

## GUARANI AND SPANISH DIMINUTIVE USE IN PARAGUYAN TABLOIDS\*

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Abstract: Paraguay is a highly bilingual country, with Spanish/Guarani bilingualism at 90%. However, the use of Guarani in urban areas is decreasing. Newspapers continue to be a source of both Spanish and Guarani in daily urban life. Investigating a Paraguayan tabloid newspaper allows us to determine the contexts in which Guarani and Spanish diminutives are used. Root language and class, animacy, and the type of newspaper article help provide conclusions about Paraguayan society in general and its sociolinguistic use of the native language of Guarani.

### 1. Introduction

With more than 90 percent of the population bilingual (Zimmerman 2004) and 95 percent of mixed race (BBC 11.3.09), Paraguay has achieved two statistics that no other country in the Americas has been able to reach. Guarani is the only Amerindian language that is spoken by a majority of a country's population (Zimmerman 2004). However, the use of Guarani in urban areas is decreasing, even in the areas of life traditionally reserved for Guarani: in the home (Choi 2005a). Newspapers continue to be a source of both Spanish and Guarani in daily urban life. While the elite press is only published in Spanish, the popular newspapers and tabloids provide many examples of Guarani. One of the common characteristics seen in this type of press is the use of Guarani diminutives.

Traditionally, writing has been considered more linguistically conservative than speech. When certain linguistic characteristics appear in written sources, they are understood to be, or have been, a characteristic of the spoken language. It follows, then, that linguistic changes appear first in speech. In order to be expressed in written text, a characteristic needs to occupy an established and fixed place in spoken discourse. The use of Guarani diminutives in a source that is published, such as a tabloid newspaper that is widely distributed throughout Asunción, the capital city of Paraguay and the home to 30% of the country's population (UNData), indicates certain linguistic habits that have been accepted by its readers, as well as characteristics about the speech of the country's population in general.

This investigation searches for an explanation for the use of Guarani diminutives in certain contexts and the use of Spanish diminutives in others. Morphosyntactic explanations do not always provide all of the information about the use of a variable. Lexical choices, the type of article, and the newspaper investigated are also important details in determining the reasons for the use of Guarani and Spanish diminutives. All of these factors combine to provide conclusions about society in general and its use of the native language. What do Guarani diminutives in so-called 'yellow journalism' tell us about Paraguayan culture, and Guarani's place in it? Specifically, what this study investigates is:

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1) In what linguistic contexts are Guarani diminutives used? Are these contexts different than the contexts in which Spanish diminutives are used?

2) What aspects of Paraguayan life show a notable use of Guarani diminutives? What does this tell us about the sociolinguistic contexts in which they are used? How does this inform us about Paraguayan society and its use of Guarani?

The first question is examined via a search for Guarani and Spanish diminutives and their morphosyntactic, lexical, and semantic comparison. In addition to the distinction between Guarani and Spanish as the word's root language, an explanation of the most common words that appear with different diminutives and their semantic characteristics, such as animacy, will help to reach conclusions for this question. The second question is approached from the analysis of the section of the newspaper in which the diminutives are used.

## 2. Diminutives in Spanish and Guarani

The suffixes *-i* and *-mi* are used as diminutives in Guarani. Examples (1) and (2) illustrate their use.<sup>1</sup>

(1) mitã -mi  
child -DIM  
'little child'

(2) yvyra -i  
tree -DIM  
'little tree'

In Paraguay, the Spanish diminutive is expressed via the forms *-ito*, *-ita*, *-itos*, *-itas*, *-cito*, *-cita*, *-citos*, *-citas*. Any of these forms can indicate, in addition to a diminutive meaning, an affective meaning, or solidarity toward the interlocutor. It can also communicate an ironic tone. Examples of these uses are seen in (3), (4), and (5), respectively.

(3) perr -ito  
dog -DIM  
'little dog' (size use; from Krivoshein de Canese & Acosta Alcaraz, 2007:115).

(4) ¡Pobre -cito!  
poor -DIM  
'Poor thing!' (affective use; from Butt & Benjamin 2004:550-552)

(5) el cerebr -ito  
The brain -DIM  
'The huge brain,' lit. 'the small brain' (ironic use)

An affective use of Guarani diminutives has not previously been documented (Krivoshein de Canese and Acosta Alcaraz 2007), but examples from the corpus used for this study appear to show this use.

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<sup>1</sup> Guarani examples taken from

Spanish diminutives are found on words of various grammatical categories. These can include: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, among others (Butt and Benjamin 2004). Guarani diminutives occur, according to prescriptive grammars, only with nouns (Krivoshein de Canese and Acosta Alcaraz 2007). We will see that in practice, however, a variety of word types carry Guarani diminutives.

### 3. Previous literature

#### 3.1 Attitudes and popular use of Guarani

There is a wide selection of literature on the topic of Guarani use in Paraguay. In the 1960s, Rubin (1968) completed a study based on questionnaire responses given by Paraguayans in order to determine the contexts in which they used Guarani. Rubin's questionnaires were distributed in Itapuamí, a rural village, in order to know about the Guarani use in rural areas, as well as in Luque, a suburb of Asunción, in order to determine its use in an urban community. He found a dichotomy between these two social factors. In very general terms, the situation in the 60s was that Guarani was used more in rural areas, where as Spanish was used more in urban areas. Choi (2005a) reproduces this study, following the same format that Rubin used in Luque forty years before. Luque has been transformed into a much more urban location than it was in the 60s, and Choi suggests that her results reflect an urban situation on the outskirts of the capital district in which Guarani use has decreased in almost all social contexts. In Rubin's study, Guarani was the language used in the home and among friends, in informal situations. At the time of Choi's study, the only context that did not decrease in its use of Guarani is that of an academic context. This is explained by Choi as the result of an increase since the 60s in the teaching of Guarani. Spanish no longer is the only language taught in schools. Choi also found that only two of the four key variables in Rubin's study, Location and Formality of Context, are still significant in determining the language used. The other two variables, Degree of Intimacy and Seriousness of the Situation, no longer were significant. Regardless of their statistical significance, the use of only Spanish did not increase greatly in these contexts. What did increase was the bilingual use of Guarani and Spanish together. That is to say, even though the urban population does not use purely Guarani as much as during the period of Rubin's study, its actual use is being integrated into general communication through code-switching and/or the use of the emerging mixed language called Jopará (Choi 2005a).

Zimmerman (2004) provides a critique of the work of Fasoli-Wörmann about contact and conflict between Spanish and Guarani in Paraguay. Fasoli-Wörmann writes about attitudes, and concludes that Guarani speakers are seen as coming from a rural background, without education, and with a generally inferior status. She brings to light the stigmas that people who speak only Guarani suffer from, regardless of the steps the Paraguayan government has taken towards bilingual education. Whereas before Guarani was favored, the present tendency favors Spanish. Despite the strong stigma against Guarani-only speakers, those who speak Jopará, the mixed Guarani-Spanish language, are not recipients of this stigma. Fasoli-Wörmann states that, unfortunately, in contradiction to what has been said, Paraguayan society is not a bilingual one. Rural life is basically lived in Guarani, while urban life is dominated by Spanish use. The quantity of people who are proficient in both languages is

low. The author does not include people who speak Jopará as bilingual, but does determine that the number of people who speak the mixed language is increasing in urban areas. Without presenting specific statistics, Zimmerman presents the work of Fasoli-Wörmann as a pessimistic position regarding the situation of Guarani in Paraguay.

In another study, Choi (2005b) conducts an investigation in Asunción similar to the one she conducted in Luque, with similar results. There were, however, a few differences. In the part of the city with the densest population, the use of Spanish decreased, bilingualism increased, and Guarani use did not change a significant amount. The author indicates that Guarani is still a spoken language in this location. Although the government is trying to standardize it, and its presence is strong in the education system, written Guarani is not seen in the press. The author states that apart from fixed sections, designed with the expressed purpose of providing a showing of Guarani in the press, “there is a total absence of Guarani in the country’s main newspapers.... publications aimed at the general public are lamentably scarce in this native language” (p. 191). This means that, according to Choi (2005b), there are no national newspapers written in Guarani.

### 3.2 Public use of substrate languages

Regarding the study of public use of Guarani in written formats and/or those transmitted for the Paraguayan public, the literature is lacking. However, studies have been done of this type on marginalized language in other parts of the world.

Rosendal (2009) looked at the public use of the native language of Rwanda in announcements and signs in the capital city Kigali and another city key for the country, Butare. Rwanda has three official languages: Rwanda, French, and English. There has been a very low level of use of the native language by non-governmental sources. Rosendal concludes that the high use of French and English in signs and announcements reflects neither the level of use nor the level of understanding of these languages by the population.

Carvalho (2004) investigated the use of phonetic characteristics according to what is heard on the television in the border region between Uruguay and Brazil. She made a distinction between Uruguayan Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese. Uruguayan Portuguese speakers speak a stigmatized dialect. What is heard on the television is Brazilian Portuguese. Carvalho argues that the phenomenon of palatalization of Uruguayan speech has to do with the contact situation. However, the author concludes that it is not because of purely phonetic reasons that Uruguayans use the variant in question, rather that it is the language attitudes that decide the variant a person will use. If the person believes that the Brazilian dialect is more prestigious, that person will use the language they hear on the television as a model for their speech. This means that the Uruguayans with prestige attitudes about Brazilian Portuguese are moving towards a Brazilian norm, in regard to this variant. Supported by her quantitative analysis and sociolinguistic interviews, the author concludes that it is not the television that is dictating a phonetic change, as was previously believed. It is rather the language attitudes of the population that is allowing the television to influence their speech.

From this brief review of the literature, it is obvious that, while there are studies on the attitudes and use of Guarani in Paraguay, as well as studies on the use of marginalized and stigmatized languages in the press and in other communicative media, there is a hole when it comes to the combination of these two types of studies in Paraguay. As far as the au-

thor has knowledge, there are no studies about the use of Guarani in the Paraguayan press. This investigation contributes to this topic.

#### 4. Methodology

For this investigation, the tabloid newspaper *Crónica* is used. It is distributed in Asunción, the capital city of Paraguay. This genre of written media was selected because of the greater use of Guarani in tabloid publications than in mainstream, national newspapers. *Crónica* is published five days per week and is not distributed on the weekends. Demographic information about the population that reads the newspaper is not available to the public. Not even the identity of the authors of the articles is public knowledge. There are six sections in *Crónica*: *Deportes* (Sports), *Mundo* (World), *Farándula* (Tabloid/Celebrity News), *Mi Dinero* (My Money), *Actualidad* (Local News), and *Tema del día* (Topic of the Day).

The program downloadthemall! was used to download all of the links available on the internet homepage [www.cronica.com.py](http://www.cronica.com.py). 8073 links were obtained, some of which were links to photos, videos, or information other than the newspaper's articles. These links did not affect the results of the study, as they included only images, and did not include text in any language. From all of the links downloaded, 5049 were used. This number includes all articles dated March 3, 2009 to November 4, 2009, with four exceptions, due to broken links.

The concordance program Monoconc was used to search for uses of the two Guarani diminutives (-*i* and -*mi*), and the uses of the four forms of the Spanish diminutive present in Paraguay (-*ito*, -*ita*, -*itos*, -*itas*). The tokens were coded in Microsoft Excel for the following variables:

Language of the diminutive (Spanish or Guarani), according to the form of the diminutive that appeared in the analyzed token. This is the principal variable under investigation here.

Language of the diminutivized word (Spanish or Guarani). The word that carries the diminutive is the part that gives meaning to the token. It is important to know the language to which the diminutive is attached in order to determine if there is a pattern regarding the use of diminutives with other languages or not. The terms 'word' and 'root' are used interchangeably in this paper.

Newspaper Section (*Deportes*, *Mundo*, *Farándula*, *Mi Dinero*, *Actualidad* or *Tema del día*). The titles of the sections refer to the content of their articles in a fairly straightforward manner. The *Deportes* section contains articles about soccer, above all, and other popular sports. *Mundo* contains international news. *Farándula* provides information about celebrities and other news of little international political importance. *Mi Dinero* provides information about the economy, including prices of basic and principal products in the country. *Actualidades* has local news. The *Tema del Día* section presents a daily question or opinion and requests comments, which are logged in another location.

Although all articles in the newspaper vary in terms of length, on average, all of the articles in the newspaper present the same quantity of content. This variable contains the possibility of providing sociolinguistic information by providing information about which topics promote the use of a diminutive of one type over another.

Grammatical Category (noun, adjective, adverb, preposition, numeral). This category is important because it applies the rules provided by the prescriptive grammars described earlier. This variable can help decide if the rules are valid or not, when put to the test. In addition, it helps to be able to determine distinct uses of different types of diminutives.

Animacy (human, animal, ambiguous, inanimate). Animacy has repercussions for the meaning of the diminutive. If one diminutive is used only with animate words and another only with inanimate words, we are able to conclude that the two diminutives have different meanings. Comrie (1989) points out that many languages make an animacy distinction. In terms of morphology, animacy can be an important determinant in explaining the differences between two morphological forms. Regarding Guarani specifically, Gynan (2009) states that animacy is taken into account in the use of direct and indirect object pronouns. However, Comrie also implies that grammatical distinctions along animacy hierarchy lines in themselves are not necessarily related to animacy. Because of this, it is possible that a linguistic characteristic that is unrelated to animacy, such as the selection of a diminutive, can be determined by animacy.

In the 5049 articles analyzed, there were 1,478,431 words. In order to have a random sampling, every fourth token of each variant was extracted, for a total of 745 tokens. Before extracting the random sampling, some words were excluded. Proper nouns and words without clear definitions were not included<sup>2</sup>, due to the inability to know if the suffix served a real diminutive or if it was an established part of the word or proper name. In the end, there were 642 cases of Spanish diminutives, 82 cases of the Guarani diminutive *-i* and 19 cases of the Guarani diminutive *-mi*.

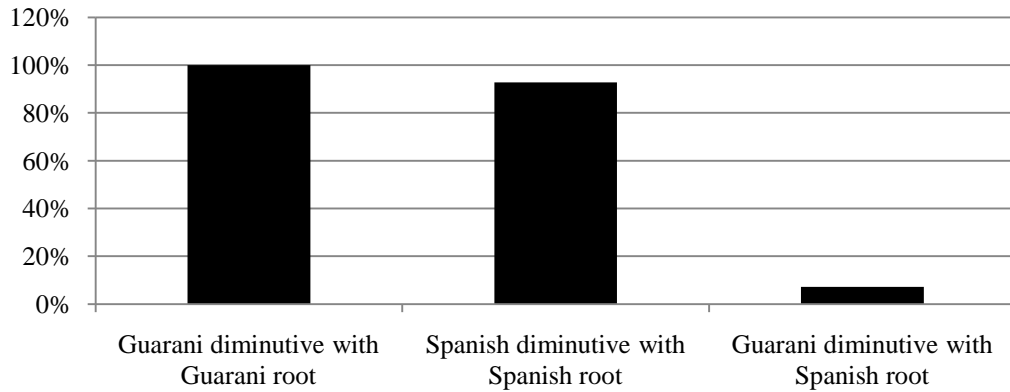
## 5. Results

The function of this investigation is to describe the difference in the use of Guarani versus Spanish diminutives. For this reason, the two Guarani suffixes were analyzed together, as one variable. This modification results in the comparing of the 642 Spanish diminutive tokens with 101 Guarani tokens, using analysis done in Goldvarb.

Diminutives are found mainly with words of the same language. That is, Guarani words have Guarani diminutives, and Spanish words have Spanish diminutives, in general. As can be seen in Graph 1, only 7.2% (n = 50) of the total corpus have Guarani diminutives occurring with Spanish words.

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<sup>2</sup> Some examples of excluded words include *Chaco'i*, *Miami'i*, *mandi'i* (a specific type of fish).



Graph 1. Correlation between language of diminutive and root word

Example (6) shows a Guarani diminutive with a Spanish root. In 45 tokens of a Guarani root word, 100% ( $n = 45$ ) occurred with a Guarani diminutive, such as example (7). In 649 cases of a Spanish root word, 92.8% ( $n = 644$ ) occurred with a Spanish diminutive, such as example (8)<sup>3</sup>. It is worth pointing out that there were zero cases of a Guarani root with a Spanish diminutive.

- (6) Hay un *descuento* -'i si se paga rápido.  
 There is a discount -DIM if it is paid quickly.  
 → 'a small discount'
- (7) Ahora pide reconocimiento como el más *michî* -mi con título  
 Now he is requesting recognition as the small -DIM with title.  
 → 'the smallest (human)'
- (8) La idea es que los *pece* -sitos se reproduzcan a full.  
 The idea is that the fish -DIM reproduce completely.  
 → 'small fish'

Upon analyzing the effects of the Guarani diminutives with the grammatical category of the word, the Preposition, Adverb, and Numeral categories were combined into one variable titled Other. There were 609 total tokens of a Spanish or Guarani diminutive with a noun, 89 with adjectives, and 47 that fell into the Other category. It is this Other category that Goldvarb analysis shows to be most favorable for Guarani diminutives, with a result of .81. Adjectives also favored the Guarani variant, with a level of .54. Nouns, while not favoring Guarani diminutives, were found significant for Spanish diminutives, with a level of .54. That is to say that adjectives, and a group comprised of prepositions, adverbs, and numbers favored the use of a Guarani diminutive while Nouns favored the use of Spanish diminutives.

<sup>3</sup> There were six cases of numerals, all with Guarani diminutives (ex. *el agosto poty está a 500'i el mazo* 'the August Flower costs 500 per bunch'). Since numerals were used, a root language could not be identified. These six added to the 639 cases explained brings us to the total of 645 tokens.

The newspaper section group is statistically significant, with four sections in particular favoring Guarani diminutive use. *Mi Dinero* is the section that most favors their use with a level of .74, with *El Mundo* (.62), *Actualidad* (.61) and *Deportes* (.58) also favoring the Guarani variant. *Tabloid* and *Tema del Día* did not prove favorable for the use of Guarani diminutives. A summary of these numbers is in Table 1. In order to better understand where these numbers come from, other figures are necessary. The total number of tokens in the My Money section is 59, of which 14 (23.7%) occur with a Guarani diminutive. The World section has a total of 33 tokens, six (18.2%) having a Guarani diminutive. Put this way, it is evident that relatively few tokens result in large percentages.

Section of the Newspaper	Goldvarb Results	Total N	N tokens with Guarani dim.	Percentage of Total with Guarani dim.
<b>My Money</b>	0.74	59	14	23.7%
<b>World</b>	0.62	33	6	18.2%
<b>Local News</b>	0.61	247	45	18.2%
<b>Sports</b>	0.58	156	23	14.7%
<b>Topic of the Day</b>	0.40	61	5	8.2%
<b>Tabloid</b>	0.25	189	8	4.2%

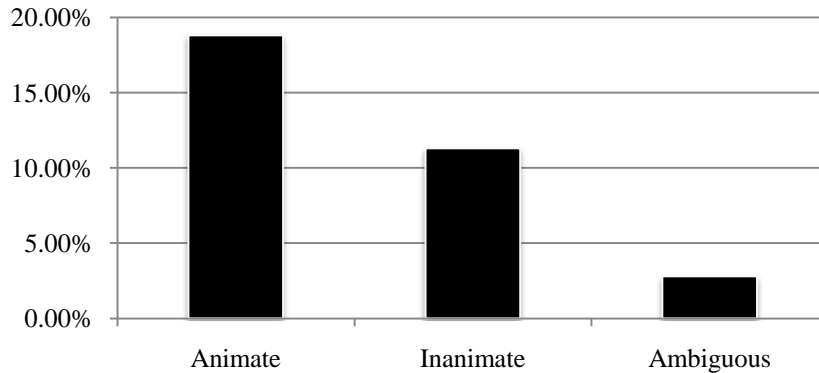
Table 1. Goldvarb results of the variable section of the newspaper, by section

It is important to take specific words and their relative frequencies into account. Given that the My Money and World sections are the ones that most favor Guarani diminutives, it is worth noting that the fourth most common word occurring with a Guarani diminutive is the Spanish word for one thousand: *mil*. In the entire corpus, there are 438 cases of diminutive -*i*. Of these, 8% (n = 27) occur with the word *mil*. Of the 101 tokens analyzed, 10% (n = 10) occur with *mil*. The statistics continue to increase when the tokens from My Money are analyzed separately. From the total of 14 cases of Guarani diminutives in My Money, 29% (n = 4) are with *mil*. Furthermore, of all of the tokens of Guarani diminutives analyzed in this investigation, there are only two words that occur with numerals<sup>4</sup>. Both of these cases are found in the My Money section.

In contrast to the sections of the newspaper that favor Guarani diminutives, the two sections that are found significant for Spanish diminutives are *Tabloid* and *Topic of the Day*, at levels of .76 and .60, respectively. The other four sections were not found significant for Spanish diminutive use.

The other significant group that was coded for was animacy. The distribution of the tokens with a Guarani diminutive is seen in Graph 2, below:

<sup>4</sup> Tokens of Guarani diminutive occurring with the numeral '22' are not included in this statistic. This exclusion is due to the fact that the numeral '22' did not refer to a quantity, as did the other numerals. In these cases, '22' refers to a 22 caliber gun, often referred to, even in English, as 'a 22.'



Graph 2. Percentage of tokens with Guarani diminutives, by animacy

Humans and animals were combined for the analysis into one variable called Animate, and run against the other categories of Inanimate and Ambiguous. Of 266 total Animate tokens, 18.8% ( $n = 50$ ) occurred with a Guarani diminutive. This group favors the use of a Guarani diminutive, with a level of .67. Inanimate tokens with Guarani diminutives occupied 11.3% ( $n = 50$ ) of the total 443 inanimate tokens analyzed in this study. Only one token (2.8%), out of a total of 36 falling into the Ambiguous category, occurred with a Guarani diminutive. Neither the Inanimate nor Ambiguous categories were statistically significant for Guarani diminutives, resulting in their significance for Spanish diminutives.

Again it is useful to return to the most common words in the corpus. The first and second most common words with Guarani diminutives are animate. The Guarani word *mitã* means ‘young person’ and composes 32% ( $n = 112$ ) of the corpus. Another Guarani word, *kure*, meaning ‘pig’ composed 8% ( $n = 28$ ) of the corpus<sup>5</sup>.

## 6. Discussion

The variables coded for in this study provide a lot of information about the differences in the use of Guarani and Spanish diminutives. The differences and similarities are clear through an interpretation of the variables presented here.

It is logical that diminutives appear with words of the same language. However, it also makes sense that 7.2% of the tokens occur with a Spanish root and a Guarani diminutive, while zero percent of the corpus occurs with Guarani roots and Spanish diminutives remains unexplained. In mixed languages of the world, in general, morphology of the substrate language, Guarani in this case, is used with the lexicon of the superstrate language, Spanish here. An example of a mixed language that follows this pattern is Media Lengua, spoken in Ecuador (Muysken 1997). On the other hand, Sanchez (2003), analyzes a superstrate suffix, the Spanish gerund *-ndo*, on substrate lexicon, Quechua roots. The literature, therefore, leads

<sup>5</sup> All of the instances of *kure* in the corpus refer to the sometimes fatal H1N1 virus, or so called ‘Swine Flu’. In Paraguay, the nickname for this virus is *gripe de kure*’i (*gripe* means ‘flu’ in Spanish) or some variation of that. According to flucount.org, as of December 13, 2009, Paraguay had reported 134.67 per million cases of the H1N1 virus. That is, it was a popular topic in the newspapers and, by extension, in the corpus of this investigation.

us to anticipate all combinations of substrate root and suffix with superstrate root and suffix between Guarani and Spanish. However, this is not the case. The substrate influence is a process that is rare at the morphological level, and often occurs only in long and intense contact situations among more than just one group of speakers of different languages (Sankoff 2004). Paraguay's linguistic contact is a strong example of this type of situation, as contact between Guarani and Spanish stretches back more than 400 years. For this reason, it should not be surprising that one of the rare cases of morphological substrate language influence occurs between Guarani and Spanish of Paraguay. It remains, however, unexplained why Guarani roots do not occur with Spanish diminutives.

That a group of a combination of variables be the most favorable in determining the use of a Guarani diminutive provokes more questions than answers. Regardless, when it is noted that in addition to prepositions, adverbs, and numerals, adjectives also favor Guarani diminutives, a pattern can be proposed: that there is no pattern. That is to say that the distribution of Guarani diminutives among word classes other than nouns is random. It appears that all grammatical classes of words except nouns are prone to taking Guarani diminutives, despite the fact that prescriptive grammar descriptions of their 'correct' use dictate that they only be used with nouns.

We see all classes of Spanish words with Spanish diminutives in this corpus. Nevertheless, the fact that nouns favor a Spanish diminutive does not coincide with what is expected according to the prescriptive rules. Butt and Benjamin (2004) state that Spanish diminutives can be used with all classes of words. This indicates that the portion of Spanish data that follows the rule, that is, largely nouns with Spanish diminutives, does not accurately reflect the following of the rule, as the expectation would be that following the rule would provoke various classes of words occurring and favoring a Spanish diminutive. This result is not found. On the contrary, where various classes of words occur and favor a diminutive, that diminutive is in Guarani. This result does not coincide with the prescriptive grammar rules either. The grammar description of Guarani diminutive rules and the actual usage of those diminutives are exactly the opposite of each other. It appears that the descriptions of use may require updating.

Another possible explanation for discordance between prescriptive rules and what is actually used by the population is the influence of Jopará, which is the spoken dialect of a large portion of Paraguayans. It is possible that the Spanish distribution of diminutives has spread to Jopará, become a part of the use of this mixed language, and by association, has become a part of the use of Guarani. Perhaps the distribution of diminutives on all but nouns was acquired by Jopará, and what remained purely Spanish were diminutives with nouns. The other classes may have become used with diminutives in Jopará and, by extension, Guarani, thereby changing the traditional Guarani distribution of diminutives. As little has been done on the morphosyntactic structure of Jopará, the proving or disproving of this hypothesis will be left for future study.

It was not expected that the sections of the newspaper that most favored the use of a less formal and more colloquial language would be the My Money and World sections. One explanation is the perhaps inflated influence of the small number of tokens. Another is the high use of one specific token directly related to matters of money (*mil* 'one thousand'), a distribution that Goldvarb takes care of given that it is designed to take such an effect into consideration. The use of a diminutive may seem illogical in such formal contexts as My Money and World newspaper sections. The articles in these sections are not as long as those

in other sections, nor do they contain as many reader comments, which could influence the data. So, the question remains. Why would diminutives be used with numerals? And when the numerals do have a diminutive, why do they favor a Guarani diminutive, over a Spanish one?

Spanish language intuition is to not use a diminutive with a numeral, while the Guarani distribution we see in the corpus favors the use of a diminutive with a numeral. This difference can be explained when one considers that a diminutive with a numeral is one that only Guarani diminutives have. In the corpus, Spanish diminutives are not found in the same social contexts as where Guarani diminutives are found to be strongly favored. This indicates that their uses are not interchangeable. Guarani diminutives in these cases do not fulfill the same functions as Spanish diminutives. An interesting future study would be to determine what exactly these functions are.

Providing a possible explanation for why animacy is key in determining the use of Guarani versus Spanish diminutives, Comrie (1989) says that often, in the languages of the world, there is no explanation for why animacy has a role in distinguishing linguistic characteristics. Nevertheless, it does play a role. He provides as examples pronouns in Finnish, case system distinctions in Australian aboriginal languages such as Yidiny and Dyirbal, and number distinctions in Chukchi, Mandarin Chinese, and others. It is clear that the use of Guarani diminutives does not fulfill a literal function in all contexts, as there are tokens with an affective function. On the other hand, not all uses are affective. This can be concluded by the wide use of the Guarani diminutive -'i in the nickname for the H1N1 virus, whose infection would not be considered by anyone as desirable.

Affectivity, nonetheless, may be a contributing factor to the explanation of why animacy is so favored in Guarani diminutive use. That animate words favor Guarani diminutives can indicate a strong supposition that animacy coincides with affective meaning. This affective nature of the word provides a link between the morphological depiction of affectiveness, with the use of a diminutive, and the semantic characteristics of the word, being animate. Because Guarani has traditionally been a language used in the house, among friends, and with family in intimate situations, it would not be surprising if the Guarani diminutive turns out to strongly favor an affective meaning, or vice versa. This behavior is as opposed to favoring a Spanish diminutive, because Spanish has been the language traditionally reserved for more formal situations where an affective tone would be inappropriate.

Another explanation can be provided through a study of salience and topicality. Comrie (1989) points out that often the most salient participants in a discourse are of a highly animate nature. Humans tend to pay more attention to humans than to, for example, rocks. Unfortunately, Comrie also warns that determining animacy constraints based on salience lends itself to circular logic, and requires a more in depth analysis, the nature of which is different than the one completed here. Payne (1997:151) draws a parallel between animacy and topicality, stating that "the normal, or most common, situation is for people to choose powerful, dynamic, and controlling entities as topics of communication." Topic and salience were not coded for in this investigation, and therefore any conclusions reached using these as their basis would be purely speculative.

## 7. Conclusions

Guarani diminutives coexist with Spanish diminutives in the Paraguayan bilingual context, revealing different and interesting uses through the medium of yellow journalism, such as is found in *Crónica*. This investigation allows us to provide some answers to the research questions presented.

1) In what linguistic contexts are Guarani diminutives used? Are these contexts different than the contexts in which Spanish diminutives are used?

Guarani diminutives are used in many different contexts. They are favored when occurring with a Guarani root word, a root word of a grammatical class other than noun, when appearing in the newspaper sections My Money, World, Local News, and Sports, and with animate words, be they human or animal. In all of these contexts, Spanish diminutives are not favored. Spanish diminutives instead favor a Spanish root word, a root word that is a noun, when appearing in the Tabloid and Topic of the Day newspaper sections, and with inanimate words. For this reason, it can be concluded that the contexts in which Guarani diminutives occur are different than the contexts in which Spanish diminutives occur.

2) What aspects of Paraguayan life show a notable use of Guarani diminutives? What does this tell us about the sociolinguistic contexts in which they are used? What does this inform us about Paraguayan society and its use of Guarani?

This research question is answered based on the data regarding the sections of the newspaper. Guarani diminutives are found to express various aspects of life: formal and fiscal via My Money, international via World, daily aspects via Local News, and national pastimes via Sports. This suggests that Guarani diminutives occur in many facets of the daily urban life of the Paraguayan reader of *Crónica*. It can be considered a more linguistically conservative characteristic of Guarani than those characteristics that have not yet made their way into the written medium of yellow journalism and are still represented solely in Asunción speech, therefore further informing us that Guarani use in daily Asunción speech is typical.

Previous studies tell us that Guarani is disappearing from the typical Paraguayan's daily routine. We can see, however, that there are characteristics of Guarani in varied aspects of Paraguayan daily life. That one of these aspects is written is further evidence that hope persists for a strong role for Guarani in the future of Paraguay.

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