Contact-induced grammaticalization of a Spanish periphrastic possessive
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Redundant periphrastic possessives (su casa de Alberto 'his house of Albert'; Heine 1997) appear as a minority pattern in pan-Hispanic Spanish used in third person to disambiguate the possessor. In Mexican and Andean Spanish, however, this construction occurs as a majority variant in contexts without ambiguity. While in Mexican Spanish the preference is for third-person kinship relationships (Company 2001; Huerta 2009), in Peruvian Andean Spanish it appears in third and first person, and with any combination of animate and inanimate referents and type of alienability relationship.

In the Andean region, Spanish has been in contact with Andean languages (mainly Quechua) since the creation of the Viceroyalty of New Castile in the early 16th century. The social ecology of this region has gone through major changes in the 20th century due to internal population movements derived from socio-economic and political events. As urbanization has risen in Peru to 73% in 2010 (ECLAC 2011), Spanish has spread in the population, and Quechua is now more frequently spoken in urban areas, especially in the Andean cities. In non-Andean areas (such as in the Peruvian capital), Andean and non-Andean varieties of Spanish are in intense contact as well.

Comparison of three varieties of Spanish – second-language and native varieties of Andean Spanish, and a non-Andean variety of Spanish (the educated Peruvian norm) – suggests that the this possessive construction has further grammaticalized in Andean Spanish, differentiating itself from the grammaticalized use found in Mexican Spanish (cf. Huerta 2009). The grammaticalization of the possessive periphrasis is discussed in reference to the weakening of the genitive meaning of de and the concept of (in)alienability, triggered by its contact with Andean languages (cf. Heine and Kuteva 2005:45). (In)alienability is flexible in Quechua, and Quechua marks possession with a genitive marker after the possessor and a possessive marker after the possessed regardless of animacy.

(1) tura-y-pa wawa-n Lit.: 'his child of my brother'
brother-POSS.1-GEN child-POSS.3

(2) mama-yki-q manqa-n Lit.: 'her pot of my mother'
mother-POSS.2-GEN pot-POSS.3

(3) kuntu-q unu-n Lit.: 'POSS water of the pond'
pond-GEN water-POSS.3

Possible explanations for the origin of this change and the resulting semantic distinctions that have emerged in the possessive constructions in Andean Spanish are explored. The diffusion of this construction as a majority pattern in Andean Spanish and in other varieties of Peruvian Spanish is discussed in terms of the changing ecologies in the region and processes of glocalization.