation in Spanish (e.g. *gatito* ‘kitty’ < *gato* ‘cat’) has received much attention in the morphology-phonology interface literature. This talk examines a dissimilatory alternation between the diminutive suffix allomorphs *ito/a* and *ico/a* (*iko/a*) across two Hispano-Romance varieties. In Judeo-Spanish, the voiceless dorsal stop [k] of default *iko/a* dissimilates to coronal [t] after any dorsal consonant [k,g,gʷ,x,w] in the previous syllable. In Colombian Spanish, the [t] of the default suffix *ito/a* dissimilates to [k] after only an identical syllable-initial [t]. In both varieties, base-final unstressed vowels delete before vowel-initial diminutive suffixes, and stress shifts rightward onto the penultimate syllable of the diminutive word, which must end in *-o* or *-a*. Iterated diminutives convey greater smallness or endearment (e.g. *gatitito* ‘little/beloved kitty’) and show two dissimilation patterns: either [it] and [ik] alternate to avoid adjacent identical syllable onsets, or [it] iterates until alternating with word-final [ik]. Using Optimality Theory, I present an analysis of dissimilation in diminutive suffixation as an interaction among constraints enforcing base-diminutive correspondence, prosodic unmarkedness, similarity avoidance, and allomorph preference. Judeo-Spanish plays a crucial role in increasing our empirical

understanding of typological variation and deserves to have a voice in current phonological theorizing within Romance linguistics.

David Bunis (Jerusalem)

Brief Historical Notes on the Use of Judezmo in Bulgaria, 16th–20th Centuries

In my talk I will briefly touch on the Bulgarian cities which hosted Judezmo speaker communities during the period discussed, and a few of the characteristic features of the dialects used in them. I will offer some notes on the extant primary sources of information on the language in this region, and on the writing systems used in the sources. I will conclude with some general remarks on the state of Judezmo in the communities at the present time.

Frank Salvelsberg and Aldina Quintana (Göttingen/Jerusalem)

The Ibero-Romance Component in Hayyim Vital (1543–1620) and his Sefer ha-Refu’ot

Hayyim Vital (1543–1620) acted as a rabbi in Safed, which was the center of Judaism in his time, in Jerusalem and, from 1594 on, also in Damascus. In his youth, he studied alchemy and was a disciple of the cabalist Yitsḥaq Luria, who has left almost no written work. After Luria's death in 1572, Vital succeeded his master and started to write down everything he had learned from Luria. From 1590, Vital settled in Damascus and started to write his own works, which became famous throughout Judaism after his death.

One of his writings is the *Sefer ha-Refu’ot* ('Book of Medicines'), whose 154-folio manuscript from about 1615 is held today in the Ben-Zvi Library in Jerusalem and was firstly edited in its entirety in 2010. From the book we know that Hayyim Vital was an autodidact in medicine and he mentions many of his sources stemming from the *Fachliteratur* of his time but does not disdain folk medicine.

His work is written in Hebrew and contains numerous terms for metals, minerals, and drugs, mostly in Hebrew, too. But the Hebrew terminology seems to have not yet been well established so that, in several cases, these Hebrew terms are glossed by equivalents in other languages or even directly substituted by them. Besides lexical items from other autochthonous languages of the region, such as Arabic and Greek, Vital's work contains a large number of Romance, i.e. primarily Ibero-Romance, elements.

This (Ibero-)Romance component of the first two chapters of the *Sefer ha-Refu’ot* will be introduced and discussed in our talk. On the one hand, we will deal with the identification of these foreign terms in Hebrew spelling and their interpretation in relation to linguistic variation and diachronic stratification. On the other hand, we will discuss in which degree the (Ibero-)Romance component is integrated into the Hebrew text and whether it can be considered part of the common terminology of science in Levantine Sephardic Judaism or (adapted) transfers from the sources Vital consulted.

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Marco García García and Javier Caro Reina (Cologne)
Differential Object Marking in Istanbul Judeo-Spanish

Differential object marking (DOM) is a morphosyntactic phenomenon that restricts morphological marking to a subclass of direct objects. For example, in standard Spanish the human definite direct object *la mujer* is *a*-marked (*Veo a la mujer* ‘I see the woman’) while the inanimate definite direct object *la película* is unmarked (*Veo la película* ‘I see the film’). DOM depends on both nominal (animacy, definiteness) and verbal (agentivity, affectivity, telicity) factors (among others, García García 2018). This phenomenon has been studied from both a diachronic and a synchronic perspective. While the morphosyntax of classical Judeo-Spanish has been analysed with respect to archaism and innovation (García Moreno 2006), DOM has not received much attention. Building on diachronic studies devoted to DOM in 16th century Spanish (Laca 2006; Romero Heredero 2022), we will analyse DOM in classical Judeo-Spanish on the basis of the historical corpus CORHIJE focusing on the Istanbul variety. The diachronic study will be accompanied by a synchronic study based on the Wagner Corpus and the newspaper supplement *El Amaneser*. The findings will enable us to observe whether DOM represents an archaic feature or whether it underwent language change. In this case, we will address the question of whether this evolution obeys language-internal factors, as in Peninsular Spanish, or whether it is a consequence of contact with Turkish, which also exhibits DOM, albeit depending on different conditions.

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Susann Fischer, Jorge Vega Vilanova, Tania Avgustinova, and Diana Klüh

(Hamburg/Saarbrücken)

Language contact effects on the word order of Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish speakers

The last generation of Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish speakers have learnt the language under very difficult conditions. This led to an acceleration of language change concerning phenomena that were previously only incipient. Even constructions that have shown a high level of stability over the five centuries of intensive language contact with Bulgarian are now showing signs of change. In this talk, we will address the question of whether contact languages play a role in this process, and if so, how it affects the outcome. More specifically, we will analyse word order in Judeo-Spanish and Bulgarian. Our data shows that Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish, has been developing a stricter word order during the last generations, even though the contact language Bulgarian displays a rather free word-order, depending on information structure. Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish speakers show a tendency towards producing SVO sentences, disliking verb-initial sentences (which are however common in the speech of monolingual Bulgarian speakers). Bulgarian Judeo-Spanish speakers either place subjects or other constituents (e.g. adverbs) in front of the finite verb, thus giving it the flavour of a V2 order. It needs to be clarified whether all interface phenomena are equally vulnerable – in our case, however, it seems that the influence of Bulgarian on word-order is only marginal.

Brechtje Post, Laura Wright, Ioanna Sitaridou, and Linda Fisher (Cambridge)

Language loss: Llanito

Many of Gibraltar's c. 33K nationals speak the traditional mother tongue known locally as Llanito (also Yanito), which has multilingual and centuries-old roots. Although this contact language has its main base in Andalusian Spanish, it also shows 'un-Spanish' syntactic, morphological, phonological and prosodic features and much lexical borrowing from English, Hakatia, Genoese, Menorcan Catalan, Portuguese, Maltese, and Darija Arabic.

A few older Gibraltarians only speak Llanito, but many adults codeswitch between Llanito and English, and many young Gibraltarians are English-predominant or speak only English. In other words, we can observe real-time cross-generational language shift. While Llanito is held in low social esteem – which is arguably accelerating its demise – its importance to Gibraltar's culture and identity is increasingly gaining attention amongst media and politicians, in part due to the publicity generated as a result of our intervention. In this talk, we will outline the objectives of the Llanito project, which is currently still very much in its infancy: to describe and revitalise the language, and to raise awareness of Llanito's origins and its value for Gibraltar and its international partners. We will first present a sketch of the wider historical and contemporary context of the linguistic situation

in Gibraltar, followed by a preliminary analysis of some of Llanito's unique linguistic features based on the limited resources we have been able to build up so far.

Christian Liebl (Wien)

Judeo-Spanish and the Phonograph

Established 125 years ago, the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna is the oldest sound archive in the world. Its Historical Collections (1899–1950), inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register, also comprise unique recordings in Judeo-Spanish, which came about in the course of three different "expeditions".

Between 1908 and 1909, Austrian linguist Julius Subak carried out phonographic field research among several Sephardic communities throughout the Balkans, making a total of 15 recordings, chiefly of poems and *romances*. In 1927, on the other hand, American scholar Max A. Luria focused solely on the dialect of Monastir (Bitola), which resulted in 26 recordings, including numerous *konsežas*. And further east, Abraham Zvi Idelsohn's investigation of the liturgical traditions of the Jews of Jerusalem (1911–1913) also yielded two songs in Judeo-Spanish.

The presentation (with audio samples) aims at giving an overview of these – already published – recordings. In addition, there will be a brief report on work in progress, which seems to have unearthed an even older (or perhaps the earliest?) non-commercial recording of Judeo-Spanish.