

Day 1 - 16th April 2026	
8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-9:15	Opening
9:15-10:30	Coffee and Poster Session 1
10:30-11:00	• Tom Rankin, Leah Bauke & Holger Hopp (#67) Priming Residual Verb Second in L1 and L2 English
11:00-11:30	• Chie Nakamura, Suzanne Flynn , Yoichi Miyamoto & Noriaki Yusa (#71) From Lexical to Structural Prediction: Accuracy in Filler-gap Formation Reflects Differences in the Information L2 Learners Rely on During Comprehension
11:30-12:00	• Fred Zenker & Bonnie D. Schwartz (#114) Strength of Wh-island Effects in Subject vs. Object Relatives for L1/L2 English Adults
12:00-12:30	• Reina Mogushi & Yuichi Ono (#66) Incremental Processing Without Early CP Projection: Japanese Learners' Processing of Ambiguous <i>that</i>
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:00	• Xurui Zhang (#27) The Initial State of Third Language Acquisition: What Can Ab Initio Learners' Production Reveal?
14:00-14:30	• Melika Rajabi & Silvina Montrul (Zoom) (#68) Differential Object Marking in Child and Adult Persian Heritage Speakers in the U.S.
14:00-15:00	• Kitaek Kim , Haerim Hwang, Joonhee Kim, Hyunjoo Lee, Yukyung Kim, Jihyeon Baeg & Fred Zenker (#77) Difficulty with 3SG -s in L2 English: A Perceptual Problem, Not a Knowledge Deficit
15:00-15:30	• Johan Liljegren (#115) L1 Effects on Binding and Coreference: L2 learners' Interpretation of Swedish Reflexive and Non-Reflexive Possessives
15:30-16:30	Coffee and Poster Session 2
16:30-17:00	• Aylin Coskun Kunduz & Silvina Montrul (#33) Reactivation of Turkish Morphosyntax in Turkish-American and Turkish-German Returnees
17:00-17:30	• Laura D'Aurizio , Natascha Müller, Francesco Romano & Giada Falcone (#60) The Development of Null Objects in Multilingual Children: Absence of a Clitic Omission Stage in the French and Italian of French-Italian Multilingual Children
17:30-18:30	Keynote Speaker 1: Ayşe Gürel (#K1) What Can Agglutinative Morphology Tell Us about Inflectional Variability in the L2: Evidence from Turkish
19:00-20:00	River Punting Tour
• Main Session; ♦ Session I: Theoretical Foundations; ◆ Session II: Language Learning and Teaching	

Day 1– Poster Session 1 (9:15–10:30)

<p>[#8] Acquisition of the Blocking Effect in L2 Chinese by L1 Japanese Speakers</p> <p align="center"><i>Jun Lyu & Yuhan Liu</i></p>	<p>[#36] Singular <i>they</i> in Second Language (L2) Production: A Feature-based Account</p> <p align="center"><i>Yi Liu & Thomas Hammond</i></p>	<p>[#30] I Can't Get No Native-like Interpretation: Negative Concord in L2-English and L2-Russian</p> <p align="center"><i>Eleanor Sand & Tania Ionin</i></p>
<p>[#42] Retrieval Interference in the Processing of English Subject-Verb Agreement: How Does Discourse Salience Guide Information Retrieval in L2 Processing?</p> <p align="center"><i>Kailun Zhang & Shuo Feng</i></p>	<p>[#52] Negative Inversion at the Syntax-Pragmatics Interface: Evidence from American English Monolinguals to Test Brazilian Portuguese L1 English L2 Bilinguals</p> <p align="center"><i>Candido Oliveira, Krichynah Gandara, Deborah Foucault, Leah Bauke, Luiz Amaral & Tom Roeper</i></p>	<p>[#56] A Longitudinal Study of Development of Verb Placement in L2 and L3 Norwegian</p> <p align="center"><i>Michela Iacorossi, Anne Dahl & Guro Busterud</i></p>
<p>[#64] Underlying Syntactic Representations and L1 Transfer: The Case of L2 Acquisition of English Subject NP Comparatives by L1 Mandarin-L2 English Learners</p> <p align="center"><i>Chun Yan Tung & Kook-Hee Gil</i></p>	<p>[#44] Acceleration and Article Omissions in Multilingual Children: Evidence from L2 French</p> <p align="center"><i>Natascha Müller & Laura D'Aurizio</i></p>	<p>[#62] Gender Assignment and Gender Agreement in Child Spanish in Contact with Zapotec: An Experimental Approach to the Subtle Nature of Crosslinguistic Influence</p> <p align="center"><i>Gladys Cruz Mendoza, Juana Licerias & Ibán Mañas Navarrete</i></p>
<p>[#10] From Perception to Comprehensibility in Spontaneous Speech: Delayed Transfer in High Variability Phonetic Training</p> <p align="center"><i>Mia Moutis</i></p>	<p>[#126] Network Dynamics in L1-L2 French <i>wh</i>-Dependencies Address the Bilingualistics of SLA</p> <p align="center"><i>Laurent Deydts, A. Kate Miller, Mike Iverson, Jih-Ho Cha, Jane Gilbert, Jae Hyun Ahn, Kent Meinert, Ludan Yang, Hongyu Zhang & Qin Li</i></p>	<p>[#57] Does the Multilingual Comparison of Motion Verb Constructions Facilitate Learning? Evidence from a Randomized Controlled Trial in Authentic Spanish Classes</p> <p align="center"><i>Eleni Kanli</i></p>
<p>[#58] Acquiring Japanese Nominative Markers: Interface Transparency in L1-Korean Learners</p> <p align="center"><i>Chika Okada</i></p>	<p>[#133] Strengthening the Interface between Generative SLA Research and Language Teaching: Insights from the UPSKILLS Project</p> <p align="center"><i>Tihana Kraš</i></p>	

Day 1– Poster Session 2 (15:30-16:30)

<p>[#15] Code-Switching in L2 Grammar Acquisition</p> <p><i>Tania Stortini, Gloria Cocchi & Cristina Pierantozzi</i></p>	<p>[#37] L3 Effects in the Acquisition of L2-English Causative Psych Verbs by L1-Thai Speakers</p> <p><i>Vatcharit Chantajinda & Jacee Cho</i></p>	<p>[#38] Second Language Acquisition of Optional Plural Marking in Korean</p> <p><i>Chae Eun Lee & Tania Ionin</i></p>
<p>[#78] Structural Constraints on Non-Coargument Pronoun Interpretation in L2 English</p> <p><i>Wei-Hsin Lo & Chun-Chieh Hsu</i></p>	<p>[#84] Heritage Learner Comprehension of Gapped Relative Clauses in Marathi</p> <p><i>Anupama Reddy & Kamil Deen</i></p>	<p>[#87] Arabic L1 learners' Sensitivity to English Article Misuse in Definite and Indefinite Contexts</p> <p><i>Kholoud Al-Thubaiti</i></p>
<p>[#141] Cross-Linguistic Influence or Universal Semantics: Which Plays the Primary Role in Acquiring Temporal-Aspectual Interactions in Initial-stage L2/L3 Chinese Grammars?</p> <p><i>Yanyu Guo</i></p>	<p>[#110] Overpassivization in L2 English: Investigating L1 Influence with Online and Offline</p> <p><i>Eunsil Kim & Heather Marsden</i></p>	<p>[#129] Microvariation in the Production of Subject Pronouns: Insights from L1 European Portuguese–L2 Spanish</p> <p><i>Alexandra Fiéis, Ana Madeira & Joana Teixeira</i></p>
<p>[#20] What Goes Missing First? - An Error-Profile Study of Italian–English Bilinguals in Milan</p> <p><i>Albina Kildeeva</i></p>	<p>[#132] Improving Bottom-Up Listening Skills in School-Aged English Learners: A Linguistically Informed Intervention Study</p> <p><i>Kateryna Derkach, Sabine Zerbian & Detmar Meurers</i></p>	<p>[#75] Supporting Multilingual Pupils in Northern Ireland</p> <p><i>Christina Sevdali, Raffaella Folli, Shauna McGill & Morgan Macleod</i></p>
<p>[#108] The L2 Acquisition of Wh-in-situ and Wh-ex-situ Reconsidered: Implications for the Role of UG in L2 Acquisition</p> <p><i>Takayuki Kimura</i></p>	<p>[#98] Negative Concord in English: An Eye-Tracking Study of Native and L2 Speakers</p> <p><i>Eloi Puig-Mayenco, Carla Menares Aranciba & Susagna Tubau</i></p>	

Day 2 - 17th April 2026

9:00-9:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marie Schnieders, Katie Von Holzen & Holger Hopp (#118) The Role of Lexical Processing for the Full Conversion of Nouns into Verbs by German Learners of English
9:30-10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amelia Tighe & Tania Ionin (#81) L1 Transfer Effects on Word Order in L2 English Reading
10:00-10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sílvia Perpiñán, Ana Espirito Santo & Rafael Marín (#121) Feature Reassembly in the Acquisition of the Spanish Copular System by Portuguese L2 Learners
10:30-11:30	Coffee and poster Session 3
11:30-12:30	<p>Keynote Speaker 2: Cristóbal Lozano (#K2) How Corpus Data Can Inform about Theoretical Questions in SLA: Triangulating Corpus and Experimental Methods</p>
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-14:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bram Buijckx & Andrea Gualmini (#45) Testing allemaal ('all') Boundaries of Cross-Linguistic Influence (CLI)
14:00-14:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tania Ionin, Chae Eun Lee & Isela Silvera (#25) Nominal vs. Verbal -s as a Cue to Number in L2-English
14:30-15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Neal Snape, Helen Zhao & Menghan Wang (#21) Generics: An Intervention Study
15:00-15:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Amy Atilés & Tania Ionin (#116) The Benefits of Structured Input in a 6-week L2-English Article Intervention Study
15:30-16:30	Coffee and Poster Session 4
16:30-17:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Elisa Di Domenico, Maria Laura Restivo, Federico Piersigilli & Laura Benincasa (#88) Explicit Positive Evidence in the Acquisition of Null, Overt and Postverbal Subjects in L2 Italian
17:00-17:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Bernat Bardagil, Ares Llop & Anna Paradís (#140) Curriculum Design in Language Revitalization Contexts: A Case Study of M̃yky, a Polysynthetic Amazonian Isolate Language
17:30-18:30	<p>Keynote Speaker 3: Melinda Whong (#K3) Research and Teaching: The Value of a Level Playing Field</p>
19:00	Conference Dinner

• Main Session; ◆ Session I: Theoretical Foundations; ◆ Session II: Language Learning and Teaching

Day 2 - Poster Session 3 (10:30-11:30)

<p>[#29] Bare and Definite: L3 Norwegian NP Choices in Generic and Episodic Contexts</p> <p><i>Marta Velnić, Anne Dahl & Roumyana Slabakova</i></p>	<p>[#46] Gender Feature Mapping in Code-Mixed Noun-Adjective Phrases: Insights from Child Bilinguals L1-Russian and L2-Hebrew</p> <p><i>Oksana Rekun & Natalia Meir</i></p>	<p>[#124] What Makes Motion Events Hard to Learn? Verbs, Argument Structure, and Perfectivity in L2 Chinese</p> <p><i>Shanshan Hu</i></p>
<p>[#82] Grammatical Overlap and Verb Type in the L2 Acquisition of English Resultatives</p> <p><i>Martine Gallardo & Silvina Montrul</i></p>	<p>[#85] Investigating L2 English Overpassivization by L1-Korean and L1-Japanese Learners</p> <p><i>Ayoung Chung & Joonhee Kim</i></p>	<p>[#92] The Acquisition of Turkish Evidentiality: Results from Two Acceptability Judgment Tasks</p> <p><i>Sophie Boes</i></p>
<p>[#107] Acquiring the Scope of Disjunction and Negation in L3 Japanese</p> <p><i>Tokiko Okuma</i></p>	<p>[#137] Investigating Null Prepositions in Wh-Questions: A Comparison of Prepositional Verbs and Adjectives by Japanese Learners of English</p> <p><i>Kasumi Katooka</i></p>	<p>[#130] Revisiting Verb Movement in L2 English</p> <p><i>Joana Teixeira & Alexandra Fiéis</i></p>
<p>[#99] Auditory Processing of German Plural Allomorphs in Noise by L2 Listeners: An Eye-Tracking Study</p> <p><i>Katharina Schuhmann & Esther Ruigendijk</i></p>	<p>[#101] Accessing L2 Phonological Knowledge – The Case of English Stress Computation by Mandarin L1s</p> <p><i>Yanran Mou & Heather Goad</i></p>	<p>[#65] How and Why Insights from Different Theoretical Paradigms in Linguistics Enrich Language Pedagogy</p> <p><i>Thomas Hammond Kook-Hee Gil Clare Wright</i></p>
<p>[#104] Generative Constraints and Domain-General Learning: AI Editing as a Test Case for Tense–Aspect Feature Reassembly</p> <p><i>Yuichi Ono & Yuka Fujii</i></p>	<p>[#54] The Role of Explicit Knowledge in the Acquisition of Negation in L3 French</p> <p><i>Guro Busterud Anne Dahl Kjersti Faldet Listhaug</i></p>	<p>[#136] Processing of Accusative, Dative, and Instrumental Case in L1 and L2 Russian: A Visual World Paradigm Study</p> <p><i>Reid Vancelette & Gita Martohardjono</i></p>

Day 2 – Poster Session 4 (15:30-16:30)

<p>[#39] Item-Based and Rule-Based Routes to Gender Assignment in L1 and L2 German Bilinguals</p> <p><i>E Jamieson, Monika Schmid, Regina Hert, Vera Heyer, Holger hopp & Barbara Köpke</i></p>	<p>[#120] Italian L2 Spanish Learners' Acceptability of Spanish Psychological Passives</p> <p><i>Silla Paneghel, Rafael Marín & Francesca Volpato</i></p>	<p>[#86] Referential Pronoun Omission and Retention in L2 English and L2 Thai: A Bidirectional Study</p> <p><i>Itsara Namtapi & Nattama Pongpairoj</i></p>
<p>[#128] Negation and TP Acquisition in L2 Adult Learners of Italian – A Corpus Analysis</p> <p><i>Lorenzo Toniolo & Jacopo Torregrossa</i></p>	<p>[#94] First Language Retention in International Adoptees</p> <p><i>Cory Lemke & Silvina Montrul</i></p>	<p>[#97] On Transmission Direction in L1-Change in Immigrant Communities</p> <p><i>Walther Glödstaf, Silvina Montrul & Jon Anthony Willits</i></p>
<p>[#74] Conceptual Transfer at the Syntax-Pragmatics Interface: Vietnamese Cultural Models of Certainty and Politeness in L2 English Modality and Evidentiality</p> <p><i>Kieu Van Le Thi & Ha Van Le Huynh</i></p>	<p>[#125] Pronoun Interpretation and Use in Turkish Heritage Speakers</p> <p><i>Ilaria Porru & Gita Martohardjono</i></p>	<p>[#83] L1 Attrition Effects on the Processing Constraints of Mandarin Relative Clauses</p> <p><i>Zewei Wei, Ianthi Maria Tsimpli & Lucy Xia Zhao</i></p>
<p>[#47] Analysis on Double Plurals in Cantonese-English Mixing Variety in Hong Kong</p> <p><i>Pui Yee Yuen</i></p>	<p>[#102] Naturalistic Acquisition of a New Language in a Multilingual Context: Insights from Nepali L1 Adult Migrant Workers' Use of Tamil L2 in Chennai, India</p> <p><i>Usha Lakshmanan</i></p>	<p>[#112] Caused-Possession Entailment in the L2 Acquisition of the English Dative Alternation</p> <p><i>Koji Kawahara</i></p>
<p>[#41] Acquiring Optionality: The Case of Verb Placement in L3 Spanish</p> <p><i>Laura Nogueira Sánchez & Kjersti Faldet Listhaug</i></p>	<p>[#142] L2 acquisition of NPI 'any' and PPI 'some' by Indonesian Speaking Learners of English</p> <p><i>Dian Kurniawati, Kook-Hee Gil & Yi Liu</i></p>	<p>[#143] Why They Might Still Get It Wrong: Polyfunctionality and the Interface Burden in L2 Spanish Modals</p> <p><i>Irene Balza</i></p>

DAY 3 - 18th April 2026	
9:00-9:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vera Yunxiao Xia & Lydia White (#34) Relativized Minimality and Featural Mismatches in L2: Is There an Age Advantage?
9:30-10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter Brakovec & Rex Sprouse (#93) Implicational Universals and Input Frequency: The Case of L1 Romance/L2 English Grammar Restructuring
10:00-10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lilong Xu & Boping Yuan (#24) Backward Anaphora Resolutions in Spanish-Catalan Bilinguals' L3 Mandarin
10:30-11:30	Coffee and Poster Session 5
11:30-12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ John Archibald (#5) Elements of Phonological Learnability: Explaining Variation in Input and Developmental Path
12:00-12:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Roumyana Slabakova (#31) Systems of Form–Meaning Mappings in Additional Language Acquisition
12:30-13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Luigi Palumbo, Angeliek van Hout & María J. Arche (#72) Aspect Interpretation across Simple and Complex Sentences: More Evidence for Feature Reassembly in L2 Spanish
13:00-14:00	Lunch +AGM
14:00-14:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Petra Schulz & Ianthi Tsimpli (#70) Ways Forward in Second and Heritage Language Acquisition Research: The Role of Timing in Development
14:30-15:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Juana Liceras & Estela Garcia-Alcaraz (#35) DPs, Weak Pronouns and Strong Pronouns Subject-Verb Code-Switches: Beyond the “Phonetic Interface Form Condition”
15:00-15:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kasumi Takahashi & Reina Mogushi (#103) L2 Acquisition of Parasitic Gaps inside Subject Islands by Japanese Learners of English
15:30-16:00	Coffee break
16:00-17:00	Keynote Speaker 4: Laura Dominguez (#K4) On Languages, Multilingual Grammars and the Status of Mental Representations
17:00-17:30	Closing
19:00-20:00	River Punting tour
• Main Session; ◆ Session I: Theoretical Foundations; ◆ Session II: Language Learning and Teaching	

Day 3 – Poster Session 5 (10:30-11:30)

<p>[#19] L2 Learners Use Both Phonological Behavior and Contrast to Build Novel Representations</p> <p><i>Xuanda Chen & Heather Goad</i></p>	<p>[#59] Re-testing the Interface Hypothesis: Phonology–Pragmatics Interface in L2 Tag Questions</p> <p><i>Sujeewa Hettiarachchi, Niamh Kelly & Sampath Pushpakumara</i></p>	<p>[#55] Unlearning and Relearning V2: The Acquisition of Negative Inversion by Advanced Norwegian L2 learners of English</p> <p><i>Anne Dahl, Charlotte Englert, Tom Rankin, Thomas Wagner & Marit Westergaard</i></p>
<p>[#89] Morphosyntactic Complexities in L2 Italian: A Cross-Sectional Study</p> <p><i>Laura Benincasa, Elisa Di Domenico, Federico Piersigilli & Maria Laura Restivo</i></p>	<p>[#90] Referential Anchoring in Monodialectal and Bidialectal Mandarin</p> <p><i>Xin Yan, Ianthi Maria Tsimpli & Lucy Xia Zhao</i></p>	<p>[#106] Testing the Stability of the Internal Interface in L2 English Have-Constructions: A Case of Japanese Learners</p> <p><i>Shota Kato & Kasumi Takahashi</i></p>
<p>[#123] The Interplay of Syntax, Semantics, and Prosody in Adult L2 Acquisition: A Reassessment of Chinese Wh-Word Interpretation</p> <p><i>Jih-ho Cha, Laurent Dekydtspotter</i></p>	<p>[#91] The Role of Cognates in the Process of Code Switching among L2-High Proficient Arabic-English Bilinguals Evidence from a Self-Paced Arabic-English Reading Task</p> <p><i>Gadah Almishwat</i></p>	<p>[#119] Can Prosodic Disambiguation Be Acquired in L2 Korean? Preliminary Evidence from L1-Chinese and L1-English Speakers</p> <p><i>Heather Marsden, Kook-Hee Gil, Sam Hellmuth, Hae-Sung Jeon, Yi Liu & Sunyoung Park</i></p>
<p>[#79] L3 Chinese Null Subjects: Insights from L1-Japanese L2-English speakers</p> <p><i>Kazumi Yamada, Mika Kizu, Ka Den, Mari Umeda & Roumyana Slabakova</i></p>	<p>[#105] Verbal Lexical Semantic Complexity and L2 Processing Difficulty: A Combined Acceptability Judgment and Eye-Tracking Study</p> <p><i>Yuka Fujii & Shota Kato</i></p>	<p>[#51] A Categorial Feature-Based Analysis of Null Preposition: Phonological Deletion in L2 Grammar</p> <p><i>Tokitada Hangai & Shigenori Wakabayashi</i></p>
<p>[#127] An Experimental Investigation of Agreement with Collective Nouns: Romanian L1 Interference in English L2</p> <p><i>Mateea Ioana Michinici-Sauciuc & Adina Camelia Bleotu</i></p>		

Elements of phonological learnability: explaining variation in input and developmental path

In this talk, I will argue against claims which have been made that generative representational models of language acquisition undervalue or ignore (a) the role of input variation in accounting for representation, and (b) individual variation in learner grammars for a given population; input-informed and representational accounts of linguistic knowledge are not mutually exclusive.

In the first part of the talk, I will argue that just as the grammar generates greater variation in production for the unmarked values of features (Natvig & Salmons, 2021), so too are learners able to reverse engineer this environmental variability to determine which values are marked and therefore need to be represented in the L2 grammar. Hall (2011) reports on the variation in Arabic vowel production (based on Abou Haidar, (1994). The height (i.e., acoustic first formant) variation on the [+low] vowel [a] is about 100Hz while the variation on the [-low] vowels ([i] and [u]) is about 300Hz (Figure 1a). This acoustic variation in the input would provide a learning cue that [+low] is the marked feature and (-low) is the unmarked feature in Arabic. Similar evidence is available for the [±back] feature in Figure 1b. Learners use this input variation to set up the appropriate markedness structures for their L_x grammars. I will then present a reanalysis of Kopečková et al.'s (2023) fascinating data on the variation in the production of L3 rhotics. They looked at participants with either L1-German/L2-English/L3-Polish or L1-Polish/L2-English/L3 German. They found considerable L1 cross-linguistic influence but also noted individual variation. Natvig (2020) notes that the “rhotic is always the unmarked member within any liquid set.” There is variation and change in the realization of /r/ between apical and uvular in the Germanic family (see Fu & Monahan, 2021 for support from other languages) which suggests that the phonological representation does not seem to limit the phonetic type of /r/ that occurs. This uniformity suggests that /r/ is a unified abstract representation regardless of its surface phonetic form. These examples show that an unspecified phoneme can surface with considerable phonetic variation: [ɹ, ʀ, ʁ, ʁ̥, ʁ̥̥]. Thus, the observed phonetic variation in L3 shown in Kopečková et al. (2023) can be argued to be the result of an underspecified rhotic representation that could come from either German or Polish; the variation in L3 motoric production is actually something that would be *predicted* by phonological theory.

In the second part of the talk I will introduce a transition theory with the processes of *redployment* and *triggering* within a Contrastive Hierarchy model of phonology which is also able to account for and constrain the observed individual variation in developmental grammatical paths., I assume L1-Mandarin speakers will initially parse the L2-English vowel input with their L1 contrastive hierarchy (Archibald, 2024) and four pairs of vowels remain undifferentiated: /e/;/ɛ/, /i/;/ɪ/, /u/;/ʊ/ and /o/;/ʌ/ (Figure 2a). What the learner needs to acquire is the [ATR] feature that distinguishes English tense from lax vowels. Different learners may set up the contrast for the four undifferentiated pairs in different orders (Figure 2b); nothing would suggest (a) that any learner should acquire them all at the same time, or that (b) learners should acquire the four pairs in the same order. Various factors could influence the order of acquisition: type frequency; functional load (Sewell, 2021); L1 acoustic cue weighting (Kim et al., 2024). Such a phonological approach will show how individual variation can arise in developmental path, yet all of these possible grammars are possible natural-language grammars.

These examples show that GenSLA can incorporate variation in input and knowledge seamlessly into a formal model of phonological learnability which finds a third way to knowledge merging the strengths of rationalist and empiricist approaches to acquisition.

Figure 1. Phonological markedness and phonetic variation

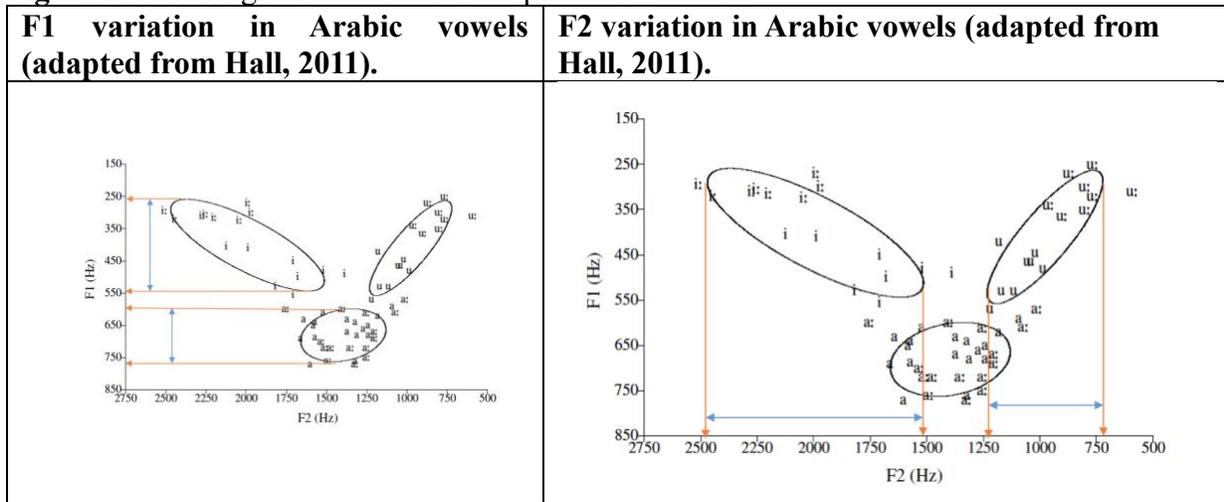
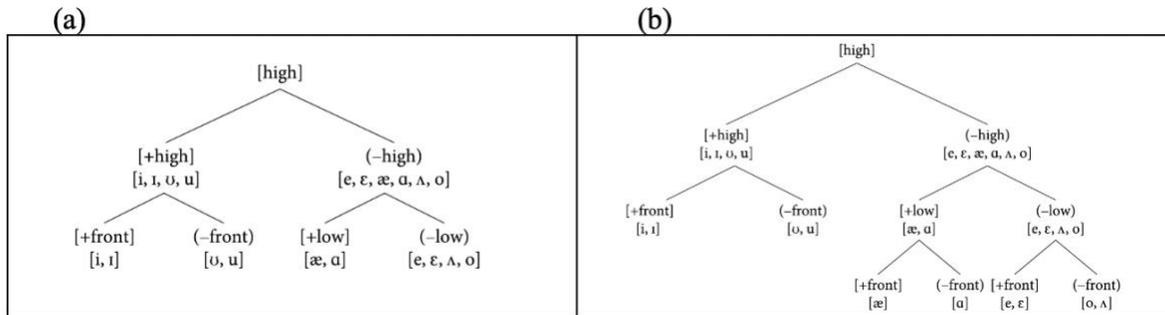


Figure 2. Restructuring a contrastive hierarchy.



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Acquisition of the blocking effect in L2 Chinese by L1 Japanese speakers

Introduction This study investigates L1 Japanese speakers' processing of reflexive *ziji* ('self') in L2 Chinese in relation to the **blocking effect (BE)** phenomenon. In Chinese, the reflexive *ziji* can be long-distance (LD) bound by a non-local subject; however, when the local subject is a 1st-person pronoun, LD binding is not allowed (e.g., 'John₁ said I₂ like self_{1/2}'s shirt'). This is because (i) LD *ziji* is empathic, requiring the speaker or reader to empathize with the non-local subject or **empathy locus** and (ii) the 1st-person pronoun 'I' is a **stronger empathy locus** and is prioritized over a 3rd-person empathy locus (e.g., Kuno'87). These two factors lead native Chinese speakers to give a local reading to *ziji* when 'I' is the local subject.

In contrast, although Japanese bare reflexive *zibun* ('self') can also be bound non-locally, it does not seem to show BE in the absence of empathy-inducing morphemes (see e.g., Oshima'07). Indeed, in the absence of empathy-inducing morphemes, LD *zibun* tends to be used as a non-empathic, attitudinal reflexive (e.g., Nishigauchi'14), bound by an **attitude holder**. Thus, Chinese *ziji* and Japanese *zibun* by default are construed differently: *ziji* is necessarily empathic and shows BE, while *zibun* tends to be non-empathic and does not show BE. Therefore, one challenge facing Japanese learners of L2 Chinese is to overcome transferring the properties of LD *zibun* to LD *ziji*. As these two reflexives share similar (although non-identical) properties, from a **psychotypological** perspective (e.g., Kellerman'83; Ringbom'02), the acquisition of BE in L2 Chinese may be highly challenging for Japanese learners as the perceived linguistic proximity may facilitate L1 transfer.

Methods Thirty-two L2 Chinese learners, in addition to 33 L1 Chinese and 27 L1 Japanese control participants, participated in the study. Two factors, ANTECEDENT (local vs. non-local) and BLOCKER (blocker vs. non-blocker) were fully crossed in a 2x2 factorial design. See **Fig.1** for an example target set (16 target items and 24 fillers) and how local/non-local binding is created in blocker and non-blocker conditions. In the experiment, participants first made a forced choice acceptability judgment ('acceptable' or 'unacceptable') and then rated the acceptability of a particular construal (local or non-local) using a 7-point Likert scale. The L2 participants also completed two cloze tests and a language background survey.

Results Mixed effects logistic and linear regressions were run over forced choice judgments and acceptability ratings, respectively. We mainly report results from the forced choice task as acceptability ratings show similar results. In the **L1 Japanese** experiment (**Fig. 2**), we discovered an ANTECEDENT x BLOCKER interaction ($p < 0.001$): within the local conditions, participants accepted local binding more often in the presence of a blocker; within the non-local conditions, they accepted non-local binding more often in the absence of a blocker. Crucially, in the non-local/blocker condition, L1 Japanese speakers prefer non-local binding, which contrasts sharply with L1 Chinese speakers. In the **L1 Chinese** experiment (**Fig. 3**), in addition to an interaction ($p < 0.001$), we further found a strong BE as Chinese natives strongly reject non-local binding in the presence of a blocker. **L2 participants** (**Fig. 4**) showed interpretation patterns of *ziji* similar to L1 Chinese speakers as they also mostly rejected non-local binding when the local subject is 'I'. Taken together, these findings suggest that Japanese learners of L2 Chinese can acquire BE in the processing of *ziji*. (We omit the discussion of some minor aspects of our findings due to space.)

Discussion The main findings of this study are two-fold. First, consistent with prior theoretical discussions, we found different interpretation patterns of *ziji* and *zibun* (e.g., Oshima'07; Wang & Pan'15). Second, Japanese learners of L2 Chinese can suppress L1 transfer and show BE in L2 Chinese. Furthermore, the weak BE effect in L1 Japanese also provides new data relating to the linguistic properties of *zibun* (e.g., it can also be interpreted as empathic sometimes).

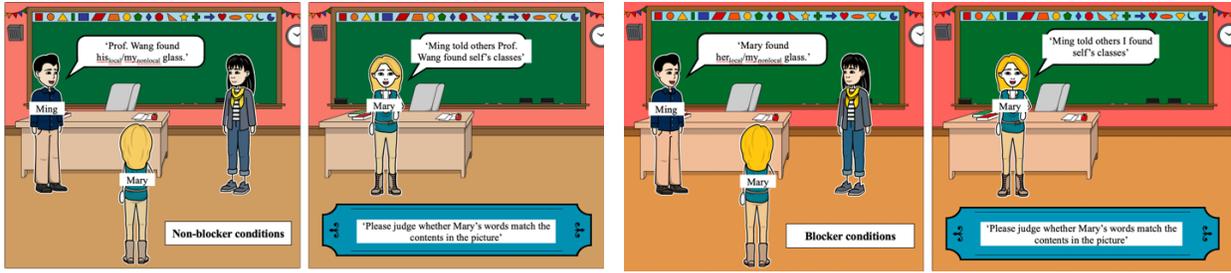
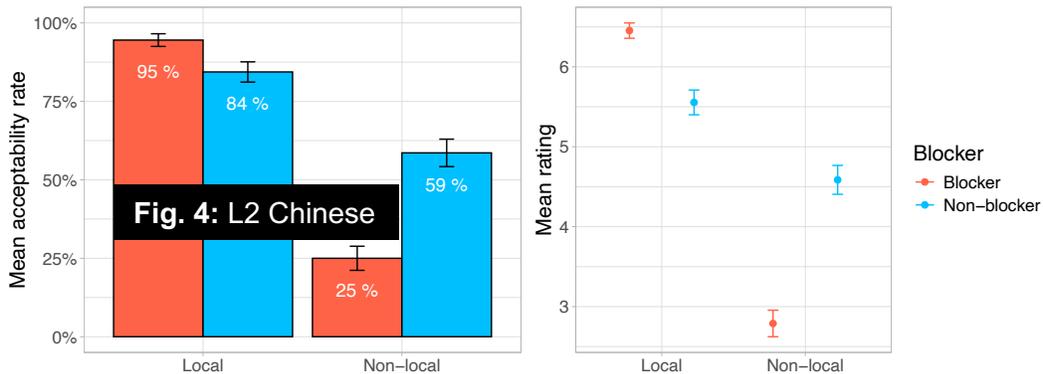
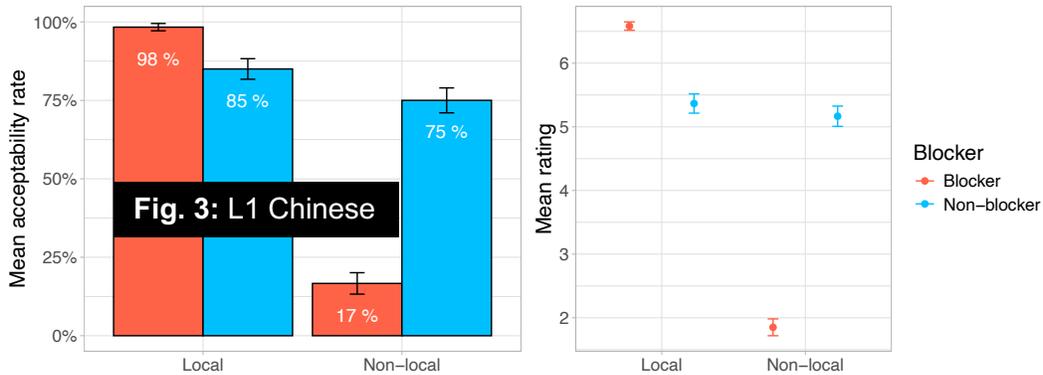
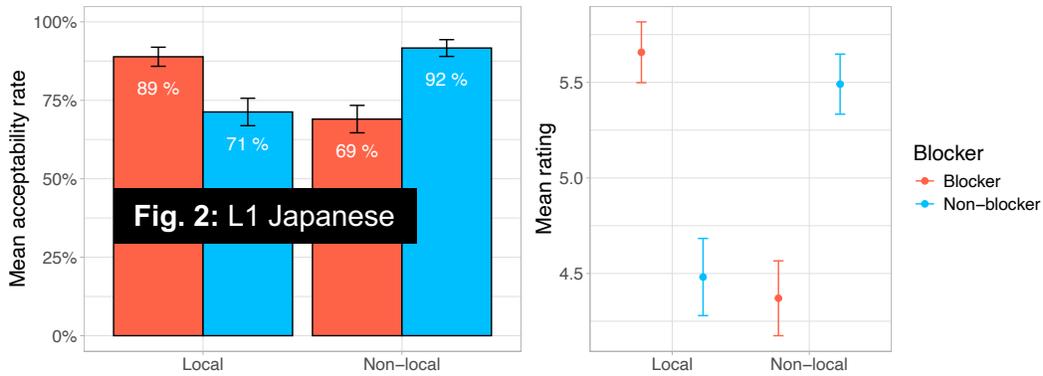


Fig. 1: An example target set with English translations. The left panel shows two **non-blocker** conditions (i.e., the local subject in Mary’s speech is **3rd-person** ‘Prof. Wang’) with local or non-local antecedents. The right panel shows two **blocker** conditions (i.e., the local subject is **1st-person** ‘I’). Local or non-local binding readings are contingent upon Ming’s speech (‘his’ indicates **local** binding; ‘my’ indicates **non-local** binding).



From Perception to Comprehensibility in Spontaneous Speech: Delayed Transfer in High-Variability Phonetic Training

Background: Generative approaches to L2 phonology argue that successful acquisition depends on the re-specification of phonological categories and feature mappings (Flege, 1995; Iverson & Evans, 2009). High-Variability Phonetic Training (HVPT; Logan et al., 1991) is a robust perceptual-training paradigm shown to enhance identification of novel phonemes and to improve word- and sentence-level intelligibility (Bradlow et al., 1997; Thomson, 2011; Iino, 2019). HVPT exposes learners to multiple voices and varied phonetic contexts, promoting robust phonological category formation and testing claims that input variability drives feature re-mapping in interlanguage grammars. While HVPT reliably improves phoneme perception and word- or sentence-level intelligibility, the ultimate goal of L2 speech is comprehensibility, that is, being understood in spontaneous speech interaction (Derwing & Munro, 2015). Evidence that perceptual training produces such real-world gains is still limited and largely confined to semi-controlled tasks, and little is known about whether improvements persist over time. This study addresses that gap by testing whether HVPT gains extend to comprehensibility in spontaneous L2 English speech and whether such gains are retained overtime.

Method: Fifty-one adult Chinese Mandarin speakers of English completed 15 online HVPT sessions (400 stimuli over 1800 trials combining minimal-pair identification with discrimination tasks) over three weeks targeting ten high-functional-load English contrasts, six known to be challenging for Mandarin learners (e.g., /æ-ʌ/, /l-r/). Pre-, post-, and delayed post-tests measured (a) perception via phoneme-identification tasks, (b) intelligibility through a read-aloud task of 80 individual words rated by 5 English proficient speakers in a two-word forced choice task, and (c) comprehensibility via two spontaneous speech tasks; a semi-controlled timed-picture story (Task 1) and a free long-turn narrative rated by 5 English proficient speakers on a 0-5 scale. Perception data met normality assumptions and were analysed with repeated-measures ANOVA; intelligibility and comprehensibility, which were non-normal, with Friedman tests.

Results: HVPT produced significant and durable gains in phoneme identification, confirming its perceptual benefits. Intelligibility showed small immediate gains both at the group level and across most individual target words, but these gains were not statistically significant. Comprehensibility patterns diverged by task. In Task 1 (the controlled picture-story task), mean ratings rose modestly from 3.20 (pre-test) to 3.41 (post-test) before declining to 3.30 at the delayed test, a slight, non-significant drop. In contrast, Task 2 (the spontaneous long-turn narrative) revealed the key effect: ratings dipped from 3.20 at pre-test to 3.04 post-test, then rebounded to 3.32 at delayed testing, exceeding baseline.

Conclusion: The delayed rebound in comprehensibility in spontaneous speech provides clear evidence of a time-dependent perception-to-production transfer: perceptual learning from HVPT consolidates before influencing natural free speech. The temporal sequence indicates that HVPT starts a developmental process which allows improved phonemic representations to influence production in progressively complex communicative contexts. The time needed for internal reorganization and integration of enhanced phonological knowledge into the L2 learner's production system explains the observed delay in comprehensibility improvements in spontaneous speech particularly in the long turn narrative. These findings show that targeted perceptual training can enhance real-world communicative success and support generative accounts in which enriched input reshapes L2 phonological representations over time.

Table 1 Post hoc pairwise comparisons of perception tests scores across the three time points

Time (1)	Time (J)	Mean Difference			95% Confidence Interval		
		N	(I-J)	SE	p*	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Pre-test	Post-test	51	5.13	1.27	<.001	8.27	1.99
Pre-test	Delayed test	47	6.40	1.88	.004	11.07	1.74

* mean difference significant at the .05 level. ** p values were adjusted using the Bonferroni correction

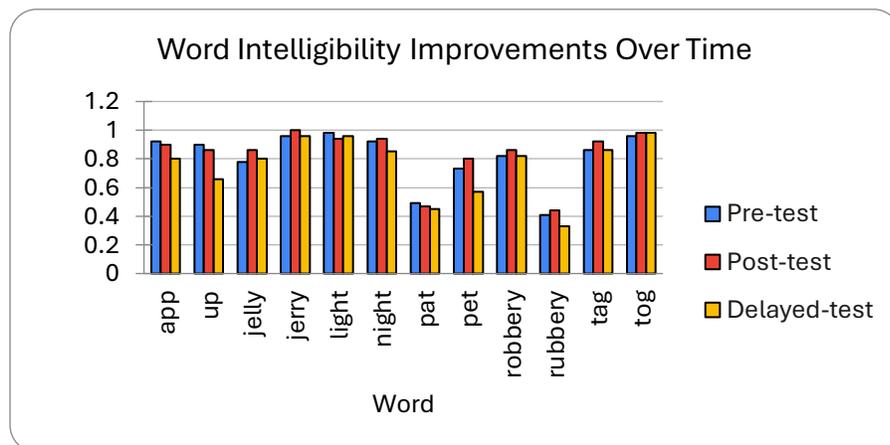


Figure 1 Bar graph shows individual word-level intelligibility improvements overtime across pre-, post- and delayed post-tests

Table 2 Mean, SD, SE, and confidence level of ratings of the comprehensibility of learners' spontaneous oral productions at pre-, post-, and delayed post-test of the long turn narrative

Comprehensibility Tests	N	M	SD	SE	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Task 2 Long turn narrative						
Pre-test	51.	3.20	.872	.122	2.95	3.44
Post-test.	51	3.04	.937	.131	2.78	3.30
Delayed post-test	47	3.32	1.024	.149	3.02	3.62

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Code-switching in L2 grammar acquisition

Although multilingual competence is a cognitive advantage rather than a drawback, its development tends to remain limited when L2 acquisition takes place in formal contexts. Therefore, this study aims to develop *ad hoc* methodologies useful for L2 educators to better promote bilingual competence. We will focus on the phenomenon of code-switching (CS), characterizing the informal speech of bilinguals. CS is observed from the earlier stages of spontaneous language acquisition in bilingual environments, and can be regarded as a natural process: bilinguals are able to judge the grammaticality of a mixed sentence, and the source of their competence can be ascribed to their Internal Language (MacSwan 1999). Starting from this perspective, our work will consist in the development of innovative material for language class activities, in a translanguaging perspective (Vogel and Garcia 2017), where the two languages in contact are considered compartments in a hierarchical relationship. Thus, the practice of language mixing is to be encouraged rather than stigmatized, as it represents a useful resource for developing oral skills in a bilingual context.

We implemented a training program for English L1 students learning Italian as an L2. It is intended to make learners acquainted with the phenomena of gender assignment to Italian nouns and the agreement relation between the noun and its modifiers; indeed, this topic is hard to acquire for English speakers, since English is a genderless language. The participants to our training were 20 students coming from the US, who spent four months in Rome, attending an Italian language course. Their average proficiency level was A2.

Students have been administered a pre-test aimed at assessing their competence on gender assignment and agreement, a few days before the training. The latter consisted of a presentation of the various strategies of gender assignment and some activities involving mixed language texts. They have appreciated these activities, where the use of English reduces anxiety and allows them to understand the context and concentrate best on the Italian lexicon and the grammatical aspects which represent the focus of the activity. At the end of the training, an immediate post-test followed.

Results are encouraging. The scores obtained in the post-test were significantly higher than those obtained in the pre-test, and mean increase of 18.3% demonstrates a substantial improvement in grammatical competence. Overall, the t-test ($p = 0.0001$) confirmed that the difference was statistically significant, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

These findings suggest that translanguaging practices—by allowing a controlled use of L1 within L2 learning contexts—help reduce learner anxiety and enhance focus on Italian grammar and vocabulary acquisition.

Measure	Pre-test (tot)	Post-test (tot)
Average score	44.62	62.94
Median	44.00	56.00
Std. Dev.	24.99	22.81
Minimum	6.00	17.00
Maximum	94.00	100.00
Δ Mean (%)	-	18.31
T-test (p)	-	0.0001

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for pre-test and post-test results.

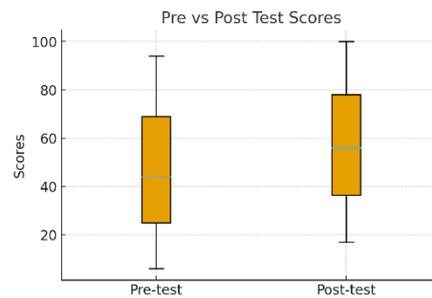


Figure 1. Boxplot of pre-test and post-test performance.

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L2 Learners Use Both Phonological Behavior and Contrast to Build Novel Representations

A foundational assumption in phonological theory is that both contrast and alternations serve as evidence for feature specification. Specifically, the presence of a contrast necessitates a phonological feature to capture it, while the existence of a phonological alternation requires that the relevant feature to be specified in the grammar. This principle forms the cornerstone of several theoretical frameworks (e.g., Dresher, 2009). However, it remains unclear whether second language (L2) learners similarly utilize both types of evidence, contrast and behavior, to construct phonological representations in their L2. This represents a significant gap in our understanding of L2 phonological acquisition. We use both behavioral (word identification task) and neurophysiological measures (Mismatch Negativity; MMN) to address this question for the representation of voicing. The MMN serves as a neurophysiological index of the establishment of abstract, underlying representations (Eulitz & Lahiri, 2004; Monahan et al., 2022), allowing us to objectively evaluate whether learners have internalized a novel phonological contrast.

Context: Voicing features offer an ideal case to explore the question of L2 feature learning. Theories of laryngeal realism classify languages based on how they represent laryngeal contrasts, with the monovalent feature [voice] ([t]-[d]) specified for ‘voicing languages’ like Russian and [spread glottis] ([t]-[t^h]) for ‘aspiration languages’ like Mandarin (Beckman et al., 2013). This results in different underspecified features in each system. This distinction is cued by voice onset time (VOT): [spread glottis] captures short-lag vs. long-lag VOTs, while [voice] captures short-lag vs. voicing-lead VOTs (following Lisker & Abramson, 1964). Beyond acoustic cues, phonological alternations can signal featural representations. Russian, for example, manipulates [voice] in assimilation: a voiced obstruent causes a preceding obstruent to adopt its voicing (e.g., /ot-brositj/ → [od-brositj] “to throw aside”). For a feature to participate in such processes, it must be contrastively specified in the grammar (Dresher, 2009). However, not all languages use alternations to signal phonological representations; Mandarin, for instance, relies solely on phonetic cues to signal contrasts (Beckman et al., 2013).

Research question: Our research focuses on the question of whether L2 learners, who have no knowledge of alternations in their L1, use phonological alternations to build novel representations for L2 sounds; and whether exposure to alternations facilitates or hinders this learning process.

Methods: We trained two groups of Mandarin-speaking naive learners of Russian in a word-learning task with 8 minimal pairs involving stops (/t-d/) and 8 fillers over four consecutive days. The contrast group (N=20) received training focused on contrast alone, while the alternation group (N=20) was additionally exposed to phonological alternations in the form of voicing assimilation applying across morpheme boundaries. Both groups participated in pre- and post-tests that included MMN in an oddball paradigm and word identification tasks.

Results and discussion: The results showed that both groups successfully discriminated the voicing contrasts after training (Figure 1). While discrimination accuracy improved over time, no significant differences emerged between the groups. However, only learners exposed to the voicing alternation in training exhibited asymmetrical MMN post-test (Figure 2), a neural marker of feature (under)specification. These findings suggest that while intensive phonetic training enables learners to build representations for novel contrasts, exposure to phonological alternations makes these representations more robust. Our results reveal that while behavioral performance appears to be the same between groups, neurophysiological measures indicate a nuanced difference in the learned representations.

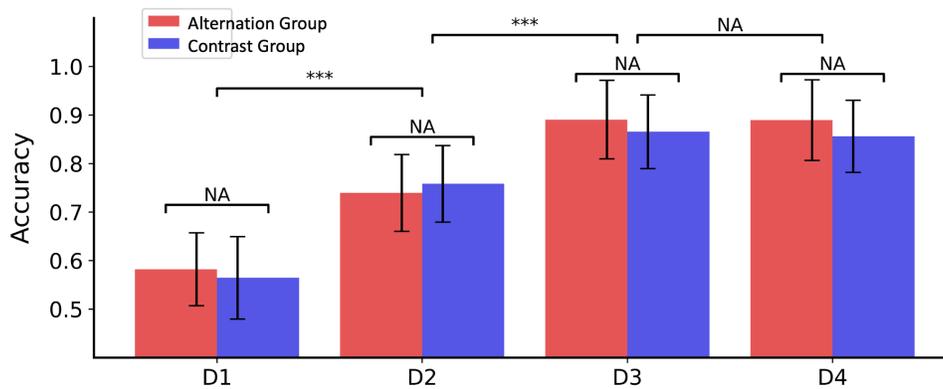


Figure 1. Distribution of the word identification accuracy (Mean \pm SE) across four training days (D1-D4) for the **Alternation Group** and **Contrast Group**.

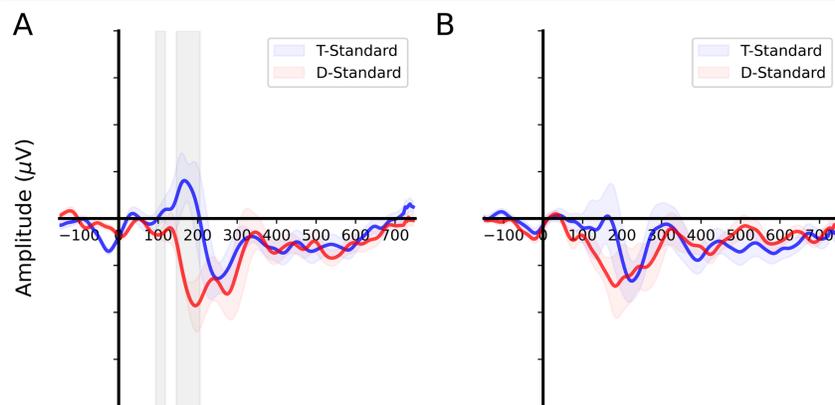


Figure 2. Average difference ERP waves (deviant minus standard) for the (A) **Alternation Group** and (B) **Contrast Group**. Shaded areas indicate significance levels at $p < 0.05$.

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What Goes Missing First? - An Error-Profile Study of Italian–English Bilinguals in Milan

This paper investigates whether functional items remain selectively fragile when L1 Italian - L2 English bilinguals repeat syntactically demanding sentences. While previous studies have generally measured overall accuracy or targeted single structures, showing that errors in bilingual morphosyntax cluster around structurally complex and interface-sensitive functional elements, such as complementisers and relativisers (Marinis & Armon-Lotem, 2015; Hamann & Ibrahim, 2017), it is still unclear whether accuracy with functional items is differently affected depending on the degree of syntactic complexity encoded in different structures.

To fill this gap, we administered a sentence repetition task to 49 students (male - 21, female - 28, aged 8–12) attending a bilingual school (with the exposure to English since the age of 3 years old) in Milan. The task tested 25 English sentences arranged along a degree of structural and processing complexity following prior research (Frizelle & Fletcher, 2014; Friedmann et al., 2009): (a) moderately complex (negation, passives), (b) high complexity (i.e. that-/wh-complements, subject/object relatives, temporal, causal, and final adverbials), and (c) discourse-sensitive (topicalisation, clefts). We asked whether (Q1) there a difference in the error rate and typology across the nine structures and (Q2) between functional items and open-class lexical items?

Each response was scored (0–3) and errors were coded as functional (when occurring with closed-class items) or lexical (with content words), based on substitution, omission, or addition following Theodorou et al. (2017).

General accuracy was modest ($M=1.05/3$), with 66% of sentences containing two or more errors. Functional errors ($n=1,292$) outnumbered lexical errors ($n=972$). Accuracy declined sharply with structure complexity: Negation reached ceiling ($M=3.00$), whereas Adverbial Final ($M = 0.25$) and Subject Relative clauses ($M=0.69$) were most error-prone. That-Complements (1.39), Object Relatives (1.88), and Wh-Complements (1.02) showed intermediate performance.

Functional errors were particularly concentrated in Object Relative clauses ($n=209$) and Adverbial Final clauses ($n=153$), highlighting the fragility of elements like pronouns and subordinators under processing pressure. In contrast, Negation structures yielded few functional errors ($n=22$), confirming their developmental robustness.

Lexical errors were more frequent in simpler structures (e.g., SVO, Negation), likely reflecting lexical retrieval limitations. In more complex contexts, functional errors often exceeded lexical ones (e.g., Purpose CP: 153 functional vs. 102 lexical), suggesting children preserved semantic content while omitting syntactic scaffolding.

These findings support interface-based models (Sorace & Serratrice, 2009; Lardiere, 2009), showing that bilingual children's grammar is selectively fragile in domains requiring integration of syntax, morphology, and discourse in the CP field. The observed functional–lexical asymmetry corroborates claims that even with high-quality input, closed-class items remain unstable. Confirming prior work (Frizelle & Fletcher, 2014; Paradis, 2010), CP-embedded structures - such as object relatives and final adverbials - elicited the most functional errors. Notably, the contrast between subject and object relative clauses further illustrates this point: the syntactically more complex object relative clauses triggered proportionally more functional omissions than subject relatives, even though the latter had lower overall accuracy due to lexical substitutions. This pattern underscores how greater syntactic complexity selectively strains functional morphology. More broadly, the results suggest that even balanced bilingual schooling from early childhood does not guarantee mastery of interface-sensitive morphology by late childhood. Functional categories appear to remain particularly vulnerable under such conditions, likely due to processing demands and typological factors.

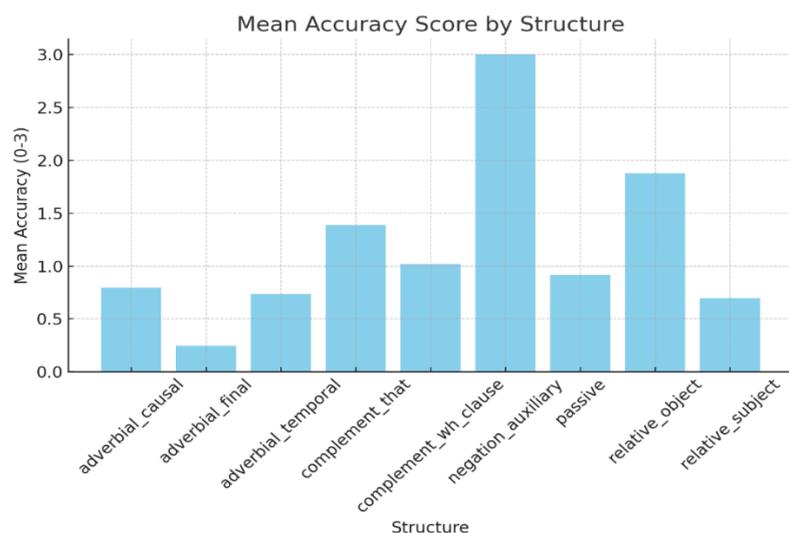


Figure 1

Structure (9)	Mean Acc (0-3)	% tokens fully correct	Functional : Lexical errors	Principal error subtype
Negation-aux	3.00	96 %	1 : 1	occasional lexical verb swap
Object relative	1.88	42 %	1 : 3	lexical NP substitutions
That-complement	1.39	26 %	2 : 3	<i>that</i> omission
Wh-complement	1.02	18 %	1 : 2	wh-form substitution
Passive	0.92	16 %	1 : 1	auxiliary omission
Causal adverbial	0.80	12 %	3 : 2	<i>because/so</i> substitution
Temporal adv.	0.73	11 %	1 : 1	tense shift in verb
Subject relative	0.69	10 %	2 : 1	resumptive pronoun insertion
Final adverbial	0.25	3 %	3 : 2	complementiser (<i>in order to</i>) drop

Table 1

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Generics: An Intervention Study

Introduction:

VanPatten and Rothman (2015) remind us that “such things as generative theory and statistical learning theories (including emergentism) may not be as incompatible as is often claimed” (pp. 111). Building on this possibility of dialogue between the two camps, the present study examines the role of explicit training in second language (L2) acquisition of English generic constructions. Japanese is a language without an article system and grammaticalizes genericity differently from English. We adopt Krifka et al.’s (1995) classification of kind NPs and generic sentences. Kind NPs can be defined as a natural kind like *the lion/lions*, a well-established kind such as *the coca-cola bottle/bottles* and a kind predicate like *extinct*. Only the definite singular and bare plural can be used for kind NPs; the indefinite singular and bare plural are acceptable for describing a general property, e.g., *an orange/oranges has/have lots of vitamin C*, a non well-established kind like *a green lamp/green lamps is/are very relaxing* and non-kind predicates such as *a warm coat/warm coats is/are necessary when you visit Hokkaido*. Our research questions are as follows:

RQ1. Does explicit training on generic article use improve Japanese L2 learners’ explicit knowledge of NP-level and sentence-level generics immediately after instruction and in subsequent delayed posttests?

RQ2. At the one-year follow-up, does the treatment group outperform a newly recruited control group with no prior training on a timed grammaticality judgment task (GJT) measuring NP-level and sentence-level generics?

RQ3: Within the treatment group, is there an association between earlier explicit knowledge of generic article use and later performance on the timed GJT at the one-year follow-up?

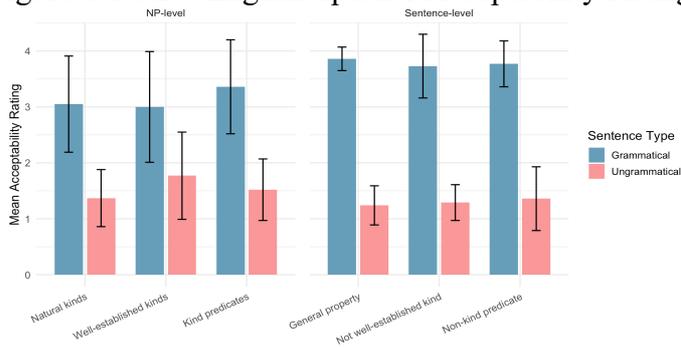
Method:

Thirty-seven Japanese learners of English were assigned to a treatment group or a control group. The treatment group received two online training sessions of normed items (see Fig 1) and testing on generics using test items from Umeda et al. (2019). The control group received training on English prepositions. Both groups completed a pretest, an immediate posttest, and two delayed posttests (one and two months later) of an untimed GJT. A final delayed posttest was administered one year later, using a timed GJT to assess whether explicit knowledge gained through instruction supported longer-term implicit performance.

Results:

Results showed robust and durable training effects on explicit knowledge. The treatment group significantly outperformed the control group at the immediate posttest, and this advantage persisted at both delayed posttests (see Figs 2-5). At the one-year follow-up, the treatment group also outperformed a newly recruited control group on the timed GJT (see Fig 6), with higher odds of correct judgments, suggesting that some explicit knowledge had been retained and modestly proceduralised. Furthermore, individual differences analyses revealed that both stronger baseline explicit knowledge and greater gains in explicit knowledge during training were predictive of later success under time pressure, although these effects were small in magnitude. Taken together, the findings indicate that explicit instruction in English generics can lead to sustained improvements in explicit knowledge. These results contribute to the debate on the interface between explicit and implicit knowledge in L2 acquisition, supporting usage-based and skill-learning perspectives that view explicit instruction as a potential catalyst for proceduralisation, rather than an isolated system with no impact on underlying linguistic competence.

Figure 1. Native English Speaker Acceptability Ratings of Training Items



Figures 2-5. Accuracy Rates of Generics in Untimed GJT by Group across Time

Figure 2. NP-level Grammatical

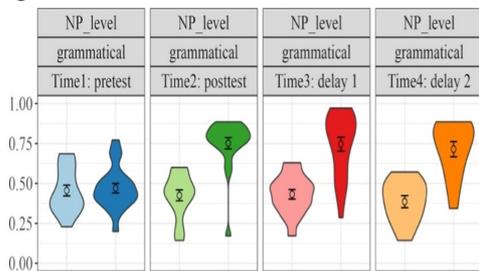


Figure 3. NP-level Ungrammatical

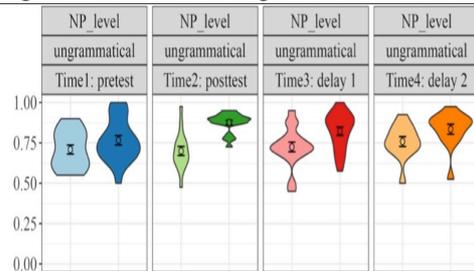


Figure 4. Sentence-level Grammatical

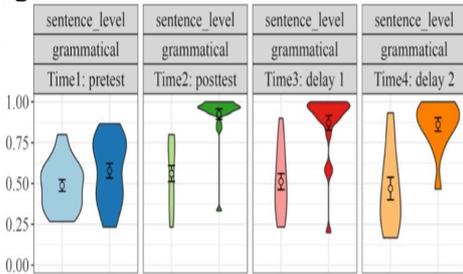
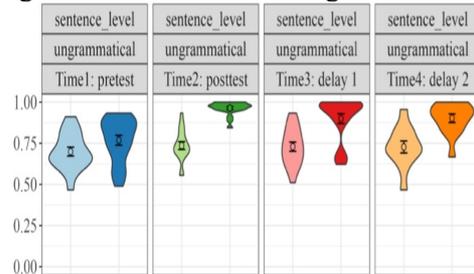
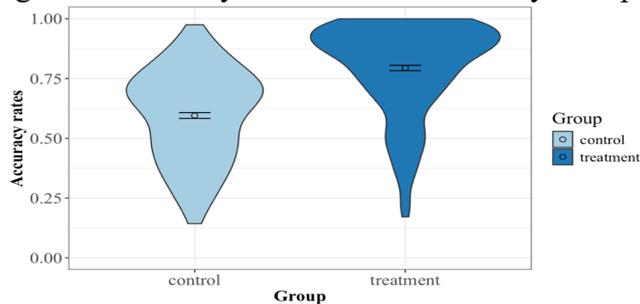


Figure 5. Sentence-level Ungrammatical



Group_Time
 control_Time1: pretest
 treatment_Time1: pretest
 control_Time2: posttest
 treatment_Time2: posttest
 control_Time3: delay 1
 treatment_Time3: delay 1
 control_Time4: delay 2
 treatment_Time4: delay 2

Figure 6. Accuracy Rates of Timed GJT by Group at the Delayed Posttest 3



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Backward anaphora resolutions in Spanish-Catalan bilinguals' L3 Mandarin

This study investigates how Spanish–Catalan bilinguals interpret backward anaphora (cataphora) in different types of clauses in their L3 Mandarin. In Mandarin, coreference between a pronoun in a preceding temporal clause and the matrix subject is prohibited, as in (1a), whereas in causal clauses, such coreference is permitted, as in (1b) (Su et al., 2025). Catalan generally disallows the coreference (e.g. (2)) (de Rocafiguera & Bel, 2025), while Spanish flexibly allows both readings (e.g. (3)) (Contemori et al., 2019:973). To investigate to what extent clause types modulate backward anaphora resolutions in L3 Mandarin, we included in our study sentences with temporal clauses (e.g. 1a), those with causal clauses (e.g. 1b), and those expressing habitual/experiencing events (e.g., 1c, 1d). The inclusion of these types provides us with a testing ground for examining the role of transfer in L3 acquisition.

Twenty-four Spanish–Catalan bilinguals at low to high intermediate levels of Mandarin and a control group of native Mandarin speakers participated in the study. The bilinguals included both L1-Spanish, L2-Catalan speakers and L1-Catalan, L2-Spanish speakers, with native or near-native proficiency in both languages although with varying degrees of Spanish dominance. In the study, participants completed a sentence–picture matching task assessing coreference and non-coreference of pronouns in different clause types, as well as a Bilingual Language Profile Questionnaire (Gertken, Amengual, & Birdsong, 2014) and a Mandarin proficiency test (Guo & Yuan, 2020).

Results show that native Mandarin speakers behave as expected: although they display a clear preference for the non-coreference reading across sentence types, they reject the coreference in temporal clauses but accept it in causal clauses and allow the coreference in habitual/experiencing events, reflecting their sensitivity to constraints on the possible coreference imposed by clause or event types. In contrast, the bilinguals, as a whole group, indiscriminately accept the coreference and non-coreference readings across all clause types, showing no sensitivity to clause or event types.

A mixed-effects analysis treating Spanish-to-Catalan dominance (as measured by Bilingual Language Profile) and Mandarin proficiency score as continuous variables shows that across all clause and event types, the more Spanish dominant, the more acceptance of both coreference and non-coreference readings—even among L1 Catalan L2 Spanish speakers—whereas less Spanish dominance correlates with a clearer Catalan-style distinction between the coreference and non-coreference, though both readings remain acceptable. Likewise, bilinguals at lower Chinese proficiency levels tend to accept both readings across all clause and event types, whereas higher-proficiency learners show an emerging preference for the non-coreference reading, while still allowing both. This supports the Dominance Hypothesis, which posits that dominance in previously acquired languages shapes the trajectory of L3 development and that transfer effects remain dynamic beyond initial stages (Puig-Mayenco et al., 2022). These findings highlight the importance of taking bilinguals' language dominance profiles into consideration when accounting for crosslinguistic influence in L3 acquisition.

Example:

(1a) Zuotian, ta_{*i/j} paobu deshihou, gege_i na-zhe shuihu.
Yesterday he run when big brother hold-ASP water bottle
'When he was running yesterday, the big brother was holding a water bottle.'

(1b) Zuotian, yinwei tai_{i/j} zai-paobu, gege_i na-zhe shuihu.
Yesterday because he ASP-run big brother hold-ASP water bottle
'Because he was running yesterday, the big brother was holding a water bottle.'

(1c) Tai_{i/j} paobu deshihou, gege_i zongshi na-zhe shuihu.
he run when big brother always hold-ASP water bottle
'When he runs, the big brother always holds a water bottle.'

(1d) Zuotian, ta_{i/j} paobu deshihou, gege_i juede feichang gaoxing.
Yesterday he run when big brother feel very happy
'When he was running yesterday, the big brother felt very happy.'

(2) Quan ell_{*i/j} corria, el Carles_i portava l'ampolla d'aigua. (Catalan)
'When he ran, Carles carried the water bottle.'

(3) Mientras que ella_{i/j/k} estaba en la preparatoria, Yolanda_i conoció a Josefinaj.
(Spanish)
'When she was in high school, Yolanda met Josefina.' (Contemori et al., 2019: 973)

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Nominal vs. verbal -s as a cue to number in L2-English

Inflectional morphology is challenging for second language (L2) learners (e.g., Slabakova 2008). In L2-English, verbal morphology (3rd person singular -s) is acquired later and omitted more than nominal (plural -s), across L2ers from first languages (L1s) both with and without nominal/verbal morphology (e.g., Zobl & Licerias, 1994; Ionin & Wexler, 2002; Austin et al., 2022; Li & Yang, 2022), despite having the same prosodic properties (cf. Goad et al. 2003). Rather less studied is whether verbal -s also poses a greater challenge than nominal -s in comprehension.

We examine whether L1-Mandarin L2-English learners (hence: L1M L2ers) use nominal and/or verbal -s as a number cue in comprehension, in the absence of lexical cues to number (numerals/quantifiers). Mandarin has no verbal agreement morphology; it has an optional nominal plural marker, *-men*, restricted to [+human] nouns (Iljic, 1994; Li, 1999); we tested only [-human] nouns. On the Morphological Congruency Hypothesis (MCH; Jiang 2007), an L2 morpheme that has no equivalent in the learners' L1 cannot become automatized. Consistent with the MCH, Jiang et al. (2017) found that L1M L2ers failed to use nominal -s as a cue to number in online comprehension; in contrast, Ionin et al. (2024) found that L1M L2ers *did* use this cue. To the best of our knowledge, online comprehension of verbal -s has not been tested in SLA.

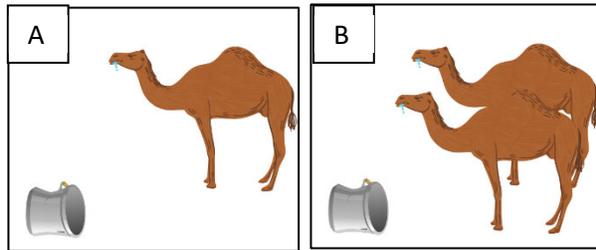
Methodology: In a timed picture-matching task, each item consisted of a sentence presented auditorily, followed by two minimally different pictures (see (1)-(2), and Figures 1-2); participants had to select the matching picture within 15 seconds. Each experimental list contained 16 items on nominal morphology (8 sg, 8 pl), 16 items on verbal morphology (8 sg, 8 pl), and 32 fillers (testing distinctions other than number). For the nominal items (1a-b), the only cue to number was the presence vs. absence of -s on the noun. For the verbal items (2a-b), the verb always began with a *s*, which (via audio splicing) masked the presence vs. absence of -s at the end of the noun (per Johnson et al., 2005), so the only cue to number was the presence or absence of -s on the verb. A Latin-square design was used so that each list contained only the singular or only the plural variant of each token set; the left/right order of singular vs. plural pictures was randomized across items.

Participants: Data collection is ongoing; we have so far analyzed results from 15 native English speakers (NSs) and 17 L1M L2ers (with high intermediate to advanced proficiency, residing in the U.S.). **Results:** Figure 3 shows that both groups were less accurate with verbal than nominal morphology; L2ers were at-chance at picture selection with the verbal items. A generalized linear mixed-effects model (Table 1) yielded significant effects of number (greater accuracy with singulars), category (greater accuracy with nouns), and group (greater accuracy for NSs). There were also significant two-way interactions between number and group (NSs were more accurate on plurals than singulars, the opposite of L2ers), and between category and group (while both groups were less accurate on verbs than on nouns, the drop in accuracy was sharper for NSs, who were at-ceiling on nouns but not verbs). A separate analysis of the L2ers with proficiency as a covariate did not find any proficiency effects, likely because all L2ers had quite high proficiency.

In sum, L1M L2ers have considerable difficulty using morphology as a cue to number; however, they are much better with nominal than verbal morphology, which is not predicted by the MCH. Given that NSs are also less accurate on verbal -s, we propose that number marking is easier to use for comprehension when it is interpretable (on the noun) than when uninterpretable (on the verb) (cf. Chomsky 1995). L2ers over-rely on lexical cues and have difficulty using inflectional morphemes for interpretation, but have an easier time when the number morpheme attaches to the element that has semantic number (the noun). Our findings lay the groundwork for a future instructional intervention using structured input (VanPatten 2004), in which L2ers will be taught to attend to morphological cues on both nouns and verbs in determining number.

- 1) a. The **camel** drank all the water in the bucket.
 b. The **camels** drank all the water in the bucket.

Figure 1: Picture choices for (1a-b)



- 2) a. The duck **swims** in the clear pond.
 b. The ducks **swim** in the clear pond.

Figure 2: Picture choices for (2a-b)

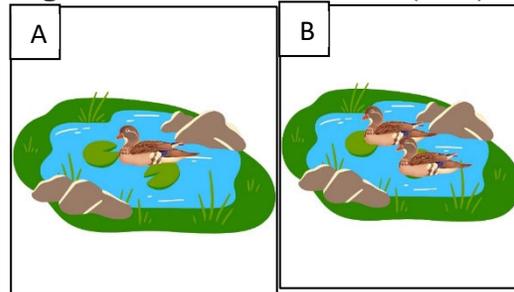
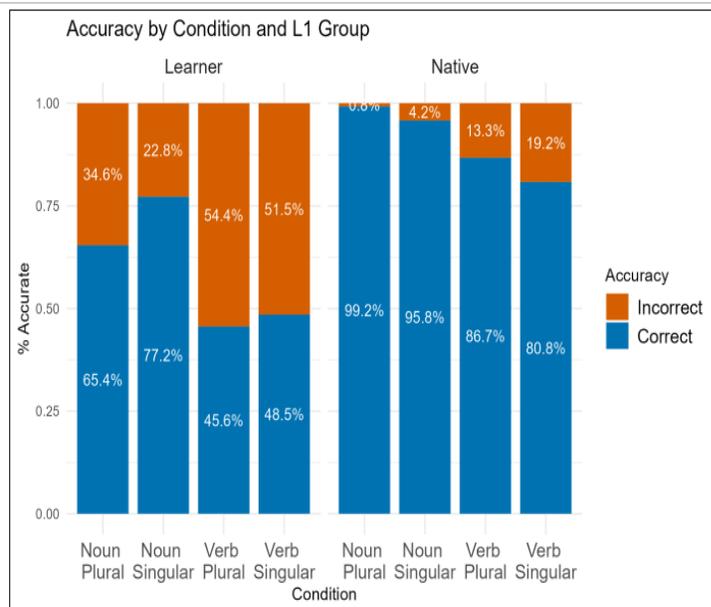


Table 1: Output of generalized linear mixed effects model (dependent measure: correct vs. incorrect picture choice, coded as 1 vs. 0; target: A for (1a)/(2a), B for (1b)/(2b))

Fixed effects	Estimate	Std. error	z value	p
(Intercept)	.68	.23	2.97	<.01**
Number:Sg	.60	.28	2.18	<.05*
Category:Verb	-.86	.26	-3.36	<.001***
Group:NS	4.27	1.03	4.13	<.001***
Number:sgXCategory:Verb	-.48	.37	-1.29	.20
Number:sgXGroup:NS	-2.26	1.13	-2.00	<.05*
Category:VerbXGroup:NS	-2.09	1.06	-1.97	<.05*
Number:SgXCategory:VerbXGroup:NS	1.69	1.21	1.39	.16

Random effect: Participants (Model with Items as
 Random effect did not converge)
 1024 observations, 32 participants

Figure 3. Results: accuracy by condition and group



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The Initial State of Third Language Acquisition: What Can *Ab Initio* Learners' Production Reveal?

What linguistic knowledge do learners possess at the very onset of third language acquisition (L3A)? This study explores how *ab initio* third language (L3) learners, whose first language (L1) is Chinese Mandarin and who have advanced English as their second language (L2), produce sentences in two semi-artificial L3s during their first exposure.

Although the so-called Initial State (IS) in morphosyntactic transfer in L3A has been extensively studied, most previous research involved some degree of training or exposure to the target language (TL). As Puig-Mayenco and Rothman (2019) argued, minimal exposure can significantly affect developmental patterns and theoretical modelling. Therefore, the present study adopts a strict definition of IS (Zhang, 2025) by testing *ab initio* learners with no prior L3 exposure at all. Moreover, while most studies on IS rely on reception tests, such as grammaticality judgment tasks, this study questions that approach for *ab initio* learners.

Thus, this study utilises a production task to examine *ab initio* L3 learners upon first exposure. The focus is on dummy subjects in weather expressions and existential constructions, which are required in English but absent in Chinese. The TLs are written in either Swedish lexis, which shares lexical similarities with L2 English, or in Japanese lexis, which shares lexical similarities with L1 Chinese. In each test, participants viewed a picture that could elicit the use of the target structure, along with a set of cards in one of the TLs. Each card included one TL lexical item, followed by translations into Chinese and English, and every card set contained necessary words to describe the picture, a card that could typically serve as the dummy subject in English, and some fillers. Participants were asked to select suitable cards and arrange them in the order they consider grammatical in the TL.

Results reveal significant correlations between the two tested structures within each TL, but not across the TLs, suggesting that learners may start forming hypotheses about L3 syntax from the very first exposure based on observed formal similarities. However, the results indicated that both L1 and L2 were activated and utilised, which contradicts the lexical-similarity-driven wholesale transfer suggested by the Typological Primacy Model (Rothman, 2015), but supports the idea of property-by-property transfer and co-activation of both previously acquired languages proposed by the Linguistic Proximity Model (Westergaard et al., 2017). These findings contribute to both the methodological and theoretical understanding of the IS in L3A.

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Bare and Definite: L3 Norwegian NP Choices in Generic and Episodic Contexts

Generic statements convey generalizations about the world (e.g., *Sharks are dangerous*, Krifka et al., 1995) while episodic sentences describe events unfolding in concrete situations (e.g., *The sharks are hungry*, Kratzer, 1995). Generic predicates describe inherent qualities (e.g. to be dangerous), while episodic predicates describe situational qualities in a temporary context (e.g. to be hungry). Can adult L_n learners use generic and episodic predicates to calculate the respective meanings and produce the appropriately marked nominals?

In Norwegian, five types of NPs can be used to express these meanings: bare, indefinite and definite singulars; bare and definite plurals. English does not allow bare singulars, while Polish nominals are not marked for definiteness. This discrepancy in morphological marking can pose acquisition challenges for L_n learners. To our knowledge, there are no studies contrasting generic and episodic statements in bi/multilingual production.

Participants were 60 English L1 speakers (Eng, L2 group), two Polish L1 English L2 Norwegian L3 groups (35 residing in Norway (PolN) and 28 studying in Poland (PolP)), and 34 native Norwegian controls. Earlier acceptability data (Authors, forthcoming) showed that PolP struggled with the generic form–meaning mapping, while PolN acquired it but tended to over-accept bare forms.

We designed an online context-driven sentence production task: participants were provided with a context and prompt words to construct context-appropriate sentences. Contexts were aligned with either generic or episodic readings, while prompts featured a generic or an episodic predicate and nouns in singular or plural form: (be hungry)/(be dangerous) (shark)/(sharks).

Results (Figure 1) show a clear number distinction: plural prompts elicited only plural forms, while singular prompts yielded more variation. Separate models were run for number. The Bayesian mixed-effects model for **plurals** showed no reliable group*condition interaction, but post-hoc tests (Table 1) revealed systematic group differences: native controls used definite forms in episodic and bare forms in generic contexts; English controls followed this pattern; PolN relied heavily on bare forms even in episodic contexts; and PolP showed no pragmatic contrast, using bare forms almost exclusively. In **singular** contexts, responses were more varied, so we fit a multinomial regression with pairwise post-hoc comparisons (Table 2). Native controls used mostly bare plurals (and some bare singulars) in generic contexts and definite singulars in episodic contexts, with categorical differences between conditions ($p < .001$). The English group patterned similarly in the generic singular but showed weaker contrasts. Both Polish groups overused the bare singular in both contexts, differing significantly from controls ($p < .001$).

These findings highlight the Polish groups' propensity to overgeneralize bare forms, a clear L1 influence. The PolN group seems to be more attuned to article usage, specifically in the plural condition, but L1 influence is still clearly observable. In our previously reported study (authors, forthcoming) we found that the PolN speakers were attuned to the subtleties of generic marking in L3 Norwegian, while the PolP groups was not, and we attributed this to the lack of exposure to generic subtleties in the instructed setting. The presented production data shows a minimal difference between the two Polish groups, indicating that production is still heavily reliant on the L1 grammar. Difficulty with choosing the appropriate NP affects not only generic but also episodic contexts where morphological restructuring is needed. The study underscores that acquiring article semantics and usage is the key to nuanced multilingual production, additionally confirming that comprehension and production proceed on different timelines and how studies of both aspects of L3 acquisition are needed for revealing the patterns of acquisition.

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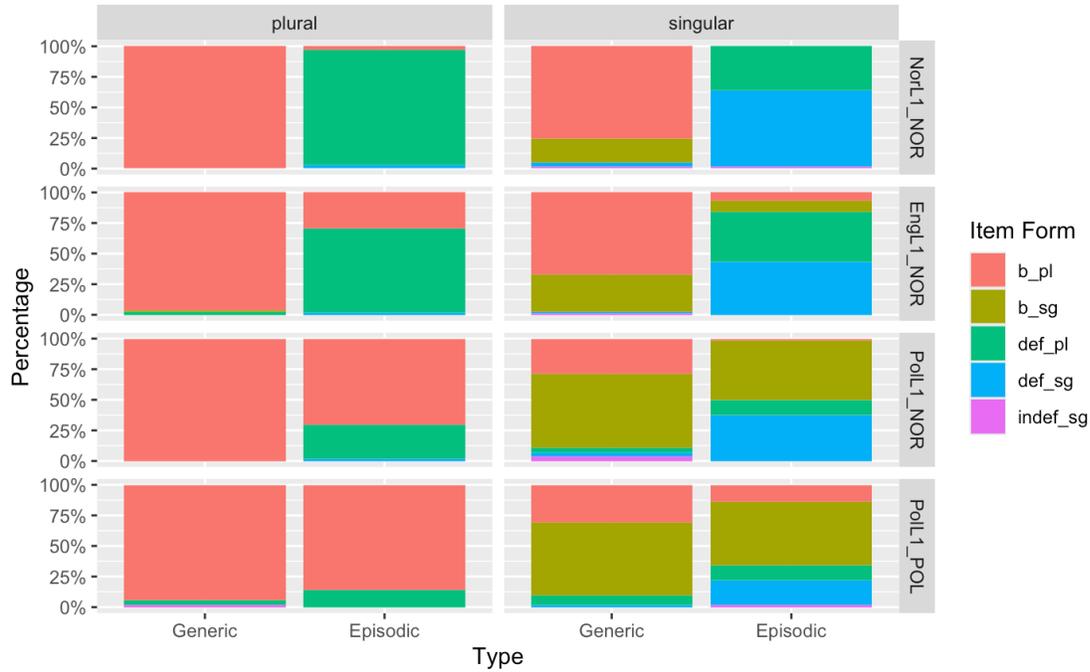


Figure 1: Overview of responses across groups and conditions

Table 1: Estimated probabilities of using the plural NP in generic and episodic conditions

Group	Condition	prob	SE	asympt.LCL	asympt.UCL
Nor	generic	0.006583	0.005310	1.35e ⁻⁰³	0.03151
Eng	generic	0.001786	0.002180	1.62e ⁻⁰⁴	0.01931
PolN	generic	0.000139	0.000282	2.60e ⁻⁰⁶	0.00728
PolP	generic	0.001616	0.002420	8.57e ⁻⁰⁵	0.02966
Nor	episodic	0.987394	0.009980	9.42e ⁻⁰¹	0.99735
Eng	episodic	0.900883	0.080400	6.09e ⁻⁰¹	0.98149
PolN	episodic	0.106159	0.086700	1.94e ⁻⁰²	0.41568
PolP	episodic	0.022016	0.023000	2.76e ⁻⁰³	0.15496

Table 2: Selected pairwise comparisons from the multinomial mixed-effects model for singular contexts

Contrast	Odds.ratio	SE	z.ratio	p-value
Nor-Eng generic	3.705	4.440	1.093	0.9585
Nor-PolN generic	47.575	88.200	2.082	0.4264
Nor-PolP generic	4.093	5.650	1.022	0.9713
Nor-Eng episodic	8.617	8.220	2.257	0.3180
Nor-PolN episodic	659.477	905.000	4.732	0.0001
Nor-PolP episodic	3479.253	5380.000	5.277	<.0001

I can't get no native-like interpretation: Negative Concord in L2-English and L2-Russian

Native speakers (NSs) of a Double Negation (DN) language are known to struggle with acquisition of Negative Concord (NC) in a second language (L2) (Alexandrino, 2010; Seaman et al., 2023; Yamada, 2022). The present study investigates L2 acquisition of NCIs, negative elements used with sentential negation to yield a single negative reading (Giannakidou, 2000). Non-Strict NC languages (e.g., Spanish) asymmetrically require sentential negation with object NCIs (1a) and disallow it with subject NCIs (1b). Strict NC languages (e.g., Russian) require a negative marker with both subject (2a) and object NCIs (2b). DN languages (e.g., standard English) prohibit NC regardless of position (3a-b) (Zeijlstra, 2004).

L1 transfer effects have been found in L1-English L2-Spanish acquisition of *object* NCI constructions (Alexandrino, 2010; Yamada, 2022). Little is known about L1-English acquisition of *subject* NCI constructions. Crucially, standard English NSs have latent Non-Strict NC, tending to interpret double negatives with negative objects as single negation (e.g., (3a) = 'He ate nothing') and those with negative subjects as universal (e.g., (3b) = 'Everyone ate food', the two negative elements cancelling each other out, the only way to interpret (3b) without NC) (Blanchette, 2017; Blanchette & Lukyanenko, 2019). Unrealized, yet grammatical NC structures found in standard English are realized in other English dialects (Barbiers, 2009; Green, 2014). L2 acquisition of a DN language such as English with variable NC input is understudied. We address these gaps by testing subject & object NCIs with L1-English L2-Russian and L1-Russian L2-English learners.

(1a) <i>Él no comió nada.</i> he NEG ate nothing 'He ate nothing.'	(2a) <i>On nich-ego ne el.</i> he nothing-GEN NEG ate 'He ate nothing.'	(3a) %He didn't eat nothing. N= 'He ate nothing.' U= 'He ate everything.'
(b) <i>Nadie comió comida.</i> no one ate food 'No one ate food.'	(b) <i>Nikto ne el ed-u.</i> no one NEG ate food-ACC 'No one ate food.'	(b) %No one didn't eat food. N= 'No one ate food.' U= 'Everyone ate food.'

20 L1-Russian L2-English learners completed English and Russian versions of the same materials; 23 L1-English L2-Russian learners completed the English version, and 17 of them also completed the Russian version. L2ers in both languages had intermediate to advanced L2 proficiency. All L1-English participants spoke a non-NC-producing variety of English. The main test instrument was a 72-item Picture Matching Task (PMT). The Russian PMT manipulated subject and object type (definite DP/NCI). The English PMT had these factors as well as presence/absence of sentential negation and excluded the highly unacceptable subject NCI-object NCI conditions (Table 1). Three possible interpretations were presented for each sentence (Table 2). Participants also completed an Acceptability Judgment Task, for which responses were native-like across groups (acceptance of sentences with multiple negative elements and rejection of sentences without NC in native & L2-Russian; the opposite in native and L2-English).

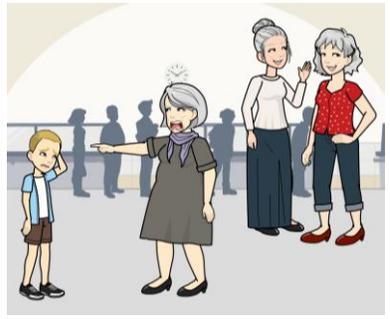
Results (Table 1). In the English PMT, for conditions with an NCI and sentential negation, L2ers gave significantly more negative interpretations than NSs ($p < .005$), aligning with transfer of Strict NC from Russian. L2-English interpretations of subject vs. object NCIs did not differ ($p > .05$). For English NSs, Non-Strict NC preferences surfaced in the English PMT, with NCI type (subject vs. object) and negation both significant (both $p < .0001$); English NSs interpreted subject NCIs with sentential negation as universal significantly more than object NCIs ($p < .0001$). This asymmetry transferred to the Russian PMT, where subject type (definite DP/NCI) had a significant effect ($p < .01$) for L2ers but not NSs. Thus, L2 acquisition of negative sentences is susceptible to L1 transfer in both L2-English and L2-Russian. Furthermore, we have shown that L1-English unrealized grammatical Non-Strict NC transfers to L2-Russian.

Table 1. PMT Conditions and Percent Selection of Pictures.

Condition (with examples)	Target picture	% Selection of interpretation			
		English		Russian	
		NS	L2	NS	L2
Subject DP, no negation, object DP <i>One grandmother is scolding the child.</i>	E: Ex	Ex: 100.0	Ex: 97.5	N/A	N/A
Subject DP, negation, object DP <i>dve babushk-i ne rugaj-ut rebyonk-a</i> two grandmother-GEN NEG scold-3PL child-GEN <i>Two grandmothers aren't scolding the child.</i>	E/R: Ex	Ex: 95.6	Ex: 88.8	Ex: 100.0	Ex: 95.8
Subject DP, no negation, object NCI <i>The grandmothers are scolding no child.</i>	E: N	N: 97.1	N: 98.1	N/A	N/A
Subject DP, negation, object NCI <i>babushk-i ne rugaj-ut nikak-ogo rebyonk-a</i> grandmother-PL.NOM NEG scold-3PL no-GEN child-GEN <i>The grandmothers aren't scolding no child.</i>	R: N E: N/U	N: 55.9 U: 44.1	N: 71.3 U: 25.6	N: 97.5	N: 94.4
Subject NCI, no negation, object DP <i>No grandmother is scolding the child.</i>	E: N	N: 97.1	N: 95.0	N/A	N/A
Subject NCI, negation, object DP <i>ni odna babushka ne rugaj-et rebyonk-a</i> not one grandmother.NOM NEG scold-3SG child-GEN <i>No grandmother isn't scolding the child.</i>	R: N E: N/U	N: 8.1 U: 91.2	N: 62.5 U: 30.0	N: 98.3	N: 86.8 U: 6.3
Subject NCI, negation, object NCI <i>ni odna babushka ne rugaj-et nikak-ogo rebyonk-a</i> not one grandmother.NOM NEG scold-3SG no-GEN child-GEN	R: N	N/A	N/A	N: 98.3	N: 89.9 U: 7.6

(N = Negative, U = Universal, Ex = Existential; R = predictions for Russian; E = predictions for English; Results showing L1 transfer effects and Non-Strict NC asymmetry are shaded in gray)

Table 2. Sample PMT Picture Choices for Sentences in Table 2.

Negative: no one scolds	Universal: every grandmother scolds	Existential: some don't scold
		

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Systems of Form–Meaning Mappings in Additional Language Acquisition

Identifying the sources of learning difficulty has been a central concern in additional language acquisition (L2/L3/Ln) research (Lardiere 2009; Slabakova 2008; White 2003). This presentation examines published data on the acquisition of one property—**generic sentences** (examples 1–3)—to discover and explore new generalizations. Generic meanings are universal so that all languages express them; marking genericity through functional morphemes such as articles and number inflection, however, varies across languages. I compare acquisition tasks and sources of crosslinguistic influence (CLI), proposing smaller analytical units—**form–meaning mappings (FMMs)**—and a new measure of difficulty, **paradigm pressure**. Three FMM types are analyzed.

1. Coinciding exponents across languages

When exponents align, acquisition should be straightforward. Snape, García Mayo, and Gürel (2013) investigated English L2 genericity knowledge in learners with Japanese, Spanish, and Turkish L1s. As Turkish and Japanese do not have definite articles, the bare plurals in those languages *superficially overlap* with English bare plurals (e.g., *lions*). However, results show error rates in the range of 25% with these forms, contradicting the obvious prediction. Similarly, Velnić, Slabakova, and Dahl (2025) reported that Polish L1–English L2 learners of L3 Norwegian performed inaccurately even on superficially “nativelike” FMMs as in (3).

2. Acquisition of new genericity exponents

Learning a new form is predicted to be more difficult than detecting an overlapping form. Velnić, Slabakova and Dahl (in press) asked whether learning a new form is easier than readjusting the meaning of a native form. Testing the same multilinguals (Polish L1–English L2–Norwegian L3), the study established successful acquisition of a new form—the definite article—but difficulty acquiring the restrictions on its use, resulting in overgeneralization. In L2A, Park and Gil (2016) and Ionin, Montrul, Kim and Philippov (2011) examine similar learning situations and provide more evidence for the difficulty of this FMM.

3. FMM reassembly

This learning task should pose the greatest challenge, yet findings are mixed. Slabakova (2006) compared English and Italian learners’ interpretations of bare plurals in both directions (see readings in [4]). English-to-Italian acquisition proved to be harder, requiring learners to “unlearn” a more frequent English interpretation; hence English learners of Italian performed 20% less accurately than Italian learners of English. Additional evidence from Ionin, Montrul, and Crivos (2013) supports the complexity of reassembly processes, as well as the importance of the acquisition task (learning from positive evidence or unlearning).

Conclusion

Taking stock, the three learning situations above do not provide a clear hierarchy of facility on their own, suggesting that other factors may mediate difficulty. Acquiring genericity marking is a **systemic, multi-stage process**. Learners do not acquire generic meaning as a single property but through individual FMMs shaped by factors such as paradigm structure, frequency, input evidence, exposure, and proficiency. Simple CLI-based predictions are therefore insufficient. **Paradigm pressure**—the number and complexity of FMMs in a given language pair/triple, including morpheme polysemy and feature bundling (Bogliani 2024)—offers a better predictor: more complex functional morphology systems yield greater learning difficulty.

Examples:

- (1) Birds fly. CHARACTERIZING READING
- (2) Dinosaurs are extinct. KIND READING
- (3) Det er sunt å ha hund. TYPE-DENOTING READING
it is healthy to have dog
'It is healthy to have a dog.'
- (4) At 5, the Creator is going to see white-colored elephants.
English readings: *some* white elephants (EXISTENTIAL) AND *all* white elephants (KIND)
Italian reading: ONLY some white elephants (EXISTENTIAL)

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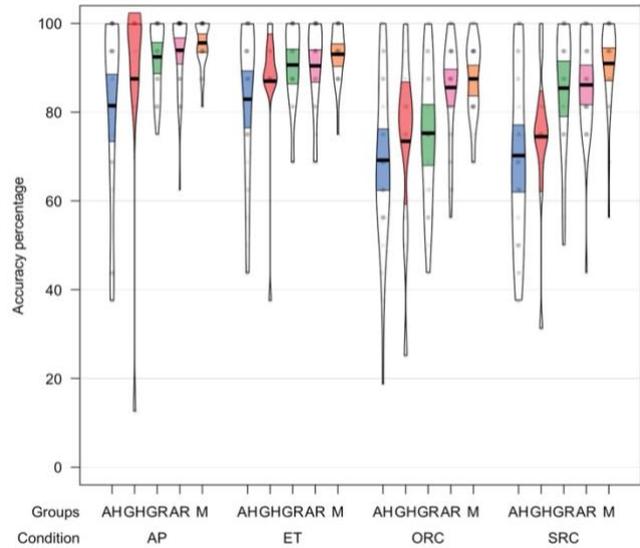
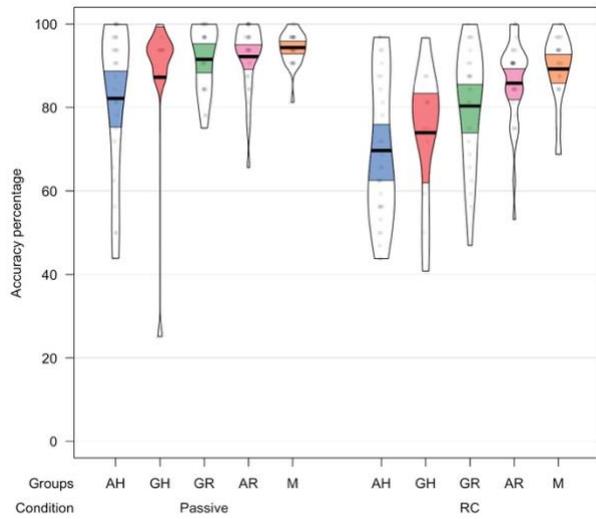
Reactivation of Turkish morphosyntax in Turkish-American and Turkish-German returnees

This study examines heritage language (HL) acquisition and reactivation of Turkish morphosyntax in two contexts: Germany and United States. Heritage speakers (HS) exhibit significant variability in the domain of morphosyntax (Polinsky, 2018). We ask whether the observed HS variability can be overcome if HS are tested in a naturalistic setting, when they are fully immersed in and using the HL in a majority language context (i.e., in the homeland). To this end, we test *returnees*: HS born in an immigration context who returned to their country of origin in later years (Flores, 2020). Turkish immigrants in Germany are reported to have a higher degree of language maintenance than those in the US due to such factors as endogamous marriages, opportunities for exposure to and experience with Turkish through frequent visits to Turkey, access to Turkish media, an abundance of Turkish organizations and a high density of social networks (Backus, 2004). We ask: Do Turkish-German and Turkish-American groups show any differences in the degree to which they acquire and reactivate relative clauses (RCs) and passives in Turkish.

Thirty Turkish HS in the US and 12 Turkish HS in Germany¹ are compared to 34 Turkish-American returnees and 24 Turkish-German returnees with varying ages of return (AoR) to Turkey (in childhood or adulthood) as well as 30 Turkish monolinguals in Turkey (i.e., the baseline group) using a context-based Acceptability Judgement Task (AJT) and a Sentence Repetition Task (SRT).

Analysis of the data (binomial logistic regression models) indicated that both German and American HS groups ($p < .001$) as well as Turkish-German returnees ($p = .03$) had significantly lower accuracy rates than the monolinguals in their judgements of RCs in the AJT. While Turkish-American returnees significantly outperformed Turkish HS in the US, no such difference was found in the Turkish-German groups. In their judgements of passives, only the Turkish HS in the US were significantly less accurate than the monolinguals ($p = .02$) (Figure 1). There were no significant differences between different types of passives (Agent-patient vs. Experiencer-theme) in any of the groups (Figure 2). However, Turkish-German returnees showed significantly lower accuracy in judging ORCs than in SRCs ($p < .001$). Data transcription and analysis for the SRT (production) data of the Turkish-German bilingual groups are ongoing. However, Turkish-American returnees were target-like in producing RCs and passives in Turkish in the SRT (Figure 3). Finally, correlations between accuracy percentages, AoR to Turkey, length of residence (LoR) in Turkey and degree of contact with the former dominant language (English or German) of Turkish-American and Turkish-German returnees (Figure 4) were not significant, suggesting that irrespective of these factors, Turkish-American returnees show complete reactivation of Turkish morphosyntax. Although Turkish HS in Germany do not significantly differ from their counterparts in the US, Turkish-German returnees show less convergence towards target-like judgements of RCs than Turkish-American returnees. However, it may be premature to draw any firm conclusions before analyzing the production data of Turkish-German returnees from the SRT, as the observed pattern could simply reflect a task-related effect. Taken together, these findings provide a unique angle on the roles of age of acquisition and input factors in the acquisition and maintenance of a native language acquired in two distinct bilingual contexts.

¹ Data collection from the Turkish-German bilingual groups is ongoing.



Figures 1&2. Mean accuracy percentages in the AJT by group and condition

Note. AH = American heritage (Turkish HS in the US), AP = Agent-patient passives, AR = Turkish-American returnee, ET = Experience-theme passives, GH = German heritage (Turkish HS in Germany), GR = Turkish-German returnee, M = Monolingual, ORC = Object relative clauses, SRC = Subject relative clauses

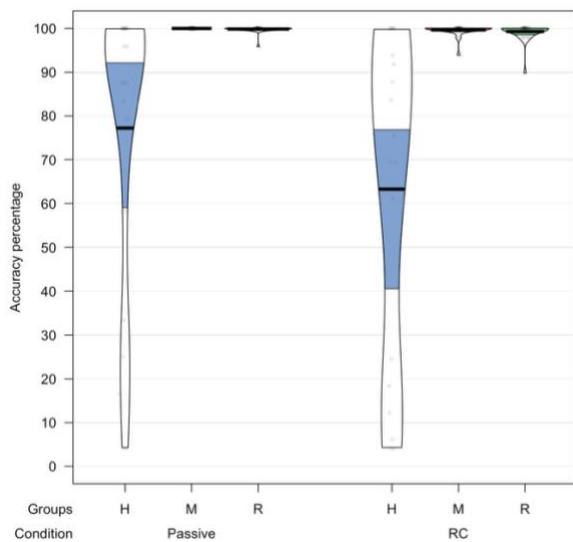


Figure 3. Mean accuracy percentages in the SRT by condition in Turkish-American HS and returnees

Note. H = (American) Heritage, M = Monolingual, R = (Turkish-American) returnee

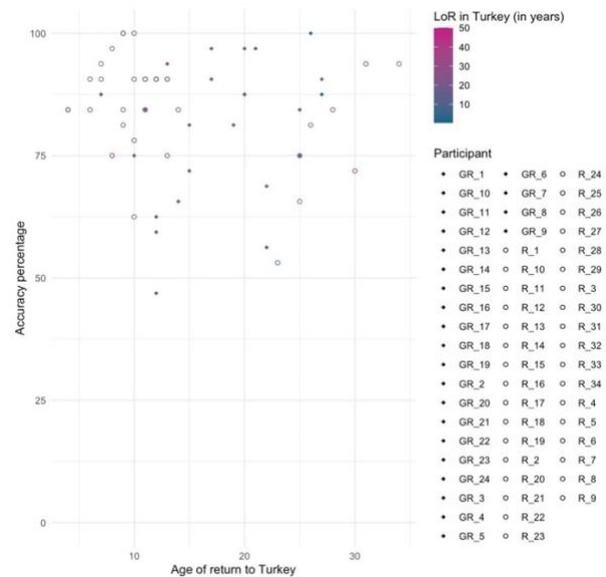


Figure 4. Correlation between mean accuracy percentages, LoR and AoR to Turkey in Turkish-American and Turkish-German returnees in the AJT

References: Backus 2004: Convergence as a mechanism of language change • Flores 2020: Attrition and Reactivation of a Childhood Language: The Case of Returnee Heritage Speakers • Polinsky 2018: Heritage Languages and Their Speakers

Relativized Minimality and featural mismatches in L2:
Is there an age advantage?

There has been considerable investigation of the acquisition and processing of object relative clauses (ORCs), conducted within the framework of Relativized Minimality (RM) (Rizzi 1990). ORCs, as in (1a), are known to cause difficulties in L1 acquisition (e.g., Adani et al. 2010) and in adult processing (e.g. Gordon et al. 2001). This is attributed to the subject of the relative clause intervening between the head noun (the object) and its source position, potentially making interpretation harder. Subject relative clauses (SRCs), on the other hand, have no such intervenor; compare (1a) and (1b). Extending this account to involve a consideration of features, Friedmann et al. (2009) propose that a mismatch between features on the head and the intervenor may make processing easier. In (2), the mismatch involves the number feature (singular versus plural).

- (1) a. The hippo that **the rhino** is washing _ has climbed onto the stool. (ORC)
b. The hippo that is washing the rhino has climbed onto the stool. (SRC)

- (2) The hippo that **the rhinos** are washing _ has climbed onto the stool. (ORC, mismatch)

Mismatch effects have also been investigated in L2. As far as number is concerned, no mismatch advantage has been found across studies looking at several different L1s and L2s, and with variations in the sentence types examined (e.g., Franciotti & Martohardjono 2022; Owerdieck & Hopp 2023; Xia et al. 2022, 2024). However, so far, research has only addressed late L2 learners. We hypothesize that people who learn the L2 at a young age will show featural effects; in other words, they will be more sensitive to number mismatches than late learners.

Participants in this study consisted of adult heritage Spanish/English bilinguals ($n = 28$), whose mean age of acquisition of English was 5. A second group includes Spanish-speaking late learners of English ($n = 35$), whose mean age of acquisition of English was 15. In addition, there was a group of native English controls ($n = 33$). A cloze test showed that the early bilinguals and late bilinguals had the same mean English proficiency.

Our predictions are that early bilinguals (unlike late L2ers) will show a mismatch effect, yielding: (i) greater accuracy on mismatched ORCs and (ii) faster processing of mismatched ORCs. Our study combined a moving window self-paced reading task with a picture selection task. Sentences (similar to (1) and (2)) were presented in segments, each sentence followed by a set of 4 pictures to choose from; see Figure 1. Reading times (RTs) were measured by segment and for the entire sentence. There were 8 sets of 4 sentences manipulating RC type (subject/object) and intervenor type (\pm singular, i.e., matched or mismatched), plus 8 distractor sets. Accuracy (measured by number of correct picture choices) was analyzed with logistic mixed-effects regressions, RTs with linear mixed-effects regressions.

Results for accuracy are shown in Figure 2. Participants are generally accurate in interpreting RCs, showing an accuracy advantage for SRCs over ORCs for all groups ($p < .001$), consistent with the RM proposal for intervention effects. As far as featural effects are concerned, looking at ORCs, participants in general are more accurate on mismatched items, as featural RM proposes ($p < .05$).

RT results are shown in Figure 3. Each group showed slower responses to ORCs than SRCs ($p < .004$), again consistent with RM, but there was no statistical advantage for mismatched items for any group, either at the relevant segment or as a whole.

In conclusion, all groups showed an advantage for SRCs over ORCs in both accuracy and RTs, in accordance with RM. However, contrary to hypothesis, earlier acquisition of English did not convey an advantage over later acquisition as far as featural mismatches are concerned. While a number mismatch did benefit accuracy for ORCs, this was not restricted to the early bilinguals. Furthermore, a number mismatch did not convey a processing advantage for any group, including the native speakers. We will speculate on the reasons for this failure.

Figure 1. Sample stimulus

The athlete/who/the sailors/were pushing/was wearing/a gold uniform/.

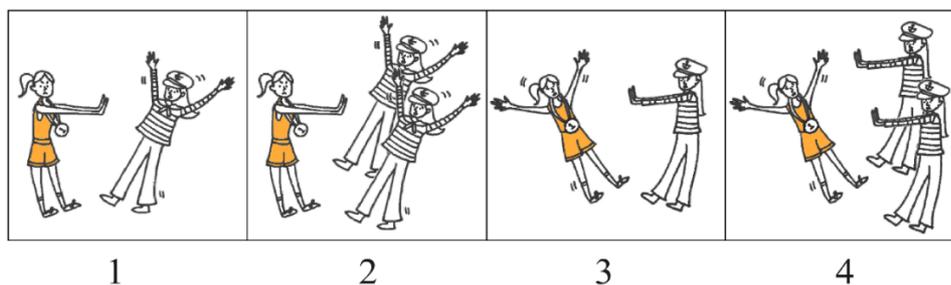


Figure 2. Accuracy by group, RC type and NP match

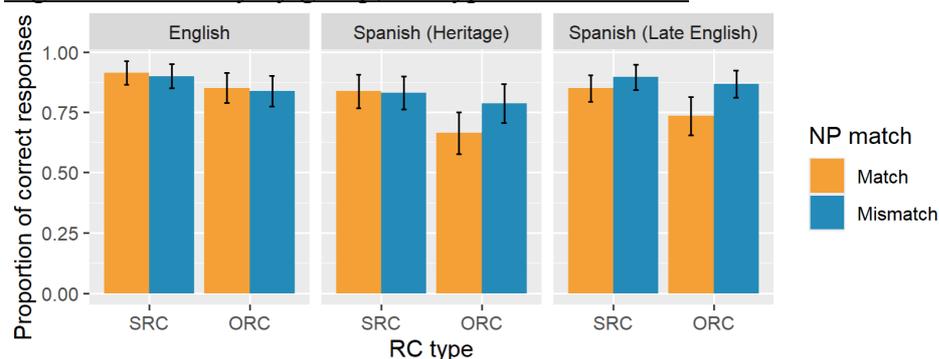
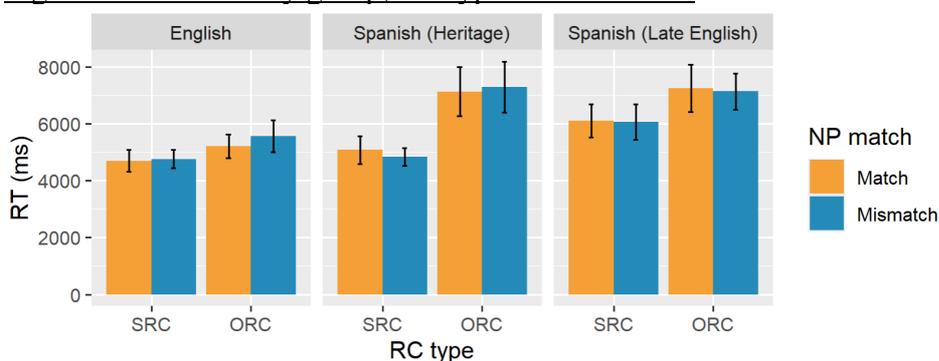


Figure 3. Total RTs by group, RC type and NP match



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DPs, Weak Pronouns and Strong Pronouns Subject–Verb Code-Switches: Beyond the “Phonetic Interface Form Condition”

Subject–verb switches involving Determiner Phrase (DP) subjects (*this student parle japonais / cet étudiant speaks Japanese*) are produced and accepted by bilinguals from different language pairs while pronominal subject–verb switches (*I parle japonais / je speak Japanese*) are seldom found in spontaneous speech and are highly dispreferred regardless of language dominance (Jake, 1994; Van Gelderen & MacSwan, 2008; Fernandez-Fuertes et al., 2016). This dichotomy has been accounted for by the ‘Phonetic Form Interface Condition’ (PFIC) (MacSwan & Colina 2014), which is said to prevent mixed-language complex heads involving a weak pronoun and a verb. Therefore, if we assume that strong pronouns, such as the French or Moroccan Arabic pronouns in *moi dxlt* (I went in) or *nta vas travailler* (you go to work), behave like DPs, these sequences would be accepted because the PFIC would not be violated. However, the results of a Forced-Choice Task and an Acceptability Judgement Task administered to three groups of adult bilinguals (French dominant, Spanish dominant and Spanish Heritage French–Spanish bilinguals) by Ayala-Nájera (2018) and Liceras & Garcia-Alcaraz (2024) did not reveal any preference for strong pronouns (*lui speaks Japanese*) or strong–weak pronoun sequences (*lui, il speaks Japanese*) over weak pronouns (*il speaks Japanese*) by any of the groups.

This lack of differentiation between the two classes of pronouns is not predicted by MacSwan & Colina’s PFIC, but because the above data was obtained via written experimental tasks, we designed and administered an oral code-switched Forced Choice Task in order to determine whether the oral data would display a difference between the two types of pronouns and whether French dominant French/Spanish bilinguals were more sensitive to the phonological status of the clitic subject pronouns than Spanish dominant French/Spanish bilinguals. Together with the oral task, the participants (20 Spanish dominant and 15 French dominant French/Spanish bilinguals) were asked to complete a French/Spanish version of the *Bilingual Language Profile* (Birdsong et al. 2012) to determine whether there was a relationship between the bilingual score obtained from this questionnaire and the subject–verb code-switching preferences shown by the bilinguals.

The results of the oral task indicate (figure 1 and 2), as with the written data, that the DP/Pronominal subject divide does not provide evidence for MacSwan & Colina’s (2014) PFIC if interpreted as differentiating weak from strong pronouns.

Given the different morphosyntactic effects that are involved in the asymmetries which exist between the different classes of pronouns (Cardinaletti & Starke, 1999), we could suggest that in a code-switching structure, the status of DPs (not case-marked) and strong and clitic pronouns (case-marked) may be located in the syntax proper. In other words, we could suggest that the preference for DPs is due to their being [-case], while pronouns are [+case], be it nominative or dative case. While it is a fact that no version of the Minimalist theory posits a [+/-case] feature to differentiate types of arguments, our code-switching data points to the fact that feature valuation (Pesetsky and Torrego 2001) is more problematic for pronominal+V switches than for DP+V switches, and it is a fact that French DPs are not case-marked. Therefore, we would like to suggest that to test whether the DP/pronoun dichotomy found in our code-switching data stems from the role of abstract case, the acceptability of Subject DPs and Subject Pronouns–Verb switches in a language with DPs which are case marked should be investigated.

Figure 1. Results Oral FCT: Dominant language French Subject + Spanish Verb sequences

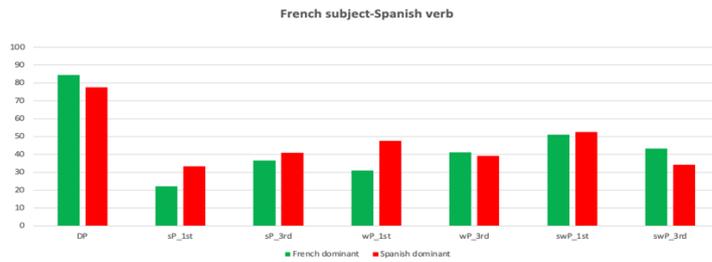


Figure 2. Results Oral FCT: French Subject + Spanish Verb sequences

	Determiner Phrase	Strong 1st person	Strong 3rd person	Weak pronoun (1&3 person combined)	Strong-Weak 1st person	Strong-Weak 3rd person
Determiner Phrase						
Strong 1st person	DP PREFERRED t(34) = 6.599, p= < .001					
Strong 3rd person	DP PREFERRED t(34) = 5.305, p= < .001	STRONG 3rd PERSON PREFERRED t(34) = -2.145, p= .039				
Weak pronoun (1&3 person combined)	DP PREFERRED t(34) = 5.119, p= < .001	WEAK PRONOUN (1&3 PERSON COMBINED) PREFERRED t(34) = -3.128, p= .004	NO PREFERENCE t(34) = -0.244, p= .808			
Strong-Weak 1st person	DP PREFERRED t(34) = 4.400, p= < .001	STRONG-WEAK 1ST PERSON PREFERRED t(34) = -3.767, p= < .001	NO PREFERENCE t(34) = -1.802, p= .080	NO PREFERENCE t(34) = -1.894, p= .067		
Strong-Weak 3rd person	DP PREFERRED t(34) = 6.590, p= < .001	NO PREFERENCE t(34) = -1.321, p= .195	NO PREFERENCE t(34) = 0.201, p= .842	NO PREFERENCE t(34) = 0.376, p= .709	STRONG-WEAK 1ST PERSON PREFERRED t(34) = 2.079, p= .045	

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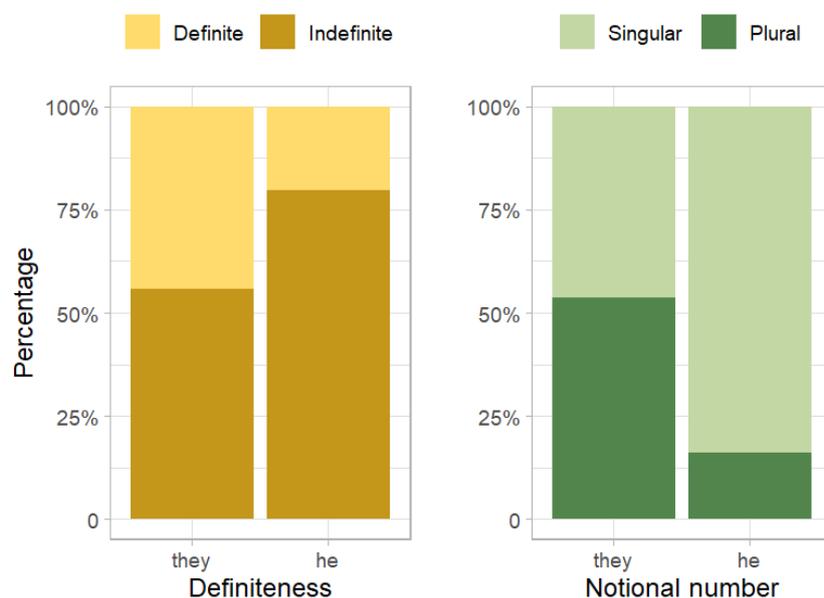
Singular *they* in second language (L2) production: a feature-based account

Functional categories such as pronouns often pose persistent difficulty for L2 learners. Singular *they* in English has become a widely used alternation of the traditional generic *he* to refer to individuals without specifying gender, promoting inclusive language use. This shift requires speakers to disassociate grammatical number from notional numberⁱ while preserving plural agreement (*they are* not **they is*). For L2 learners, matching this evolving English system may pose a mapping/reassembly challenge. In Mandarin Chinese, pronouns encode person (lexically) and number (via the plural marker *-men*) but not grammatical gender. The third-person singular pronoun *ta* ('he/she/it') is phonologically identical across gender and animacy, with differentiations appearing only orthographically (他/她/它). A learner's choice of generic *he* or singular *they* in English is influenced by properties that contribute towards how 'individuated' their antecedent is perceived as; previous L2 studies (with non-Chinese speakers) find that definite, notionally singular antecedents (*the student*) elicit generic *he*, whereas indefinite, notionally plural ones (*any student*) trigger singular *they* (e.g., Stormbom, 2022). We test these factors in Chinese learners' writings, to evaluate the potential influence of antecedent properties and feature-reassembly challenges in light of their unique L1 pronoun system. **Methodology** We sampled 2000 tokens of *they* and 2000 tokens of *he* from the *Ten-thousand English Compositions of Chinese Learners* (TECCL, Xue, 2015), by 1094 university-level learners, and analysed the distributions of their antecedents by definiteness and notional number. **Results**ⁱⁱ Mixed-effects modelling revealed significant effects of an antecedent's definiteness and notional numberⁱⁱⁱ on learners' pronoun choice (Table 1): use of generic *he* was largely constrained by these factors, whilst singular *they* was used more flexibly (Figure 1). **Discussion** Within the *Feature Reassembly Hypothesis* (FRH; Lardiere, 2008, 2009), when learning English third-person pronouns, Chinese-speaking learners map *he* and *she* to the feature set for *ta* in their L1, then add natural gender features to this L1-based feature set. When acquiring generic *he*, they need to create another representation in their interlanguage grammar; although gender neutrality is already available from their L1, they still face feature reassembly tasks (e.g., person, definiteness, specificity). This creates a demanding process that potentially constrains the use of generic *he*, whose antecedents are similar to those of gendered *he* (i.e., largely notionally singular). By contrast, acquiring singular *they* could be more straightforward. In learning plural *they*, learners would likely have established the mapping route from *they* to *ta-men* (both plural and gender neutral). Because Chinese learners already possess the relevant feature bundle (i.e., gender neutrality), acquiring singular *they* largely reduces to a semantic-pragmatic reinterpretation of notional number, i.e., accepting singular reference under plural morphology, which is arguably a less costly adjustment. Consequently, learners employ *they* with greater flexibility regardless of an antecedent's definiteness and number conditions. The flexible use of singular *they* with inanimate antecedents (e.g., *the death penalty, our education*) found in our sample further supports this interpretation. Gender-marked pronouns (*he, she*) and plural *they* are explicitly taught in L2 English instructions, whereas there is no evidence that singular *they* is part of formal mainstream curricula or is systematically taught^{iv}. Thus, if instruction is limited, we argue that the occurrence and flexible use of singular *they* in learners' production may result from incidental input, which in this case appears to have facilitated its acquisition.^v The use of *singular they* therefore provides an ideal testing ground for examining how incidental input supports the acquisition of emerging linguistic forms that are not yet widely represented in textbooks or other types of instruction.

Table 1: Results of the Generalised Linear Mixed-Effects Model

(model<-glmer(formula = Token ~ Definiteness + Number + (1|ID), family = binomial, nAGQ = 0, data = TECCL)

Parameters	Fixed effects			
	Estimate	SE	z value	Pr(> z)
(Intercept)	0.1105	0.2765	0.400	0.68942
Definiteness_indefinite	1.1663	0.3218	3.624	0.00029 ***
Number_plural	-1.8401	0.3217	-5.719	1.07e-08 ***
Random effects				
Groups	Name	Variance	SD	
ID	(Intercept)	0.3127	0.5592	

Figure 1: Distributions of the antecedents by definiteness and notional numbersingular *they*: definiteness (definite 44% vs. indefinite 56%), notional number (plural 54% vs. singular 46%)generic *he*: definiteness (definite 19% vs. indefinite 81%), notional number (plural 17% vs. singular 83%)

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ⁱ For example, in *Everyone is in the classroom*, the verb agrees with the grammatically singular subject, but the referent set is notionally plural, since *everyone* refers to all the individuals in that context.

ⁱⁱ We identified 106 tokens for singular *they* (produced by 94 learners) and 143 tokens for generic *he* (produced by 129 learners). All statistical analyses were conducted on these tokens.

ⁱⁱⁱ Model fit indices (marginal $R^2 = .236$; conditional $R^2 = .302$) indicate that definiteness and notional number together account for about one-third of the variance in learners' pronoun choice, with the remainder likely reflecting input, proficiency, and individual sensitivity to sociolinguistic norms.

^{iv} The TECCL corpus was produced approximately 10 years ago, and although singular *they* may be mentioned in some more recent teaching contexts, its instructional status remains unclear. Future research using newer learner corpora would help determine whether classroom practices have since changed.

^v Although our corpus-based approach is not a direct test of FRH, the observed patterns appear consistent with its predictions. Future experimental research (e.g., elicitation tasks) is needed to confirm the present account.

L3 effects in the acquisition of L2-English causative psych verbs by L1-Thai speakers

Current L3 models, e.g., the Typological Primacy Model (Rothman, 2010), the Linguistic Proximity Model (Westergaard et al., 2017), and the Scalpel Model (Slabakova, 2017), aim to explain transfer from previously acquired languages (L1 and/or L2). However, recent studies have reported transfer from an L3 on an L1 and an L2 (Cabrelli Amaro, 2017) and enhancement of L2 representations by an L3 when the two non-native languages are similar suggesting cumulative regressive transfer (Park & García Mayo, 2023; Tsang, 2016; Velnić et al., 2025).

The current study examined L3 effects in the acquisition of L2-English causative psych verbs by L1-Thai speakers. Participants included 14 L1-English, 19 L1-Thai L2-English, and 26 L1-Thai L2-English L3-Spanish speakers, who all completed an English proficiency test and an English 7-point acceptability judgment task (AJT) (1 = ‘completely unacceptable’ and 7 = ‘completely acceptable’). The L2 and L3 groups also completed a vocabulary translation task (VTT) included to examine learners’ knowledge of the structure and meaning of causative psych verbs. The L3 group, additionally, took a Spanish proficiency test. The L1-Thai groups were not different in English proficiency ($p > .05$) but both different from L1-English speakers ($ps < .001$).

The AJT comprised two experimental lists featuring two causative psych forms: lexical (*surprise*) and periphrastic (*make someone surprised*), a structure with the causative verb *make* (see examples in Table 1). While English and Spanish permit both forms, the periphrastic form is the only available structure in Thai for expressing causative psych events. It was predicted that the L3 group would prefer the periphrastic form less than the L2 group when comparing the two forms as the L2 group would show greater L1 influence while the L3 group would benefit from a similar structure in Spanish. The VTT included words used in the AJT including psych verbs. In Thai, translating causative psych verbs requires a causative verb and an adjectival psych predicate. In this task, the L3 group was expected to show higher accuracy due to L3 cumulative effects.

Cumulative link mixed models used for the analysis of the rating data indicated that the L1 group rated the periphrastic form as marginally less acceptable than the lexical form ($\beta = -.84$, $p = .052$, $d = .79$). In contrast, the L2 and L3 groups did not differentiate between the two forms ($ps > .05$). Descriptively, however, while the L2 group showed a preference for the periphrastic form, the L3 group rated the lexical form higher than the periphrastic one (Table 2). Generalized linear mixed-effects models showed no statistically significant difference in translation accuracy between the L2 and L3 groups ($\beta = .69$, $p > .01$, OR = 2). However, descriptive data indicated slightly higher accuracy of causative psych verbs in the L3 group (Table 3). Overall, no statistically significant difference emerged between the L2 and L3 groups possibly due to the small sample size in the current experiment. However, based on descriptive statistics, there exists a trend suggesting that L3 Spanish may influence L2 English representations. The L3 group’s more target-like performance in the AJT and greater accuracy in the VTT point toward cumulative crosslinguistic influence from L3 Spanish to L2 English, potentially supporting cumulative regressive transfer.

Besides the preliminary findings reported above, more data will be collected from two additional groups. First, L3-Spanish speakers will complete the tasks in Spanish to ensure that they have acquired causative psych verbs in Spanish. L1-Spanish speakers will thus be recruited to serve as the control group in the Spanish experiment. Second, it is more logical to compare L3-Spanish speakers to another L3 group to minimize a multilingualism effect (Velnić et al., 2025). Since Korean, like Thai, lacks causative psych verbs, L3-Korean speakers will be recruited and compared to L3-Spanish speakers to examine L3 effects on L2 English. Data collection and analysis will be completed by the conference dates.

Table 1: Examples of Test Items in the Two Conditions (lexical vs. periphrastic causatives)

Form	Sentence
Lexical form	Peter never disappoints his parents.
Periphrastic form	Peter never makes his parents disappointed.

Table 2: Mean Rating Scores in the AJT with SD in Parentheses

Form	L1-English	L2 group	L3 group
Lexical form	6.36 (.49)	5.99 (1.19)	5.72 (1.17)
Periphrastic form	5.87 (.7)	6.31 (.89)	5.49 (1.12)

Table 3: Translation Accuracy in the VTT

Group	Response	Raw count	Proportion
L2 group	Correct	116	55.5%
	Incorrect	93	45.5%
L3 group	Correct	175	61.2%
	Incorrect	111	38.8%

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Second language acquisition of optional plural marking in Korean

This study examines the acquisition of optional plural marker -tul in second language (L2) Korean. Although -tul is known to be optional, Native Speakers (NSs) are more likely to use -tul in definite contexts and with [+Human] nouns, but less likely to do so in counting contexts with numeral-classifiers (NCs) and with [-Human] nouns (Kang, 1994; Hwang & Lardiere, 2013). We investigate whether Korean L2ers can acquire these complex conditions on the realization of -tul, which are not explicitly taught in the classroom, and to what extent plural marking in their L1 influences this process. To this end, we examine two L1 groups: L1-English (L1E) L2ers, whose L1 has obligatory plural marking, and L1-Mandarin (L1M) L2ers, whose L1 optional plural marking is more restricted than -tul (Table 1). This allows us to investigate whether it is more challenging to restrict the use of plural marking (L1E L2ers) or to expand its use (L1M L2ers).

We used an elicited written production task (EPT) and an acceptability judgment task (AJT). The EPT included [+/-Human] nouns with dem(onstrative) or numeral cues (4 conditions, 4 tokens per condition, Table 2). Each item consisted of a picture and a set of words; participants typed a description of the picture using the given words. The AJT crossed Humanness, Tul-marking, and CL(assifier) (8 conditions, 4 tokens per condition, Table 3). Participants rated sentences like (1) on a 1-to-5 scale. Both tasks included fillers, and used the Latin-square design to distribute tokens across lists. L2ers completed all tasks, including a Korean C-test (Lee-Ellis 2009), during two sessions over Zoom. All L1-English L2ers (mean proficiency = 44%, range = 15–79%) were residing in the United States, while all L1-Mandarin L2ers (mean proficiency = 66%, range = 17–88%) were residing in South Korea at the time of testing.

The preliminary **EPT results (Figure 1)** show that NSs⁽ⁿ⁼³⁰⁾ produce -tul significantly more frequently with demonstratives than numerals ($p < .001$), and [+Human] than [-Human] nouns ($p < .001$). We also found a significant Cue * Humanness interaction, indicating that the tul-suppressing effect of Numeral cues is attenuated for [+Human] nouns ($p < .05$). We found a significant group difference between NS vs. L2ers, but not between L1E⁽ⁿ⁼¹²⁾ and L1M L2ers⁽ⁿ⁼¹²⁾. Both L2 groups produced -tul significantly less than NSs ($p < .001$), and they showed the same effects of Cue and Humanness as NSs, but not the Cue * Humanness interaction. The preliminary **AJT results (Figure 2)** show that NSs⁽ⁿ⁼³⁵⁾ judge NoCL conditions significantly lower than CL conditions ($p < .001$), but a significant Human * CL interaction indicates that NoCL conditions are rated significantly less acceptable with [-Human] than [+Human] ($p < .001$). Also, a significant Tul * Human interaction shows that counting constructions with Tul are rated significantly lower when the noun is [-Human]. By contrast, neither the L1E⁽ⁿ⁼¹³⁾ nor the L1M⁽ⁿ⁼¹¹⁾ group shows any significant effects, indicating that they do not display native-like sensitivity to these cues in counting constructions.

In sum, we found that in definite contexts, L2ers show sensitivity to Humanness regardless of the properties of their L1 plural marking. While this may reflect L1 transfer for L1M L2ers, transfer cannot account for the similar performance of L1E L2ers. The AJT results are consistent with the findings from Hwang & Lardiere (2013) and Lee & Lardiere (2019), indicating that the co-occurrence restrictions in counting constructions are difficult to acquire, regardless of the direction of acquisition. We propose an explanation in the framework of the Variational Model (Yang, 2002), where L2ers entertain possible grammars and adjust the weights of these grammars based on the amount of unambiguous evidence in the input. NSs consistently use -tul in definite, [+human] contexts, but rarely use it in NCs (even while accepting -tul with [+human] NCs). Thus, L2ers have more positive evidence for the use of -tul in definite than in NC environments, making the co-occurrence restrictions in NCs much harder to acquire.

Table 1. Distribution of plural marking in English, Korean, and Mandarin

	Definite		Counting	
	[+Human]	[-Human]	[+Human]	[-Human]
English	Obligatory			
Korean	Obligatory	Preferred	Optional	Not allowed
Mandarin	Optional	Not allowed		

Table 2. A sample token set exemplifying 4 conditions in the EPT

-Human, Dem; -HD	+Human, Dem; +HD	-Human, Numeral; -HN	+Human, Numeral:+HN
			
Chelswu, ce (that), tol (rock), pota (see)	Chelswu, ce, salam (person), pota	Chelswu, neys (four), tol, pota	Chelswu, neys, salam, pota

Sample sentence [+HD]: Chelswu-ka ce salam-tul-ul po-n-ta
 Chelswu-nom that person-pl-acc see-pres-dec

(1) An example sentence frame for AJT; the blank corresponds to one of the NPs in Table 3

Mark-nun tosekwan-eyse _____(l)ul po-ass-eyo / pili-ess-eyo
 Mark-top library-at _____-acc see-past-dec borrow-past-dec
 ‘Mark saw two students / borrowed two books at the library.’

Table 3. A sample token set exemplifying 8 conditions in the AJT

	Tul, CL	NoTul, CL	Tul, NoCL	NoTul, NoCL
+H	a. haksayng-tul twu myeng student-pl two CL	b. haksayng twu myeng student two CL	c. twu haksayng-tul two student-pl	d. twu haksayng two student
-H	e. chayk-tul twu kwen book-pl two CL	f. chayk twu kwen book two CL	g. twu chayk-tul two book-pl	h. twu chayk two book

Figure 1. EPT results

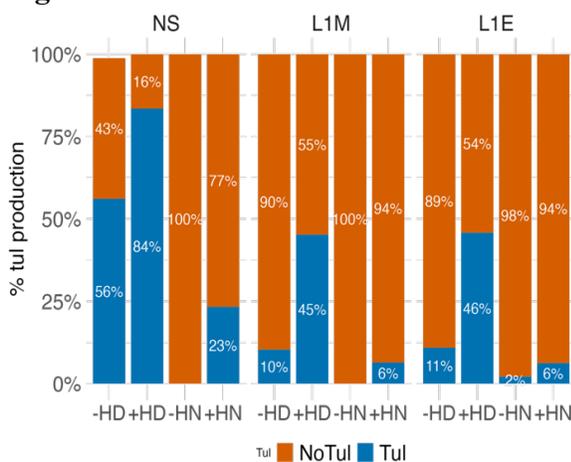
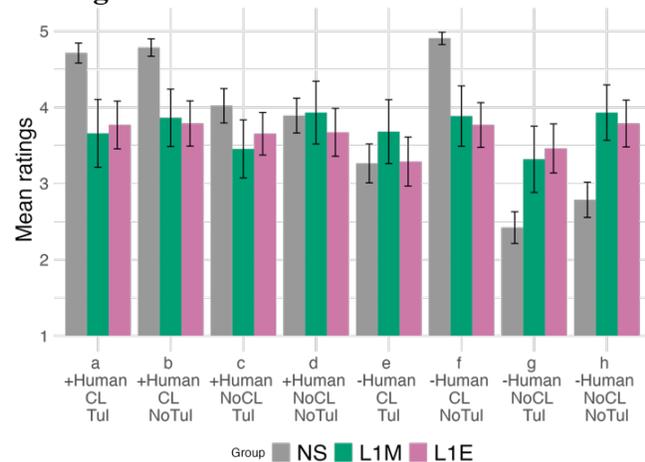


Figure 2. AJT results



Selected References: Hwang & Lardiere (2013). *Second Language Research*. Kang (1994). *Journal of East Asian Linguistics (JEAL)*. Lee-Ellis, S. (2009). *Language Testing*. Lee & Lardiere (2019). *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism*. Park (2022). *JEAL*. Yang (2002). *Knowledge and learning in natural language*.

Item-based and rule-based routes to gender assignment in L1 and L2 German bilinguals

BACKGROUND: Lexical gender assignment is generally assumed to be arbitrary, stored as a feature of the lexical item (Carstens 2000). Both monolinguals and bilinguals are also sensitive to phonological regularities which probabilistically associate with certain genders (Bordag et al. 2006), giving ‘two routes’ to gender access (Gollan & Frost 2001). However, the extent to which speakers use each route may vary depending on, e.g., age of acquisition, cross-linguistic influence from an ‘other’ language, and reliability of the cue. We investigate feature-based knowledge vs. rule usage for gender assignment in L1 and L2 speakers of German, testing speakers who are in contact with a competing gender system (French), and who are not (English), across real and non-words.

METHOD: We tested 83 L1 French or English/L2 German speakers living in Germany (‘learners’), 76 L1 German/L2 French or English speakers, living in France or the UK (‘potential attriters’), and 18 L1 German speakers in Germany (‘monolinguals’), using a timed lexical gender assignment task with 120 real low-frequency nouns and 60 non-words (see Table 1). In real words, we manipulated **transparency**, i.e. whether the gender of the word *matched*, or was *mismatched* with the rule implied by its phonological cue. In both real and non-words, we manipulated **reliability of cue**: in German, bisyllabic words ending in *schwa* are feminine in 90% of cases (Köpcke 1982); monosyllabic words beginning with a *consonant cluster* are generally masculine, but only in 81% of cases (Köpcke 1982).

HYPOTHESES: **In real words**, we expect (H1) L2 German speakers rely more on phonological rules than L1 German speakers, and will thus be less accurate in the mismatch than match condition. Further, we hypothesise that given general sensitivity to cues, participants will be more accurate with real words with the more reliable schwa cue (H2), modulated by transparency – i.e., when it is in the match context (H3). Finally, **in non-words**, we expect (H4) participants will utilise the schwa cue to gender the word more often than they use the consonant cluster cue. Across all hypotheses, there may be an effect of contact language: when the ‘other’ language is French, there will be greater reliance on the final schwa cue, given that gender in French is often cued by word-final sounds (Lyster 2006).

RESULTS: We ran generalized mixed effects models on accuracy. **In real words**, we found overall effects of L1 German and transparency; an interaction between transparency and cue, and a 3-way interaction between transparency, cue and L1 German. Pairwise comparisons show that L1 German speakers (i.e. monolinguals and potential attriters) were more accurate overall, and accuracy was higher in match conditions (Fig 1). The schwa cue induced greater accuracy than the consonant cluster cue in the match condition, but not the mismatch condition, more strongly for participants who do not have L1 German (i.e. learners) (Fig 1). **In non-words** (Fig 2), both learners and potential attriters used the schwa cue to gender more than the consonant cluster cue. No such difference was found for the monolingual group. Learners overall used the consonant cluster cue less, while potential attriters used the schwa cue more than either of the other groups (Fig 2). **Overall**, we found no differences as a result of contact language.

DISCUSSION: These findings support existing research that both monolinguals and bilinguals are sensitive to rule-based processes for lexical gender assignment (H2, H3). However, with (low frequency) real words, late L2 learners *rely* on these cues to assign gender, while for adult L1 speakers, gender is stored in individual items in the lexicon (H1). Yet, interestingly, in non-words, L1 German potential attriters also showed an effect of reliability of cue on how they assigned gender to the non-words (H4), patterning like the learners in utilising the schwa cue more often, while the monolinguals showed no differences in how they used the schwa and cluster cues. This suggests that although potential attriters’ storage of gender features in the lexicon is unaffected by processes of attrition, how they apply rules to new words has changed. In the Attrition via Acquisition model (Hicks & Domínguez 2020), morphosyntactic acquisition processes are (re)activated by immersion and extensive input from an L2, potentially leading to L1 attrition. In L1 gender acquisition, children begin by relying on phonological cues (e.g. Mills 1985) – and when presented with novel nouns, it seems that L1 German attriters do the same, perhaps as a result of increased sensitivity to perceptual input which could become acquisitional intake. There was no effect of contact language, suggesting that this is independent of potential cross-linguistic influence.

Table 1: Example items

			Expected gender	Transparency			
				Match		Mismatch	
Real words	Cue	Final schwa	Fem	<i>Birne</i> ‘pear’	Fem	<i>Welp</i> e ‘puppy’	Masc
		Initial consonant cluster	Masc	<i>Spind</i> ‘locker’	Masc	Kraut ‘herb’	Neut
Non-words	Cue	Final schwa	Fem	<i>Bieke, Faspe</i>			
		Initial consonant cluster	Masc	<i>Kromp, Speitz</i>			

Figure 1: Accuracy in real words

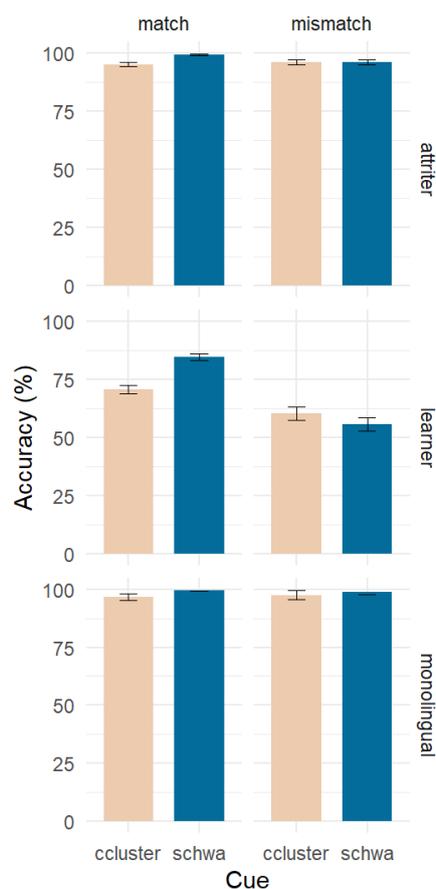
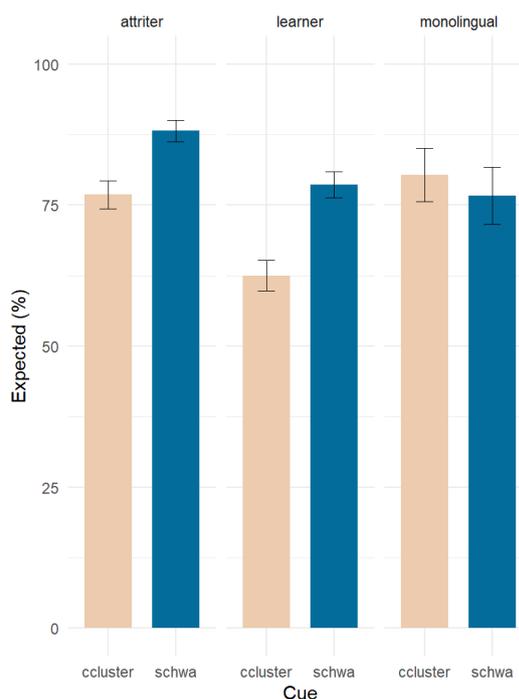


Figure 2: Use of cues in non-words



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Acquiring optionality: the case of verb placement in L3 Spanish

While multiple models have been advanced to explain cross-linguistic influence (CLI) in third language (L3) acquisition, no consensus has emerged yet regarding which approach best describes CLI patterns at the morphosyntactic level. This study investigates CLI in L2 and L3 speakers of Spanish (L1 English and L1 Norwegian L2 English, respectively). We examine phenomena related to verb placement which exhibit some degree of optionality in Spanish: non-subject-initial declarative main clauses (NSI; see (1)) and subject-initial declaratives with a sentence-medial adverb (SI; see (2)). In both cases, English and Norwegian each accept only one word order: the former XSVO and Adv-V, the latter XVSO and V-Adv. In Spanish, all four word orders are attested, though their alternation is constrained by various factors. XSVO is the unmarked word order, but free inversion is possible, resulting in XVSO (Leonetti, 2017; Sheehan, 2010). As for SI, while some Spanish adverbs like *siempre* ‘always’ may appear to either side of the verb, *completamente* ‘completely’ can only be placed after the verb and is ungrammatical before it (Schifano, 2018).

Having acquired Norwegian and English means that L3 speakers of Spanish have prior experience with all word orders discussed above, while L2 speakers do not. Therefore, we formulate our research question as follows: is the acquisition of syntactic optionality influenced by prior exposure to each word order across previously acquired languages? Participants were recruited at universities in Norway, the UK and the US, from courses that required students to have achieved intermediate proficiency in Spanish (B1). We probe both comprehension and production by using an acceptability judgment task (AJT; $n = 56$) and an elicited production task (EP, $n = 26$) in Spanish. For SI, the stimuli included both adverbs mentioned above: *siempre* ‘always’ and *completamente* ‘completely’.

We use mixed-effects regression models to analyse raw scores and discrimination in the AJT, as well as production rates in EP, between and within groups. For NSI structures, results diverge slightly between the two groups: while both perform similarly in terms of acceptability scores and production rates, the L3 group discriminates between marked and unmarked word orders at significantly higher rates than the L2 group ($\beta = 0.67$, $p < .05$). For SI structures, the most remarkable difference between the two groups is found in their AJT scores for *completamente*: the L2 group is the only one that rates V-Adv (grammatical) significantly higher than Adv-V (ungrammatical) ($\beta = 1.69$, $p < .0001$). Interestingly, however, both groups produce Adv-V word orders with *completamente* to a much higher degree than V-Adv (with some between-group differences).

We conclude that prior exposure to each word order does not appear to be facilitative for the acquisition of optionality in the structures targeted in the present study at intermediate levels of proficiency. We argue that the L3 group’s heightened sensitivity to NSI conditions does not necessarily constitute facilitative CLI, since both conditions are grammatically acceptable, and hypothesise that explicit instruction and metalinguistic awareness can account for the observed patterns. As for SI, especially *completamente*, our presentation will discuss three possible factors for both groups’ performance: overgeneralisation of adverb placement patterns, the salience of V-Adv word order and the costliness of verb movement.

- (1) a. *On Sundays, Clara eats fish* (Eng.)
b. *På søndager spiser Clara fisk* (Nor.)
c. *Los domingos Clara come pescado* (Spa.)
Los domingos come Clara pescado (Spa.)
- (2) a. *Peter always/completely trusts his sister* (Eng.)
b. *Peter stoler alltid/fullstendig på søstera si* (Nor.)
c. *Peter siempre/*completamente confía en su hermana* (Spa.)
Peter confía siempre/completamente en su hermana

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Retrieval interference in the processing of English subject-verb agreement: How does discourse salience guide information retrieval in L2 processing?

A core issue in second language (L2) research concerns how non-native speakers (L2 speakers) differ from native speakers in real-time comprehension, and what underlying mechanisms account for the differences (e.g., Clahsen & Felser, 2018; Sorace, 2011). A recent model, the cue-based model in L2 processing (Cunnings, 2017), claimed that L1 and L2 speakers differed in their vulnerabilities to interference in the retrieval operation from memory, partially due to L2 speakers' over-reliance on the discourse-based retrieval cues rather than syntactic constraints compared to native speakers' processing strategies.

Discourse salience is the most widely investigated retrieval cue at the discourse level in L2 processing. A great number of empirical works have shown that L2 speakers tended to initially retrieve the salient antecedent when processing anaphora resolution, with the application of syntactic constraints delayed until later processing stages (e.g., Felser & Cunnings, 2012). However, it remains unclear whether the heavier weight of discourse salience in information retrieval applies to L2 processing of other types of linguistic dependencies, such as the subject-verb agreement (the S-V agreement hereafter). The current study is interested in how discourse salience guides the retrieval operation in contrast to the syntactic constraint in L2 online processing of the S-V agreement.

To answer this research question, the experiment collected data from 83 English native speakers and 79 L1-Mandarin Chinese L2-English speakers of advanced language proficiency by using a self-paced reading task (SPRT). Test sentences in the SPRT followed a 2*2*2 test design. As shown by sentences in example 1, three factors were manipulated: the grammaticality of the sentences (grammatical v.s. ungrammatical), the plurality of the distractors (singular v.s. plural) and the salience of the distractors (salient v.s. non-salient). The salience of the distractor was modulated by the syntactic position (e.g., Kaiser, 2011). In the salient condition, the distractor (*the volunteer(s)* in a-b), being the matrix subject in the sentence, is more salient than the target (*the leader*), while in the non-salient condition, the distractor is less salient than the target (*the volunteer* in c-d), which is the matrix subject. While the distractor (*the volunteer(s)*) is the matrix subject, being more salient than the target. In order to examine how participants retrieve NPs at the auxiliary verb, we paid special interest to the reading times (RTs) of the auxiliary verb (i.e., *was/ were*) at window 5 (i.e., the critical window) and the verb immediately after it at window 6 (i.e., the spillover region).

The RT patterns from the SPRT were displayed in Figure 1 and Figure 2. Results of linear mixed-effect models indicated that native speakers were sensitive to the S-V disagreement when the distractor is non-salient, since a grammaticality effect ($p = 0.017$) was observed at the spillover region in the non-salient condition. However, no significance was found in the salient condition. There was no strong evidence showing that L2 speakers were sensitive to the S-V disagreement. Rather, they exhibited significant slowdown when the salient distractor mismatched with the auxiliary verb in the number feature. The processing patterns among the two groups supported the assumption that L2 speakers tended to rely more heavily on discourse salience in contrast to the syntactic constraint in information retrieval, leading to a scenario that they were more vulnerable to interference in the processing of the S-V disagreement. This finding contributes to our understanding of the underlying cognitive mechanism which subserves real-time language comprehension among L2 speakers.

(1) The salient condition

a. Grammatical; Singular & Plural distractor:

The volunteer(s)/ who/ the leader/ at the shelter/ **was**/ instructing/ managed/ the distribution.

b. Ungrammatical; Singular & Plural distractor:

The volunteer(s)/ who/ the leader/ at the shelter/ **were**/ instructing/ managed/ the distribution.

The non-salient condition

c. Grammatical; Singular & Plural distractor:

The volunteer/ who/ the leader(s)/ relied on critically/ **was**/ distributing relief supplies.

d. Ungrammatical; Singular & Plural distractor:

The volunteer/ who/ the leader (s)/ relied on critically/ **were**/ distributing relief supplies.

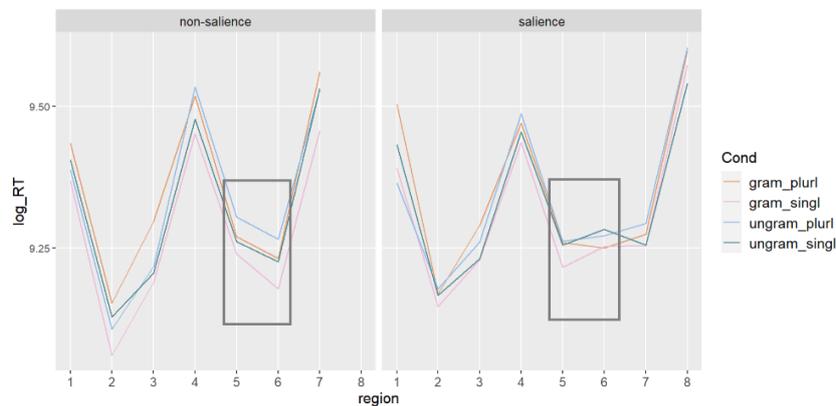


Figure 1. Mean log RTs in the SPRT among native speakers

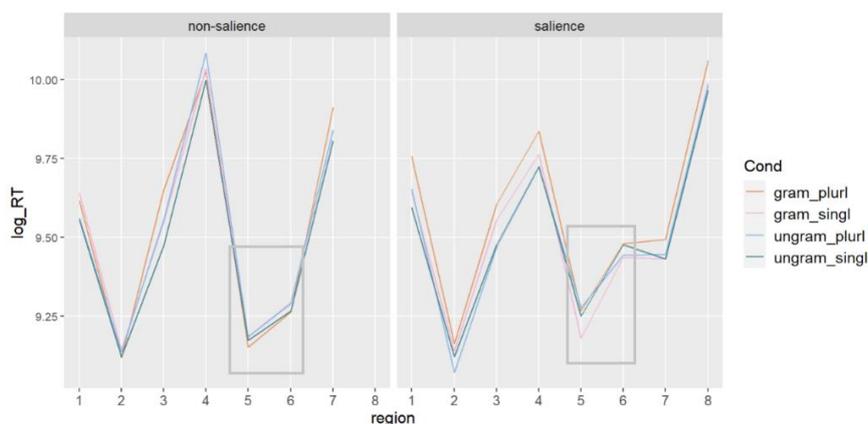


Figure 2. Mean log RTs in the SPRT among L2 speakers

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Acceleration and Article Omissions in Multilingual Children: Evidence from L2 French

The acquisition of two or more L1s in early childhood can lead to acceleration effects compared to monolingual development, even when the languages differ parametrically (Müller 2024), since the earlier acquisition of grammatical features in less-marked systems can facilitate their acquisition in more marked ones. This facilitative effect may occur in the child's weaker or later-acquired language(s) (Silva Colaço et al. 2024, Scalise et al. 2021, Arnaus et al. 2021). Acceleration, i.e., the acquisition of a given grammatical structure in multilingual children significantly earlier than in age- or MLU-matched monolingual peers, has been observed in different grammatical domains, including determiner realizations in French (Stahnke 2022).

From a typological perspective (Dryer & Haspelmath 2013), languages without active determiner systems are more frequent and hence distributionally less marked. French, by contrast, exhibits near-obligatory determiner use, with omissions restricted to specific contexts (e.g., *en train* 'by train'), while German allows omissions with mass nouns and indefinite plurals (Geist 2021), reflecting a parametric setting (Roberts 2019) at the nano-syntactic level. Prior studies on children (Grondin & White 1996) and adults (Watorek et al. 2021) show early determiner realization in L2 French. In particular, adult learners of French whose L1 has an active determiner system (e.g., Swedish; Granfeldt 2000) realize determiners more frequently than those whose L1 lacks one (e.g., Vietnamese, Leung 2005). This research shows that similarity of grammatical systems is an important factor which shapes the L2- (L_n) acquisition process and positively influences it. Following Sleeman (2008), we expect the presence of an active L1 determiner system to enhance L2 performance. However, no comparable data exist for children at consecutive learning years.

The present study addresses this prediction by investigating elicited determiner realizations in 101 primary school pupils in Germany aged 6–10 who acquire French as their first L2. The cross-sectional data are split into three groups: (1) monolingual German children (n=56), (2) multilinguals with French as L1 (n=25), and (3) multilinguals who acquired German simultaneously with non-environmental languages (n=20, e.g., Russian, Turkish). Two tasks elicited definite and indefinite determiners. We test whether the presence or absence of an active determiner system in a child's L1(s) facilitates the acquisition of French determiners, an area of grammar that can differ parametrically across languages. We compare language groups by grade. In grade 1, group (3) shows the highest omission rate (40%), group (1) around 20%, and group (2) only 5%. By grade 3, group (3) children have reached target performance, while groups (1) and (2) still exhibit omission rates of 3 to 5% (Figure 1). Thus, an active L1 determiner system like German facilitates L2 acquisition only at the initial stages; cf. Schwarz & Sprouse (2021) for an overview on facilitative transfer): by grade 3, monolingual children still omit determiners in French unlike their multilingual peers with L1s which parametrically differ from French.

A type-based noun analysis reveals systematic omission patterns tied to phonological and gender cues (Figure 2): all pupils, irrespective of whether French is an L1 or not, omit determiners more frequently with masculine and vowel-final nouns, consistent with a gender-based phonological account of article realization (Lowenstamm 2008). In particular, children acquiring French at school age appear to rely on patterns observed for monolingual children concerning the relationship between gender and noun endings (Karmiloff-Smith 1979). We conclude that determiner realization in L2 French is positively influenced by the existence of an active determiner system in the L1 in early stages of acquisition, as well as by an acceleration effect in multilingual children without French later in the acquisition process, although the languages differ parametrically from French. Montanari (2010:92) notices that increased diversity in a child's input enhances their ability to discriminate between languages and makes them attentive to structural properties, ultimately supporting faster and more efficient language development. Thus, multilingual children can use the grammatical knowledge of all of their languages to determine the interaction of morpho-phonological and grammatical features for determiner realizations in French. Within a Cumulative Enhancement (Flynn et al. 2004) model, multilingual children are able to activate L1 acquisition processes if the other languages are not of help: they are able to activate acquisition strategies characteristic of monolingual French children.

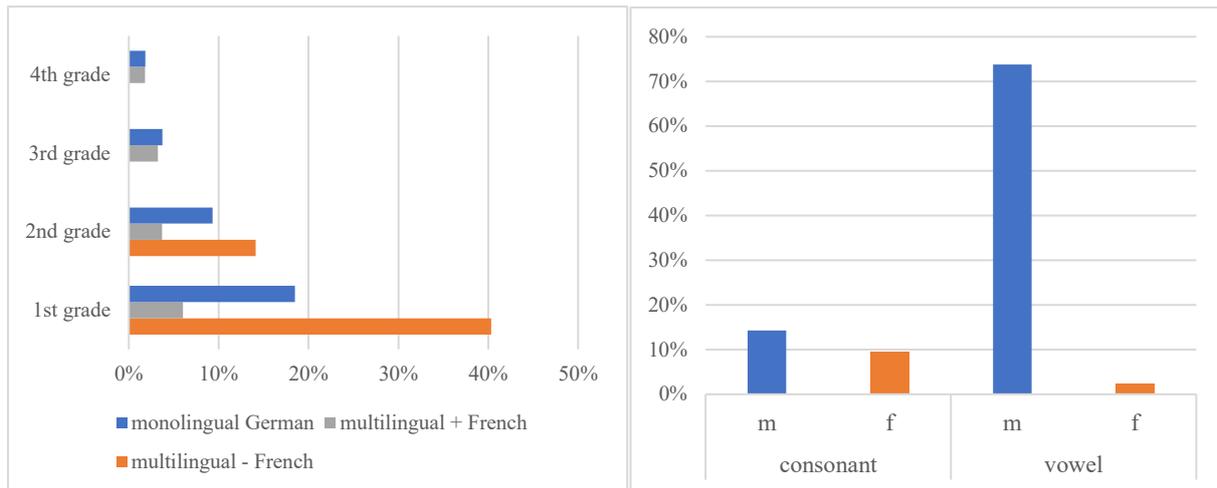


Figure 1: Development of determiner omissions in monolingual German, multilingual with French and multilingual children without French.

Figure 2: Determiner omissions analysed according to the ending of the noun and gender value.

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Testing *allemaal* ('all') boundaries of Cross-linguistic Influence (CLI)

Much recent research on bilingual language acquisition is concerned with cross-linguistic influence (CLI) (Van Dijk et al., 2022). Early accounts of CLI proposed that only morphosyntactic and syntax–pragmatics interface phenomena were susceptible to CLI, a conclusion that heavily drew on the initial empirical findings (Hulk & Müller, 2000). Subsequent research has challenged this restrictive picture, revealing CLI effects in domains outside the syntax-pragmatics interface (e.g., purely (morpho)syntactic properties, Argyri & Sorace, 2007) as well as instances of CLI at the semantics-pragmatics interface (Mazzaggio & Stateva, 2024).

Phenomena at the syntax-semantics interface have not received the same degree of attention, however (but see Meroni et al., 2017 for evidence about CLI in terms of acceleration). The present study contributes to this line of research by investigating CLI effects in the acquisition of the weak reading of the Dutch quantifier *allemaal* ('all').

Unlike the strong universal quantifiers *alle* ('all'), *ieder* ('every'), and *elk* ('each'), when used pronominally, *allemaal* typically receives a weak interpretation comparable to 'many' (see (1) vs. (2)). Hollebrandse and Smits (2006; H&S henceforth) showed that the weak reading is unavailable in early L1: children - unlike adults - consistently reject (2) as a description of Figure 1. H&S attribute children's slow acquisition to the difficulty of constructing a semantic interpretation that deviates from the syntactic representation, a task involving syntax–semantics interface mapping. Against this background, we hypothesized that L2 acquisition of this phenomenon at the syntax-semantics interface would be as vulnerable as other interfaces investigated in the literature. In particular, we hypothesized that bilingual children would show an even longer delay in their acquisition of the weak reading of *allemaal* than their monolingual peers.

Experiment 1 was conducted to determine when the weak reading of *allemaal* begins to be acquired by monolingual children. 60 monolingual Dutch children (age: 7;1-11;9, mean: 9;4; s.d.: 1;5) participated in a Truth Value Judgment Task (Crain & Thornton, 1998) including 8 target trials (and fillers). The results revealed a significant effect of age [$F(4,55)=7.07, p<.001, \omega^2=0.29$] in children's acceptance of (2) in the context of Figure 1. In particular, the data show that the weak reading emerges at age 10, the first age group to differ significantly from the immediately preceding one ($p_{\text{TUKEY}}=.02$).

To the best of our knowledge, no other language has been shown to have a quantifier with the same systematic behavior as *allemaal*. The replication of the behavior observed by H&S and the finding that the weak reading emerges around age 10 thus makes it possible to turn to bilingual speakers and test whether they show an even longer delay. This is to be expected if CLI extends to phenomena at the syntax–semantics interface and the relevant languages show partial overlap. Hungarian is an example of such a language (see Csirmaz & Szabolcsi, 2012).

In Experiment 2, 35 simultaneous Dutch–Hungarian bilinguals (age: 7;0-11;8, mean: 8;11; s.d.: 1;5) were tested. A factorial ANOVA revealed a significant effect of age [$F(4,85)=2.60, p=.04, \omega^2=.05$], bilingual status [$F(1,85)=23.16, p<.001, \omega^2=.17$] and a significant interaction [$F(4,85)=3.38, p=.01, \omega^2=.72$]. Notably, even 11-year-old bilinguals do not differ from 9-year-old monolinguals ($p_{\text{TUKEY}}=1$) (see Graph 1).

In summary, our results indicate that simultaneous Dutch–Hungarian bilinguals show a delayed onset in the acquisition of the weak reading of *allemaal*, a delay that remains evident at age 11. These findings suggest influence can also be observed at the syntax–semantics interface.

Examples, figures and graphs

- (1) De vogels vliegen allemaal
the birds fly all
'All the birds are flying'
- (2) Er vliegen allemaal vogels
there fly all birds
'There are (many) birds flying'

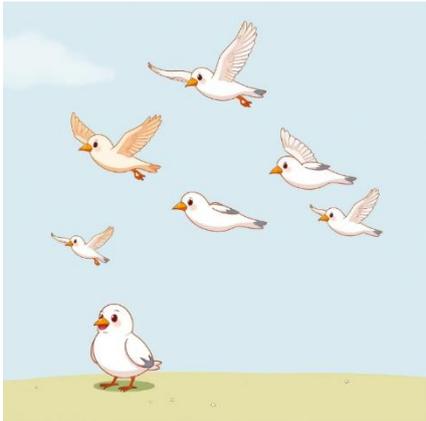
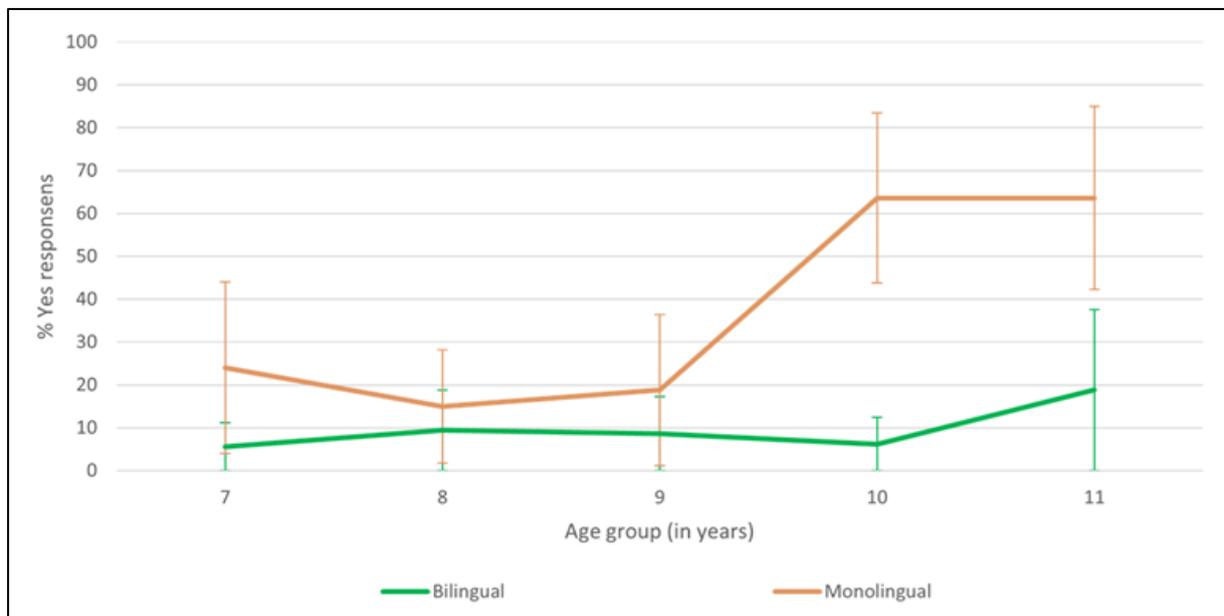


Figure 1 – Picture accompanying the sentence *Er vliegen allemaal vogels* in Experiment 1 and 2.



Graph 1 – Percentage of acceptance of the weak reading of *allemaal* (and 95% CI) across age groups (in years) in Dutch monolingual (N=60) and Dutch-Hungarian bilingual children (N=35).

Gender Feature Mapping in Code-Mixed Noun-Adjective Phrases: Insights from Child Bilinguals` L1-Russian and L2-Hebrew

Recent research has examined how bilinguals comprehend, produce, and evaluate mixed-language noun phrases (NPs), with a particular focus on grammatical gender assignment and agreement (e.g. *le SUN* ‘det.M sun; Burkholder, 2018). In bilingual adults, four primary strategies have been identified: (1) default, (2) translation-equivalent, and (3) insertion, (4) shape-based (Bellamy & Parafita Couto, 2022; González-Vilbazo et al., 2011). While these strategies reflect a categorical approach, research within Generative Approaches to SLA emphasizes that gender assignment involves how bilinguals represent, integrate, and realign L1 and L2 gender-agreement features within a single mental grammar. Variability in code-mixed NPs thus arises from the mapping and reassembly of features across languages, particularly when the inventories or morphosyntactic cues of the L1 and L2 differ (Lardiere, 2009; Putnam & Sánchez, 2013).

Most prior research has examined bilingual adults and language pairs in which only one language marks grammatical gender (e.g., Füller & Lehnert, 2000), leaving largely unexplored how bilingual children navigate gender when both of their languages encode it. The present study addresses this gap by investigating gender assignment strategies in Russian–Hebrew bilingual children. Russian has a three-gender system, whereas Hebrew has a two-gender system, with some overlapping transparent gender cues. At the same time, both languages also include opaque nouns without reliable morphophonological cues, creating an environment in which children must determine how to map, integrate, or differentiate the relevant gender values across their L1 and L2. Under a generative account, this cross-linguistic feature mapping drives variability in bilingual gender assignment.

Data were collected from 60 children who were first assessed on vocabulary skills using the LITMUS cross-linguistic lexical tasks (Haman et al., 2015) and on gender assignment in both languages using nonce words (Rodina et al., 2020). Following these assessments, participants completed two auditory acceptability judgment tasks, rating each sentence as 1 ("sounds good") or 0 ("sounds bad"). In one task, Hebrew served as the matrix language with embedded Russian nouns, and in the other, Russian served as the matrix language with embedded Hebrew nouns, with gender transparency and gender congruency manipulated across items. For example:

Russian:	<i>U mojej sestry est' rozov-aja/ij MITRIYA.</i>	<i>Krasota.</i>
	At my sister has pink-F/M UMBRELLA (RU-M; HEB-F)	beauty
	‘My sister has a pink UMBRELLA. It is a beauty’	
Hebrew:	<i>Le-ima sheli yesh SHL'APA yaf-a/e. Aba kana la.</i>	
	To-mom my have HAT (RU-F; HEB-M) beautiful- F/M. Dad bought to-her.	
	‘My mom has a beautiful HAT. Dad bought it for her’	

Our findings suggest that while some strategies, such as the masculine default in Russian production and phonological alignment in Hebrew (see Fig. 1), remain relatively stable and categorical, other patterns, particularly in the Russian acceptability judgments (see Fig. 2), indicate variability in how gender features are selected and mapped across the two languages in code-mixed sentences. This variability aligns with a Generative SLA perspective, in which bilinguals differ in how successfully they reassemble and access the relevant gender features available in each language. Individual differences therefore stem from variation in feature representation and integration across the bilingual grammar.

Figures

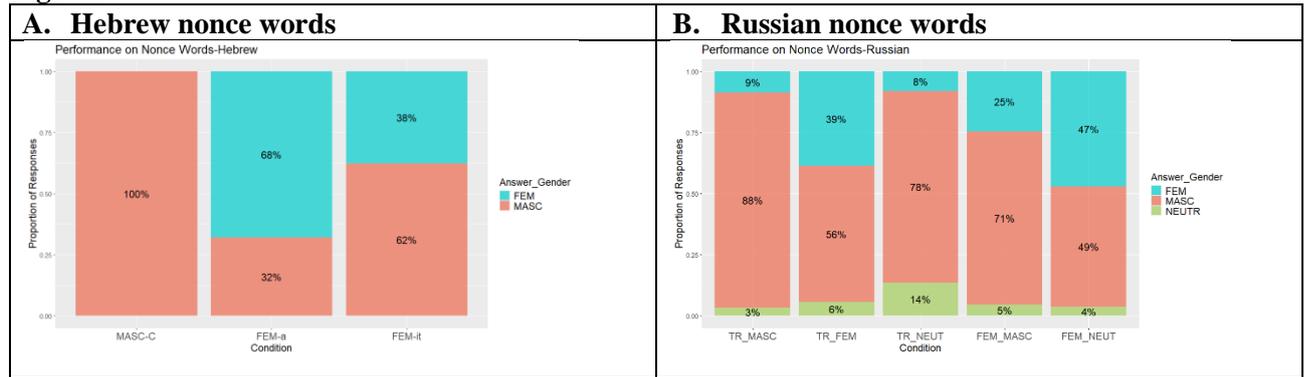


Figure 1. Gender production with nonce words

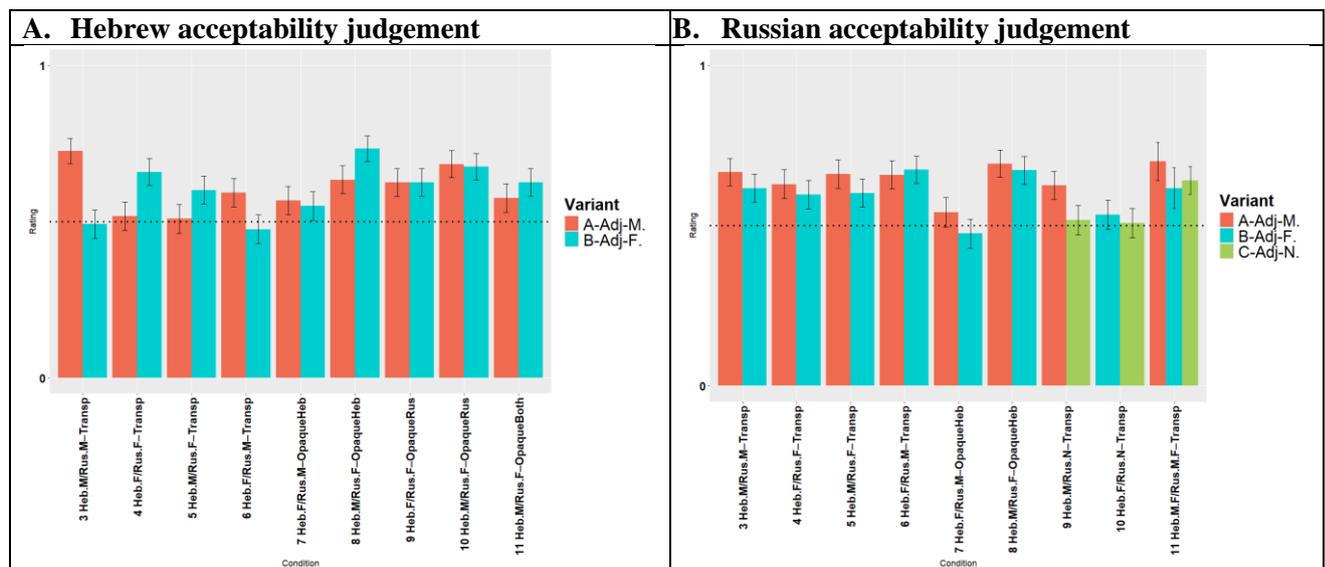


Figure 2. Acceptability judgement in Russian and Hebrew

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Analysis on Double Plurals in Cantonese-English mixing variety in Hong Kong

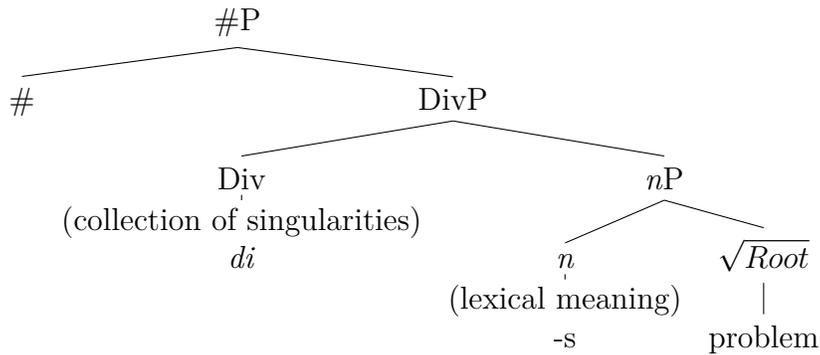
Background and puzzle: In recent years, formal syntax approaches, which are used to analyse monolingual language production, have extended to language mixing of different varieties (Alexiadou et al. (2015); Alexiadou & Lohndal (2018); Grimstad et al. (2015); López (2020) among many others). The current study extends the investigation on a relatively understudied bilingual group, the Cantonese(YUE)-English(EN) variety in Hong Kong, where YUE is the dominant language for most of the speakers. More specifically, it looks at the syntactic representation of double plurals (PL). Borer (2005) suggested that languages with the plural marker like EN and other languages with the CL, e.g. YUE, these two items bear the same function: division. Thus, they occupy the same syntactic position – the Div-head. Under this assumption, the double PL is impossible or disregarded as an error if attested in speech. The study investigates: (i) whether double PL is possible, and (ii) if yes, how this can be captured under a generative framework. The data demonstrates that double PL is not only attested but also very systematic and prominent, which illustrates an instance of split plurality proposed in Acquaviva (2008); Kramer (2016); Alexiadou (2024).

Data: The study uses the YUE-EN bilingual data from the previous literature (Chan, 1999) and a corpus from Baroni et al. (2009). Speakers use both EN plural suffix *-s* and one of the YUE PL markings: (a) PL classifier(CL) *di*, (b) quantifier(Q) with optional singular CL and (c) numeral(#) with singular CL. The data showed that not only is the double PL possible, but it is a very productive pattern (1). Moreover, the two different readings of singular and double PLs in (2) illustrate that the use of singular or double PL is not just randomly interchangeable. In (2a), with only the EN suffix, it only has the group or kind reading; thus, no distributive reading (i.e. each fan waves one flag) is available. In contrast, in (2b) with the double PL, both the cumulative and distributive readings are possible.

Proposal and analysis: I argue the double PLs in YUE-EN is not an error but a disambiguation strategy of bilinguals. Split plurality in monolinguals has previously been discussed in Acquaviva (2008) for Breton and Kramer (2016) for Amharic. Acquaviva (2008) has suggested that the split PL represents the two layers of plurality: the cohesive group meaning and the “true plurality” – the collection of singularities. Kramer (2016) further suggested that the two PLs are located at different syntactic nodes: the meaning of the group correlates with the word-maker and should occupy *n*, while the cumulation is located at the higher position, the Div-head. Alexiadou (2024) extends the analysis to capture the double PLs in bilingual varieties, e.g. Romanian-EN and Ewe-EN. I further implement this split plurality analysis to another PL type: the CL in the YUE-EN mixing variety. The EN PL *-s* marks the group meaning is located at the *n* position and the YUE markers is hosted at Div for division and cumulation, see (3).

Implication: The single PL remains an option, the one-to-one form-meaning matching in the double PL uses both exponents to be more transparent, which aligns with the Maximise Exponence Principle in Martin et al. (2023) and findings in other language contact phenomena (Don, 2017).

- (1) *ceoi*²¹*zo*³⁵ *ni*⁵⁵ *di*⁵⁵ technical *ge*³³ problem-s *zi*⁵⁵*ngoi*²²
 apart from DEM:this CL.PL technical GE problem-PL besides
 ‘Apart from these technical problems’ (Chan, 1999)
- (2) a. fan-s *fai*⁵⁵ *kei*²¹ b. *di*⁵⁵ fan-s *fai*⁵⁵ *kei*²¹
 fan-PL wave flag CL.PL fan-PL wave flag
 ‘Fans wave the flag’ ‘The fans wave the flag’



1 References

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A Categorical Feature-Based Analysis of Null Preposition: Phonological Deletion in L2 Grammar

Introduction: This study proposes a novel account of the null preposition phenomenon (NullPrep) in second language (L2) grammar, arguing that it arises from the categorical feature specifications of prepositions. NullPrep refers to the omission of a stranded preposition in L2 grammars, as in (1a), contrasting with the target form in (1b). Even when L2 learners correctly produce prepositions in declarative clauses, as in (1c), they nonetheless produce and accept sentences like (1a) (Klein 1995, among others).

Previous Studies: Dekydtspotter et al. (1998) attribute NullPrep in *wh*-questions to a non-target-like structure in which the preposition incorporates into *V*, the *wh*-word is base-generated in [Spec, CP], and it binds *pro*, as illustrated in (2a). However, this approach cannot account for NullPrep in adjunct phrases, as in (1d). Klein (2001) proposes that a null operator undergoes movement and covertly pied-pipes a null *P*, with the *wh*-expression base-generated in [Spec CP] (2b). Recent studies, however, have shown that post-intermediate L2 learners employ overt *wh*-movement even when their L1 lacks it (e.g., Kimura & Wakabayashi 2024). Since NullPrep persists beyond this level, Klein's account is also implausible. Perpiñán et al. (2014) link NullPrep to derivational complexity, but provide no mechanism for its derivation. Thus, a satisfactory analysis of NullPrep remains lacking.

Theoretical Framework: We adopt a phase-based model following Chomsky (2000) and Dobashi (2003), in which cyclic Spell-Out of phase complements determines both linear order and prosodic structure. When *vP* or CP is constructed, its complement undergoes Spell-Out, establishing precedence relations and creating phonological phrases (Φ -phrases). The leftmost element in each spelled-out domain remains unmapped, serving as an anchor for integrating subsequent cycles. In the first cycle (*vP*), for example, the VP complement is spelled out, yielding $V \ll \text{Obj}$; *Obj* is mapped to a Φ -phrase (*Obj*) $_{\Phi}$, while *V* remains accessible, and the derivation proceeds accordingly.

Proposal: The categorical status of prepositions is controversial: they have been analyzed as [+lexical] (Chomsky 1970) or [-lexical] (Baker 2003; Grimshaw 2000). Bošković (2016) argues that this indeterminacy underlies crosslinguistic variation. Under Bare Phrase Structure (Chomsky 1995), categorical features consist of bundles of finer features, and languages differ in their specifications (the Borer–Chomsky Conjecture). We propose that categorical features include [+/-functional] ([$\pm f$]) and [+/-lexical] ([$\pm \text{lex}$]). Sato & Dobashi (2016; S&D) argue that functional words cannot form a Φ -phrase on their own. We assume that such functional words (purely functional items) are [+f][-lex]. In English, for instance, the complementizer *that* is [+f][-lex], whereas the determiner *that* is [+f][+lex] ([+lex] due to its deictic function) and can form a Φ -phrase. English [+f][-lex] elements such as complementizers (*that*, *if*, *for*) and articles (*a(n)*, *the*) cannot form independent Φ -phrases. Prepositions in English may be [+f][-lex] or [+f][+lex] when selecting an overt complement, while they are always [+f][+lex] when stranded. In learner grammar, however, stranded prepositions may be either as [+f][+lex] or [+f][-lex]. In the former case, they form Φ -phrases and surface phonologically; in the latter, they cannot form a Φ -phrase, resulting in phonological deletion—i.e., NullPrep.

Analysis: The crucial contrast is shown in (4). In (4a), the preposition is [+f][+lex], and at the *vP* phase, the PP forms a Φ -phrase without violating the S&D condition. In (4b), the preposition is [+f][-lex]; although the PP is transferred at Spell-Out, the S&D condition prevents it from forming a Φ -phrase. Consequently, the entire PP is omitted, surfacing as NullPrep. This account naturally explains the well-known lack of argument–adjunct asymmetry in NullPrep in L2 grammars (Klein 2001; Klein & Casco 1999), a significant difficulty for incorporation-based analyses (Dekydtspotter et al. 1998).

Discussion: Our analysis suggests that L2 learners encounter difficulty in specifying categorical features consistently. We propose that such specification must occur in the Numeration for each derivation, and learner inconsistency reflects optionality at this stage (Wakabayashi 1997, 2009). Feature underspecification also accounts for other L2 phenomena, such as the absence of the *that*-trace effect in L2 grammars (6a, b) (Aldosari & Covey 2024; Kim & Goodall 2024): because *that* does not bear [+f][-lex] in learner grammars, the S&D condition is not violated. Feature Reassembly (Lardiere 2008) follows naturally in the Minimalist Program (Wakabayashi 1997, 2002; see also Lohndal & Putman 2024), and the mechanisms by which features are identified remain central to advancing Generative SLA. This study contributes a fine-grained, feature-based analysis of L2 grammars and offers a new perspective on NullPrep.

- (1) a. *Who did Tom rely? b. Who did Tom rely on? c. Tom relied on Mary.
 d. Which library did he read the book *(in)? (Klein, 2001, p. 49, slightly modified)
- (2) a. Dekydtspotter et al. (1998): base-generated *wh* & A' -binding of *pro*
 $[_{CP} wh_i \dots [_{VP} V-P\emptyset] [_{PP} t_i] pro_i]$
 b. Klein (2001) : base-generated *wh* & Null Op pied-pipe covert movement of P
 $[_{CP} wh_i [_{FocP} [P\emptyset Op]_i \dots V [_{PP} t_i]]]$
- (3) a. $[_{CP} [_{TP} Subj T [_{VP} V [_{VP} V Obj]]]]]$
 b. First cycle (vP phase): linear order: $\underline{V} \ll \text{Obj}$
 Φ -Phrasing: $(Obj)_{\Phi}$
 c. Second cycle (CP phase): linear order: $\underline{Subj} \ll T \ll v \ll \underline{V} \ll \text{Obj}$
 Φ -Phrasing: $(T v V)_{\Phi} (Obj)_{\Phi}$
 d. root CP: linear order: $(C) \ll \underline{Subj} \ll T \ll v \ll \underline{V} \ll \text{Obj}$
 Φ -Phrasing: $(C Subj)_{\Phi} (T v V)_{\Phi} (Obj)_{\Phi}$
- (4) a. **Who did Tom rely on?** $[_{VP} who_i [_{VP} Tom v [_{VP} rely [_{PP} on_{[+lex]} t_i]]]]$
 linear order: $rely \ll on$ Φ -Phrasing: $(on_{[+lex]} t_i)_{\Phi}$
 b. ***Who did Tom rely on?** $[_{VP} who_i [_{VP} Tom v [_{VP} rely [_{PP} on_{[-lex]} t_i]]]]$
 linear order: $rely \ll on_{[-lex]}$ Φ -Phrasing: $(on_{[-lex]} t_i)_{\Phi}$
- (5) *Which library did he read the book ~~in~~? Φ -Phrasing: $(in_{[-lex]} t_i)_{\Phi}$
- (6) a. Who do you think met Sue?
 b. *Who do you think that met Sue? Φ -Phrasing: $(that_{[+lex]} t_i)_{\Phi}$

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Negative Inversion at the Syntax-Pragmatics Interface: Evidence from American English Monolinguals to test Brazilian Portuguese L1 English L2 Bilinguals

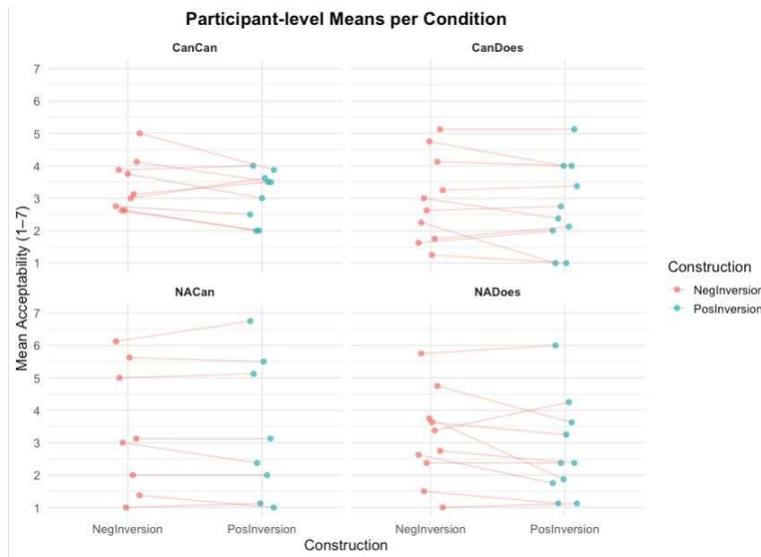
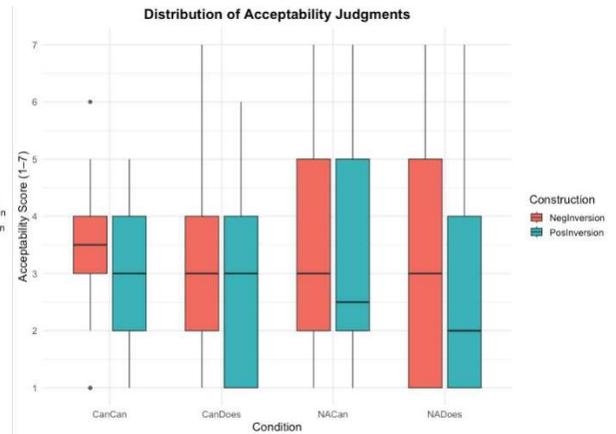
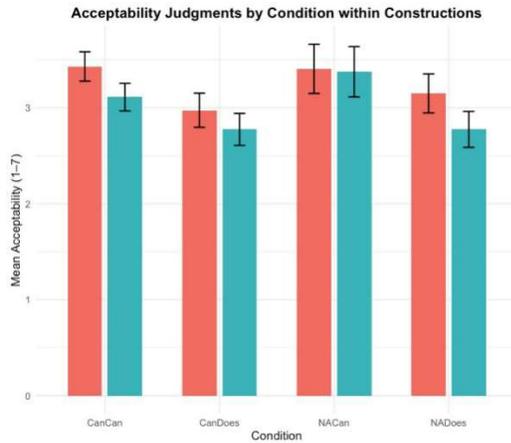
Research on ultimate attainment in second language (L2) acquisition has consistently shown that linguistic domains at the interface between syntax and pragmatics often remain vulnerable even for highly proficient bilinguals. According to the Interface Hypothesis (Sorace, 2011), structures whose interpretation require coordinating syntactic form with discourse or pragmatic conditions tend to exhibit persistent optionality in adult L2 grammars. While most empirical work supporting this claim has focused on pronominal reference, topic–focus phenomena, and word order alternations, far less is known about how bilinguals acquire other interface-sensitive constructions. The present study expands this line of inquiry by first examining negative inversion (NI) with American English monolinguals to assess their acceptability of this construction before assessing bilingual Brazilian Portuguese speakers in their L2 (English), as NI is a construction that is formally syntactic but pragmatically conditioned by clause-initial negative or restrictive adverbs.

Methods: 66 adult native speakers of English participated in an acceptability judgment task on Qualtrics via the University SONA system. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions that judged 64 randomized trials after completing four training items: 16 test sentences and 48 filler items. The test stimuli for the first condition included eight grammatical NI cases with frequency adverbs in the second clause (e.g., *Patrick can always travel abroad, but seldom can James*) and eight counterparts with a positively inverted frequency adverb (PI) in the second clause (e.g., *Patrick can never travel abroad, but always can James*). Three other conditions tested logically possible structural configurations of this sentence type, varying whether the first clause used *can* or a lexical verb (e.g., *travels*) and whether the inverted clause used *can* or *does* (see Figure 1: Construction Condition). This allowed us to test whether using the auxiliary *can* in both clauses reduced processing load by minimizing exposure to functional morphology, which has been shown to pose difficulties for bilinguals (Slabakova, 2013). The three other conditions tested whether the use of *can* in both sentences creates an unintended processing bias. Participants used a 1-7 Likert Scale that assigned 1 as *Completely Unacceptable* and 7 as *Completely Acceptable*.

Results: Native speakers unexpectedly rated both negatively inverted and positively inverted items similarly in the lower range of the scale (see Figure 2, 3, and 4). Moreover, all four conditions produced the same pattern of low acceptability for both NI and PI items.

Conclusion and next steps: The low acceptability of both NI and PI suggests that frequency adverbs do not robustly trigger inversion for speakers of contemporary American English. Building on these findings, we have created an acceptability judgement task that uses emphatic negative expressions (such as *under no circumstances*, *in no way*, *by no means*, *not for a moment*, and *at no time*) that are followed by the auxiliary *can*, all of which consistently triggered inversion in our pilot. Testing both the inverted sentences and their non-inverted counterparts enables us to hypothesize that, compared to native speakers, Brazilian Portuguese L1 - English L2 bilinguals will be more accepting of the non-inverted versions, showing residual optionality in precisely those structures where syntax and pragmatics must interface. Such a pattern would support the Interface Hypothesis, offering a more comprehensive view of the limits of L2 grammatical convergence.

	Construction	Condition	mean_score	sd_score	n	se_score
	<fct>	<fct>	<dbl>	<dbl>	<int>	<dbl>
1	NegInversion	CanCan	3.43	1.30	72	0.153
2	NegInversion	CanDoes	2.98	1.59	80	0.178
3	NegInversion	NACan	3.41	2.05	64	0.257
4	NegInversion	NADoes	3.15	1.82	80	0.204
5	PosInversion	CanCan	3.11	1.22	72	0.143
6	PosInversion	CanDoes	2.78	1.49	80	0.167
7	PosInversion	NACan	3.38	2.10	64	0.262
8	PosInversion	NADoes	2.78	1.68	80	0.187



The role of explicit knowledge in the acquisition of negation in L3 French

In this presentation, we explore whether and how explicit knowledge influences non-native grammars and the implications for generative approaches to L_n acquisition. While realization of syntactic properties in the L1, L2 and L3 and subsequent patterns (and sources) of cross-linguistic influence or transfer have constituted a substantial part of generative L3 acquisition research, we shift the focus to other factors which may influence acquisition of syntactic properties in L_n.

A recurring finding in L2/L3 research is that establishing verb placement relative to negation is less problematic for learners than establishing verb placement relative to sentence-medial adverbs (Hawkins et al., 1993; Hermas, 2010; White, 2024). Data from the current study targeting written learner production in L3 French by learners in a traditional foreign language learning context, with formal instruction in the classroom and limited access to naturalistic input, comply with this robust finding. Learners in our material overwhelmingly place the verb to the left of the negative element *pas* while performance on sentences with a sentence medial adverb such as *often* or *always* do not show the same uniform trend of correct verb placement (Table 1).

The issue remains of what the differential learning for the two structure types entails, specifically whether we can assume that the target-like underlying verb placement has been acquired for subject-initial sentences with negation but not for those with sentence-medial adverbs. Factors such as construction frequency, explicit instruction, and metalinguistic knowledge (Slabakova, 2017; Westergaard et al., 2023) have been argued to contribute to different rates of acquisition for different structures, and it is possible that such factors have contributed to learners realizing verb movement across negation before other movement operations.

However, the target-like behavior with verb placement relative to negation may also be a result of explicit knowledge. The link between explicit instruction and internalized linguistic competence is not obvious (Schwartz, 1993), and studies involving explicit instruction of verb placement often show a limited effect over time of instruction (Trahey & White, 1993; White, 1990/91, 1991). However, properties of our data lead to the question of whether explicit instruction is in fact an important factor in successful surface verb placement with negation. There are indications that this surface target-likeness might not necessarily reflect target-like underlying structure, but rather an explicit rule of placing the verb between the two negative elements of French negation, *ne* and *pas*, sometimes leading to other elements in this linear position or even to two finite verbs in the sentence (Table 2). We revisit the discussion of possible links between explicit instruction and internalized linguistic competence, specifically the role of *noticing* (e.g., Schmidt, 1990) in light of recent theories of L_n acquisition, especially those of micro-cues, learning by parsing, and structure activation as proposed by Westergaard (2021).

Importantly, we argue that a precise understanding of the explicit instruction to which learners may have been exposed regarding a particular structure and how they explicitly construe its grammatical makeup (i.e., their structure-specific explicit knowledge) is crucial in order to draw conclusions from behavioral data about their underlying grammatical system.

Tables

Table 1 Number of occurrences and % incorrect placement of the verb after sentence medial adverbs vs. negation

Structure type	Total number	*Verb-3	* %
Adv	37	9	24.3
Negation	317	0	0

Table 2 Examples of errors

C'est n'est pas bizarre pour une personne en Réunion de parties de religion. It is.3P SG <i>ne</i> is.3P SG <i>pas</i> strange for a person in Réunion ART. parties of religion
Beaucoup de police dans les rues est n'est pas normale. Lots of police in the streets is. 3P SG <i>ne</i> is. 3P SG <i>pas</i> normal
Oui, c'est n'est dangereux pas heureusement. Yes, it is.3P SG. <i>ne</i> is.3P SG. dangerous <i>pas</i> luckily
C'est ne bien pas It is.3P SG. <i>ne</i> good <i>pas</i>
Je n'envie pas d'étudier en France, parce que c'est loin de Norvège. I <i>ne</i> wish.NOUN <i>pas</i> to study.INF in France, because it is.3P SG. far from Norway.
Les élèves venir de France trouve il a etrainge parce que il ne sociaux pas que les élèves de France. The students come.INF from France find.3P SG. it has.3P SG. strange because that it <i>ne</i> social.PL. <i>pas</i> as the students from France
Tu as besoin de sommeil, et tu as ne besoin pas avoir attachée à une poutre. You have.2P SG need for sleep, and you have.2P SG <i>ne</i> need <i>pas</i> have.INF attached.PAST PART. to a pole
Napoleon profité quand le situation politique n'est stabilité pas . Napoleon profited.PAST PART. when the situation political <i>ne</i> is.3P SG. stability <i>pas</i>
Beaucoup personnes sont pauvres, ne rien pas un emploi et beaucoup enfants. Many persons are.3P PL. poor, <i>ne</i> nothing <i>pas</i> an employment and many children
Je peux un peu français, mais ne beaucoup pas . I can.1P SG. a little French, but <i>ne</i> much <i>pas</i>
Un SDF est un personne qui n'favorable pas . A homeless is.3P SG. a person who <i>ne</i> favorable <i>pas</i>

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Unlearning and relearning V2: The acquisition of Negative Inversion by advanced Norwegian L2 learners of English

Assuming Full Transfer (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996), L2 learners of English with a verb second (V2) L1 are confronted with an ‘unlearning’ task in acquiring V3 word order in English. At lower-intermediate stages of acquisition, production and judgement of word order in declarative clauses in L2 English are already broadly target-like, with some variation indicating continued transfer (e.g. Robertson & Sorace, 1999; Westergaard, 2003). However, acquisition of English word order also involves a ‘relearning’ task for L1 speakers of a V2 language. This is evident in residual V2 contexts, such as Negative Inversion (NI), where subject-auxiliary inversion is required in declaratives after fronted negative constituents (as in ex. 1). Less is known about L2 development in light of this relearning task, and how these properties of English are acquired by L2 learners.

Robertson & Sorace (1999) find that intermediate-proficiency L1 German-L2 English learners overgeneralise V3 and reject grammatical negative inversion before coming to accept the residual V2 pattern at advanced proficiency. However, Rankin & Wagner (2025) exploit a semantic constraint on negative inversion to explore whether learners have fully acquired constraints on the structure. While subject-auxiliary inversion is obligatory after fronted negation with sentential scope, as illustrated in (1) and (2), it is ungrammatical after fronted negative adverbials with local scope, as in (3) and (4) (Haegeman, 1995). Advanced L2 English learners with L1 German are found to not consistently discriminate between grammaticality as a function of negative scope, unlike L1 controls.

The current study replicates Rankin & Wagner’s (2025) acceptability judgement task, extending it with the LexTALE test (Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012) as a measure to discriminate among advanced proficiency levels, and 17 questions exploring English exposure, to explore effects of input. 71 Norwegian learners of English participated in the study, providing judgements on 32 items, 16 of which were critical items in four experimental conditions, crossing grammaticality of subject-auxiliary inversion (G/U) with scope of fronted negation as sentential vs. local (Sent / Loc), see examples (1-4).

Using cumulative link mixed modelling, we found a strong and significant effect for negative scope. Participants can robustly differentiate grammaticality of subject-auxiliary inversion after fronted sentential negation, but less reliably after fronted local negation (Fig. 1). This trend was mildly co-determined by the learners' proficiency level and exposure to English, with the caveat that the group was relatively homogenous with respect to proficiency and exposure (Fig. 2).

The results replicate the findings from L1 German-speaking learners in Robertson & Sorace (1999) and Rankin & Wagner (2025), showing that speakers of a V2 L1 can come to acquire the residual V2 property of subject-auxiliary inversion after fronted sentential negation, but that this may be superficially overextended to fronted local negation, even at advanced levels of proficiency. We discuss this with respect to effects of acquiring micro-parametric variation evidenced by properties which are infrequent and potentially superficially misleading in the English input, leading to issues in acquiring the full constraints on the residual V2 properties of negative inversion.

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Example Sentences (experimental conditions)

Fronted Sentential Negation	(1) At no time could I see the answer.	(SENTG)
	(2) *At time I could see the answer.	(SENTU)
Fronted Local Negation	(3) In no time I could see the answer.	(LOCG)
	(4) *In no time could I see the answer.	(LOCU)

Figure 1

Conditional Means Plot for Acceptability Ratings by Sentence Type

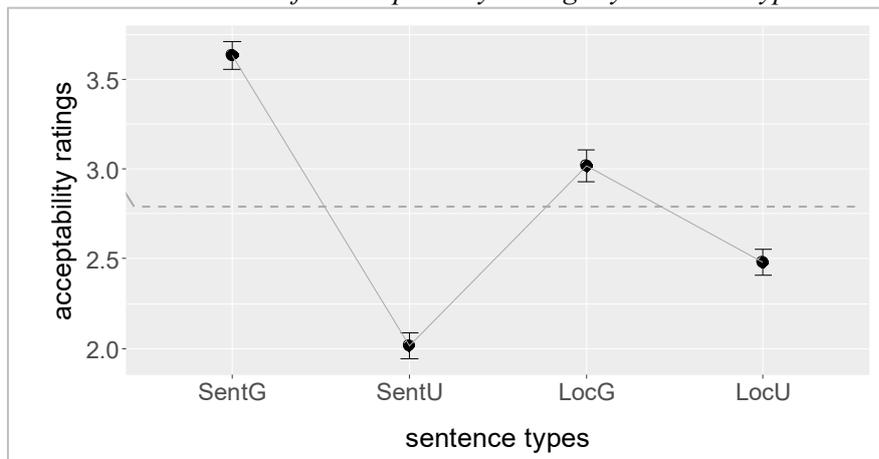
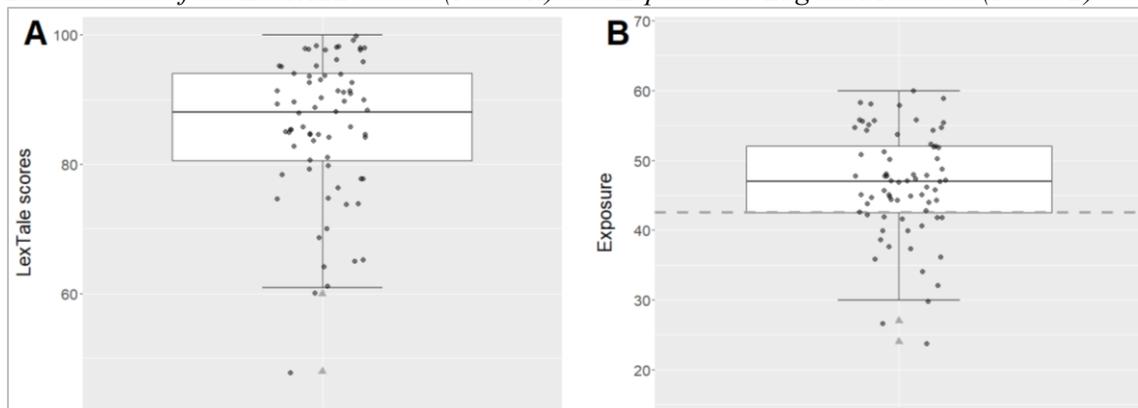


Figure 2

Distributions of the LexTALE Scores (Panel A) and Exposure to English Measures (Panel B)



A longitudinal study of development of verb placement in L2 and L3 Norwegian

This study investigates the development of verb placement by adult L3 learners of Norwegian with either French or German as L1 and English as L2, and L2 learners with English as L1. In an acceptability judgment task, 18 participants rated 40 target items varying with respect to verb placement (V2, *V3), sentence type (subject-initial, non-subject-initial), and verb type (lexical, auxiliaries) (see Table 1) on a 1-6 Likert scale. Participants were tested three times over a span of one year. The study aims to examine how the presence of verb movement and/or V2 in previously acquired languages influences rating accuracy and sensitivity to (un)grammatical verb placement, and how individual Norwegian proficiency interacts with these factors over time. Previous research has primarily relied on cross-sectional corpus data, having to deal with avoidance strategies and the inability to track development within the same individuals (e.g., (Brautaset 1996; Selven 2014; Johansen 2008; Danish: Sjøby & Kristensen 2023). Recent studies used experimental methods but focused exclusively on the early stages of acquisition (Vikmoen 2023; Author 1 & Author 2, forthcoming). However, longitudinal studies are lacking.

Statistical analysis (CLMM model) reveals a differential effect of time depending on the learners' L1. While at Test session 1 all learners rated the target items relatively similarly, L1 German learners become gradually more accurate than the others, particularly at Testing session 3. While other learners also become slightly more accurate over time, their trajectories are not linear, and rejecting ungrammatical word order remains particularly challenging, especially for the L1 English group. While we found a marginal effect of sentence type, verb type does not seem to have an effect on rating accuracy.

Our results emphasize the importance of longitudinal data in understanding the interaction between previously acquired languages and development in L3 acquisition. While all learners initially struggle to reject *V3 word order, pointing to potential L2 English influence, L1 German learners show significant improvement between Test Sessions 1 and 3. In contrast, L1 French learners lag behind, despite sharing the same word order as Norwegian in subject-initial sentences, further highlighting the role of L2 transfer in shaping L3 development. Our data indicates that acquiring restrictions on verb placement – rejection of *V3 – is more demanding than acquiring a new structure (V2). We will discuss our results in light of recent calls for new empirical approaches to L3 development (Puig-Mayenco & Tubau 2022; Puig-Mayenco 2025; Cabrelli & Iverson 2024). We will also discuss how findings from L3 acquisition can inform formal analysis of linguistic structures.

Word order	Verb type	Sentence type	Target item
V2	Lex	Non-SU-I	På søndager danser gutten med venner On Sundays dances the boy with friends
*V3	Lex	Non-SU-I	*På søndager gutten danser med venner On Sundays the boy dances with friends
V2	Aux	Non-SU-I	I år har Per reist til Spania This year has Per travelled to Spain
*V3	Aux	Non-SU-I	*I år Per has reist til Spania This year Per has travelled to Spain
V2	Lex	SU-I	Studenten leser ofte på biblioteket The student reads often at the library
*V3	Lex	SU-I	*Studenten ofte leser på biblioteket The student often reads at the library
V2	Aux	SU-I	Legen har ofte jobbet alene The doctor has often worked alone
*V3	Aux	SU-I	*Legen ofte har jobbet alene The doctor often has worked alone

Table 1. Example of target sentences in the acceptability judgment task.

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Does the multilingual comparison of motion verb constructions facilitate learning?

Evidence from a randomized controlled trial in authentic Spanish classes

The use of prepositions is one of the most difficult grammar topics for Spanish learners. The high frequency prepositions *a* ('to/at/on') and *de* ('from/of') are often confused or omitted, especially in motion verb constructions. One reason might be the fact that they are highly polysemous and have different meanings depending on the multiword unit in which they appear. In addition, crosslinguistic interaction plays a significant role, above all in third language acquisition (e.g., Kanli, 2024; San-Mateo-Valdehita & Díaz Mendoza, 2024).

Since the 1990s, multilingual didactics has advocated comparing constructions from different languages, especially Romance languages (e.g., Meißner & Reinfried, 1998), such as Spanish *Salgo de Madrid* and French *Je sors de Madrid* ('I leave Madrid'), combined with cognitively activating tasks (Angelovska & Hahn, 2023). However, empirical evidence is still mixed: some studies suggest positive effects of interlingual comparisons (e.g., Hicks, 2021), while others do not (e.g., Berthele & Udry, in press). Researchers call for more intervention studies, particularly in Romance language teaching in secondary education (e.g., Göbel et al., 2024, p. 14).

In parallel, current research highlights the significance of multiword units in language processing and fluency (e.g., Hennecke et al., 2023). Both usage-based (e.g., Tyler & Ortega, 2018) and, more recently, generative (e.g., Alexopoulou et al., 2015; Hammond & Gil, 2025) approaches to SLA converge on the central role of multiword units in second or additional language acquisition, particularly for beginners. However, evidence-based teaching materials are still lacking that raise awareness of multiword units and take different degrees of schematicity into account.

In this presentation, I want to present first results from an interdisciplinary project. This seeks to address these gaps by systematically combining the teaching of semi-schematic multiword units with multilingual didactics in a task-based teaching setting (e.g., Michel, 2023). In a randomized controlled field trial (RCT) (Connolly, 2017), in authentic classrooms (Meurers, 2019), it investigates how targeted interventions can improve long-term retention of Spanish motion verb constructions with *a* and *de*, a well-known learner difficulty.

Two instructional packages of the unit "Planning a weekend in Spain" were developed: one that foregrounds multiword units and the role of prepositions in the respective construction types explicitly, and one that adds a multilingual dimension by encouraging learners to draw on their prior languages to deepen processing and facilitate transfer. Both packages are implemented in a hybrid format with individualized explanatory videos and allow for within-class randomization.

The RCT was conducted from April until November 2025 in 16 classes (~300 students) in German grammar schools. The participants were predominantly L1 German speakers at the age of 14 who study English, French or Latin and add Spanish as a third foreign language. A pre-post design with multiple assessment formats (cloze tests, writing tasks, C-test, stimulated recalls), complemented by a language biography sheet was realised.

The initial findings from this study support the hypothesis that a multilingual approach supports more sustained learning than a monolingual focus on multiword units alone.¹

¹ ChatGPT (OpenAI) and DeepL Write were used to support the linguistic revision of this abstract; all contents and interpretations remain the author's responsibility.

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Acquiring Japanese Nominative Markers: Interface Transparency in L1-Korean Learners

Korean and Japanese are pro-drop languages with nominative particles. The Japanese nominative marker *ga* (JP-*ga*) is an independent particle that requires an exhaustive-listing reading (ELR) only when it is the subject of an individual-level predicate, which denotes the individuals' permanent properties (e.g., Akiyama 1991, Kratzer 1986, Kuroda 1965, Kuno 1973). Korean has the nominative allomorph *i/ka* (KOR-*i/ka*), in the case that matrix clauses have ELR when it is also the subject of an individual-level predicate (e.g., Ha 2007). Given these similarities between KOR-*i/ka* and JP-*ga*, to what extent do L1-Korean learners acquire the ELR of JP-*ga*, considering its interpretive characteristic, the influence of L1 knowledge, and differences in proficiency levels?

A picture selection task was administered to 90 L1-Korean learners (30 elementary/N4, 30 intermediate/N2-3, 30 Advanced/N1-2) and 24 Japanese native speakers. The test sentence (1) requires ELR, as it includes JP-*ga* with an individual-level predicate in a matrix clause, which also fulfills the condition for ELR in Korean (2). Stimuli included 10 target sentences and 40 fillers, with 10 sentences targeting the Japanese topic marker *wa* (JP-*wa*) as a baseline, due to its morpho-syntactic and semantic similarities to the Korean topic marker 'nun-/neun-' (3, 4) (Lee 2002). Participants were presented with a context and a target sentence (5 seconds each) with audio stimuli, then had 15 seconds to select as many pictures as they liked based on their interpretation of the sentence (Figure 1).

Firth-corrected logistic regression models examined each response type (Baseline only, ELR only, Baseline+ELR) with Group as fixed effect and Item/List as covariates. For JP-*ga*, analysis revealed a striking U-shaped developmental pattern (Figure 2). In ELR-only responses, Controls significantly outperformed both Beginners ($\beta = -1.19, p < .001$) and Intermediates ($\beta = -1.12, p < .001$). Critically, Intermediate learners showed heightened uncertainty, selecting combined Baseline+ELR readings significantly more than Controls ($\beta = -1.40, p < .001$) and Beginners, suggesting active feature reassembly. Advanced learners recovered toward native-like patterns. This contrasts sharply with JP-*wa*, which showed stable high performance across proficiency levels. Reaction time analysis revealed no significant differences between learner groups ($F < 1.2, p > .30$), though Controls responded faster ($F = 8.5, p < .01$), indicating accuracy differences reflect capacity constraints rather than processing speed.

These differential patterns challenge the Interface Hypothesis assumption that all syntax-discourse interfaces pose equal difficulty (Sorace 2011). Our findings suggest interface accessibility is gradient rather than categorical, determined by transparency and computational complexity. JP-*wa* benefits from cross-linguistic consistency and clear discourse cues (Li & Thompson 1976, Givón 1983), requiring linear processing. JP-*ga*'s exhaustive-listing involves variable cross-linguistic properties and demands complex operations computing "X and only X" from alternative sets, creating higher processing demands (cf. Slabakova et al. 2017). The U-shaped trajectory reflects capacity-constrained representation: learners possess component knowledge but struggle with simultaneous operations required for exhaustive interpretation. The Competition Model (MacWhinney 2005) accounts for intermediate confusion as cue recalibration, while Feature Reassembly Theory (Lardiere 2009) explains why transparent features reassemble more successfully. (498 words)

Figures and Graphs

(1) Japanese main stimuli (ga-type)

Minna-de ge-mu senta- -ni itta-yo. Taroo ga ge-mu-ni tuyokatta-yo.
 everyone-COM game center-ALL go-PST-DECL. Taroo NOM game-LOC strong-PST-DECL.
 ‘We all went out to the game center. It is Taroo (among others) who was very strong in games.’

(2) Korean exhaustive listing interpretation on ‘i/ka’

Uri modu geim-senteo-e gass-eoyo. Taeho-ka geim-eul jal-haess-eoyo.
 we all game-center-LOC go-PST-POL Taeho-NOM game-ACC well-do-PST-POL
 ‘We all went to the game center. It is Taeho (among others) who was good at games.’

(3) Japanese topic marker (wa-type)

Minna-de ryokou-ni itta-yo. Ken wa reisei datta-yo.
 everyone-COM trip-ALL go-PST DECL. Ken-TOP calm COP-PST-DECL.
 ‘We all went on a trip together. Speaking of Ken, he was calm.’

(4) Korean topic marker (nun-/neun-)

Uri modu yeohaeng-eul gass-eoyo. Minsu-neun chabun-haess-eoyo.
 we all trip-ACC go-PST-POL Minsu-TOP calm-PST-POL
 ‘We all went on a trip. Speaking of Minsu, he was calm.’

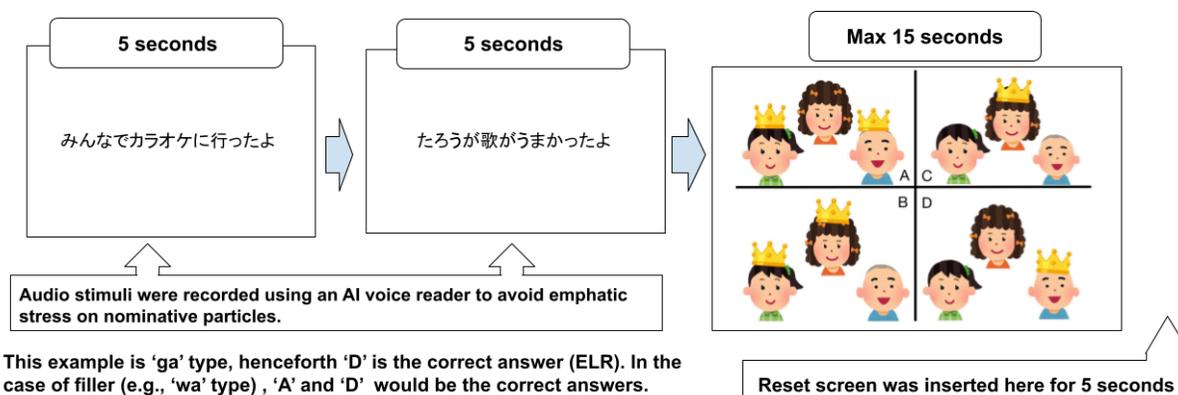


Figure 1: The flow of the experiment

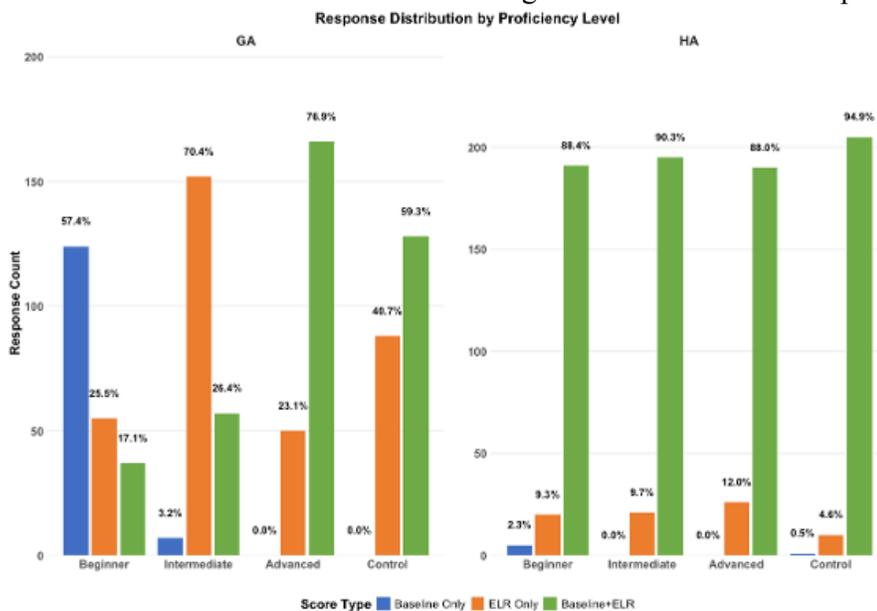


Figure 2: The result for the ga-/wa- type test

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Re-testing the Interface Hypothesis: Phonology–Pragmatics Interface in L2 Tag Questions

This study investigates the L2 acquisition of English tag questions (TQs) by Sinhala L1-English L2 speakers. Although structurally simple, English TQs (Ex:1) require coordination across multiple grammatical interfaces: syntax (auxiliary choice, subject–verb agreement, polarity), phonology (rising vs. falling contours) and pragmatics (mapping intonation to speaker stance: rising for information-seeking, falling for confirmation-seeking) (Algeo, 1990; Holmes, 1983). Such multi-interface structures are predicted to be especially challenging in L2 acquisition, leading to optionality and residual non-target performance even at advanced levels: Interface Hypothesis (Sorace, 2011). While the syntax–pragmatics interface has been extensively investigated within this framework, the phonology–pragmatics interface in L2 acquisition remains underexplored. This study addresses this gap by examining L2 English TQ production.

We conducted two experiments: an Acceptability Judgment Task (AJT) and an Elicited Production Task (EPT). Using a 5-point scale, the AJT tested the acceptability of canonical English tags and invariant tags with ‘no’ (Ex: 2), common in Sri Lankan English (SLE) (Meyler, 2011). The production task included a short context and an incomplete question, with the tag part missing. The participants were instructed to read the context and say the whole question aloud as naturally as possible, adding on an appropriate tag. The manipulated variable was the pragmatic condition: In condition 1 (Ex:3), the answer was not clear from the context (information-seeking), but in condition 2 (Ex: 4), it was (confirmation seeking). Based on previous descriptions of English canonical TQs (e.g., Halliday 1970, Tench 1996, Cruttenden 1997), we expected rising contours in information-seeking contexts and falling contours in confirmation-seeking ones. Ten British English speakers and 36 Sinhala–English bilinguals (intermediate proficiency) participated in the AJT; a subset of 26 L2 speakers and the 10 native speakers completed the EPT. If the L2 users have converged on the English system, they should demonstrate fewer rising contours in confirmation-seeking contexts, similar to native controls. AJT revealed that the L2 participants have successfully acquired the syntax of English canonical TQs: both groups rated canonical tags similarly ($p = .85$). However, they accepted invariant “no?” tags significantly more than L1 speakers ($p < .0001$), suggesting that the invariant tag is represented in their interlanguage grammar as an alternative to canonical tags, consistent with its possible nativized status in SLE (Gunsekera, 2005).

In EPT, the TQs were manually coded for the shape of the contour (Rise, Fall, Fall-Rise, Rise-Fall and Plateau) and for whether the tag was integrated into the preceding phrase, or a separate intonational phrase. There was a total of 552 tag questions. 53% of the tag questions had negative polarity, 36% were “right”, 8% were “no” and 4% had positive polarity. 45% were separate and 55% were integrated, but this differed between the two groups: for the L1 speakers, 14% were separate and 86% integrated, while for the L2 speakers, 57% were separate and 43% were integrated. The results showed that overall, rises were more common than any other contour, comprising 66% of the contours, and falls just 9%.

Statistical analysis showed that the L2 group did not differentiate between information-seeking and confirmation-seeking contexts (odds ratio = 1.19, $p = .46$; Confirm: 70%, Info-seek: 66%). The English L1 group showed a marginal trend towards the expected distinction (odds ratio = 0.50, $p = .079$; Confirm: 73%, Info-seek: 84%), although this comparison is based on a relatively small English native sample ($n = 10$). The L2 group’s consistent use of rising contours across both contexts aligns with previous findings (Verdugo & Trillo, 2005; Yazawa, 2022) and broadly supports the Interface Hypothesis: L2 speakers’ failure to map intonational contours to pragmatic context suggests incomplete convergence at the phonology-pragmatics interface, even when syntactic aspects of TQ formation are successfully acquired.

1. Sri Lankan food is very spicy, isn't it?
2. Sri Lankan food is very spicy, no?
3. Max is in college, and you're not sure when he's going to graduate. You decide to politely ask Max's best friend to clear up your curiosity: **Max is graduating soon, _____?**
4. You're at a railway station waiting for your train. You notice the departure board shows your train is on time. You're confident it hasn't been delayed but casually comment to the person next to you to confirm your assumption: **The train is still on time, _____?**

Figure 1. Mean acceptability: English L2 and Native English (Ex 1): (1=Totally unacceptable; 5= Perfectly Acceptable).

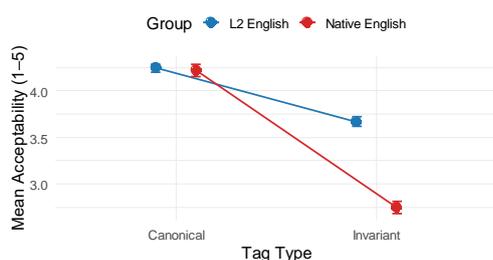


Figure 2. Model -predicted Probability of Rising Intonation (Ex 2)

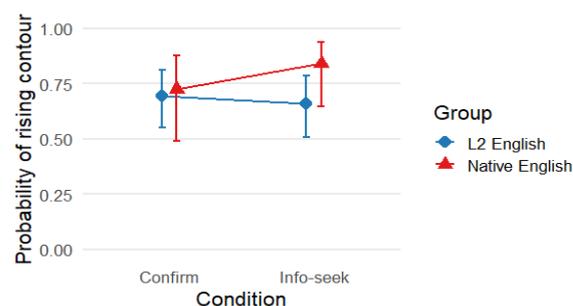


Table 1. Fixed Effects: Mixed-Effects Logistic Regression (EPT)

Predictor	β (Estimate)	SE	z	p
Intercept (L2, Confirmation)	0.825	0.322	2.561	0.010
Group (Native vs L2)	0.146	0.604	0.242	0.809
Condition (Info-seek vs Confirmation)	-0.171	0.231	-0.739	0.460
Group \times Condition	0.861	0.457	1.887	0.059

Table 2. Pairwise comparisons of rising-intonation probabilities across conditions and groups

Group	OR	SE	z	p
L2 English: Confirm – Info-seek	1.19	0.27	0.74	0.46
Native English: Confirm – Info-seek	0.50	0.20	-1.76	0.079

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The development of null objects in multilingual children: absence of a clitic omission stage in the French and Italian of French-Italian multilingual children

This study investigates whether multilingual children go through an object clitic omission stage in which object clitics are omitted on a par with their monolingual peers. French and Italian are languages which exhibit definite (direct) null objects (Lambrecht & Lemoine 1996, 2005 for French; Bello & Pirvulescu 2022 for Italian). In French, definite null objects are possible with a large variety of verbs (Fónagy 1985) but restricted (Tuller 2000); they are used when the object is recoverable from the discourse, the topic is salient, and the object is 3rd person, in contrast to languages like Chinese where instead objects are omitted with both specific and non-specific referents (Lee 2018). The null object in French is simply put, a phonetically null pronoun (Tuller 2000). As for Italian, although research on null objects is sparse, definite null objects are possible with a limited set of verbs and can be analyzed as a phonetically null pronoun in French (cf. Rizzi 1986, Bello & Pirvulescu 2022).

From a language acquisition perspective, an utterance with a definite null pronoun is (syntactically and pragmatically) equivalent to one where the object clitic is realized: *J'abats* 'I cut-down' / *je l'abats* 'I cut it down' (Fónagy 1985). Experimentally, this has resulted in the determination of the following stages of development in L1 French children (Prévost, 2009): stage 1, strong pronoun *ça* 'this' or object DPs or omission; stage 2 is the same as stage 1 though clitic realization begins; stage 3 clitic realization is optional though strong pronouns and object DPs cease to occur (age 6) in contexts which exhibit a clitic. As for Italian, Belletti & Guasti (2015) observe omissions ranging between 15 and 75% in some cases until the age of 5;5 (Bernardini & van de Weijer 2017). However, when comparing French to Italian monolingual children, the object omission rate is higher in French (Müller et al. 2006).

Research on simultaneous multilingual children acquiring French or Italian together with German finds a delay in the acquisition of clitic realization in both Romance languages (Müller & Hulk 2001). This delay, however, only stands when these languages are acquired together with German, which is characterized by the absence of (syntactic) clitics (Bernardini & van de Weijer 2017). In the absence of an intervening Germanic language, we predict bilingual French-Italian children to skip the object clitic omission stage typifying monolingual both French and Italian.

We present 1) longitudinal data from one bilingual French–Italian child (Si_{fi}, 1;6–4;7), raised in Italy and showing a strong preference for the environmental language, and 2) the elicited production data from 17 monolingual French children. Results for French show that Si_{fi} produces object clitics extremely early (< 2;0), frequently and rarely omits them, whereas the monolingual children display the typical omission and development expected from the literature (cf. Figure 1). A Pearson chi-square test of independence comparing Si_{fi} to the monolingual group on the overall distribution of object types revealed a highly significant difference ($\chi^2(3, N:1413):164.43, p<0.001$), with monolingual children producing substantially more omissions. The Italian data show a similar acquisition trajectory: object clitics appear very early and target-deviant object clitic omissions almost disappear after age two. We discuss these results against recent perspectives on argument omission which assume that languages can be classified according to the possibility of omitting arguments (here: objects) based on the expression of syntactic agreement and discourse constraints, even though the nature of the 'missing' object is still under debate (cf. Barbosa 2024, Duguine 2025).

Building on Duguine (2025) and Müller (2004:281), we propose a parameter hierarchy for null objects considering aspects such as the type of complement, lexical verb class, and contextual conditions based on observations relative to French and Italian. For the bilingual child, we suggest that similar feature settings relevant to the realization of object clitics and agreement features in French and Italian, together with high clitic frequency in the input, provide sufficient evidence to accelerate French clitic acquisition.

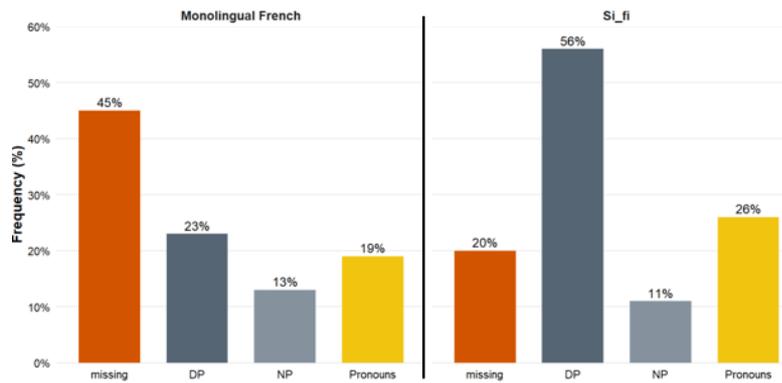


Figure 1: Object realization in monolingual French children (on the left) and the bilingual child (on the right) for French

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While there is clear lexical and phonological evidence attesting how the indigenous languages spoken in Mexico have influenced the Mexican varieties of Spanish spoken in that country, morphosyntactic influence has received less attention, although agreement and grammatical gender influence have been recently investigated (Cruz Mendoza, Licerias and Mañas Navarrete, 2025; Diaz and Orozco, 2019; Torres, 2018; a.o.). Cruz Mendoza et al. (2025) have shown that in the Zapotec variant spoken in San Cristóbal Lachirioag (Oaxaca), default “lo” (the use of masculine object pronoun “lo” to refer to inanimate feminine nouns as in *Esa casa_{i[fem]} lo_{i[masc]} hemos comprado hace dos años* / that house it we have bought two years ago) is used by adult Zapotec Spanish monolinguals and Zapotec–Spanish bilinguals and that it is very prevalent in gender agreement tasks but not in gender assignment tasks. This use of “lo” has been attested in other varieties of Spanish (Palacios 2000, 2007, 2015; a.o) and has been accounted for as the result of influence from indigenous languages which, as is the case with Zapotec, lack grammatical gender.

Here, using online experimental data from 28 child Zapotec Spanish monolinguals and 28 child Zapotec–Spanish bilinguals from Teotitlán del Valle, Tlacolula (Oaxaca), we investigate: (i) whether default “lo” is also present in child Zapotec Spanish; (ii) whether it occurs both in gender assignment and gender agreement tasks; and (iii) how and to what extent its use and distribution can be attributed to crosslinguistic influence from Zapotec. All the participants completed a Biodata Questionnaire (LAR-LAB uOttawa) and the bilingual group completed the BLP (Birdsong, Gertken and Amengual 2012). All the participants were administered two oral experimental tasks, a gender assignment task as in (1), and a pronominalization task (gender agreement) as in (2). Data collection was elicited individually using the OpenSesame Program to address both accuracy and response times (RTs). For accuracy data, a logistic mixed effect regression model was fitted adding Linguistic Profile, Gender, and Position of Pronoun as fixed predictors. RTs data were transformed to approximate normal distribution. The same fixed structure was included in the RTs model.

The results of the gender assignment task (1) show that all responses are at ceiling both for gender transparent Nouns (-o endings for masculine—*vestido*/dres— and -a endings for feminine—*casa*/house) and gender non-transparent Nouns (ending with vowels other than -a/-o or consonants, as *pan*/bread). This clearly evidences that neither the child bilinguals nor the child monolinguals have problems with gender assignment (as is the case with the adults). With respect to the RTs, the bilingual's RTs are systematically lower (Table 2), which shows that they are faster when it comes to complete the task. However, the differences between them and the monolingual group are not statistically significant ($b = 0.012$, $SE = 0.057$, $t = 0.215$).

The results of the gender processing task in Table 3 show that with masculine Nouns, the two groups behave similarly. However, with feminine Nouns the monolingual group is more accurate than the bilingual group ($OR = 0.445$, $z = 2.693$, $p = 0.007$), even though both groups produce a high number of instances of default “lo”. With respect to the direction of pronominalization, the monolingual group produces less instances of default “lo” with forward pronominalization ($OR = 0.427$, $z = -2.500$, $p = 0.012$). There is no difference in the case of backward pronominalization and the responses involving transparent vs. non-transparent Nouns do not show any group interaction. As for the RTs (Table 4), as with the gender assignment task, there is a group effect: the bilinguals are faster (lower RTs) than the monolinguals ($b = 1753.32$, $SE = 16.88$, $t = 103.86$) but less accurate which feminine Nouns, which are the relevant. For both groups RTs are higher with backwards pronominalization.

These results point to a possible influence from Zapotec in the case of processing, as the bilinguals are less accurate, which may indicate that the gender value of a given referent does not seem to be retained in the working memory so that “default lo” is the preferred option. We interpret the use of “default lo” by the monolingual group as evidence that it is a feature of Zapotec Spanish that was incorporated into this variety by previous generations of speakers.

(1) **Task #1.** *Classification of nouns according to Grammatical Gender (GG. Assignment*
 —Provide the name of the following pictures using the article.



accurate response: **la**_[fem.] bicicleta

(2) **Task #2.** *Fill in the Blank (FB): Agreement*

- Forward pronominalization

Cuando hacemos , ___ horneamos por las noches
 When we make bread, it we bake throughout the night
 expected answer **lo**_[masc.]

- Backward pronominalization

Ella ___ compraría si  (vestido)_[masc.] fuera de color verde
 She it would buy if the dress were of color green
lo_[masc.] = expected answer

Table 1. Task #1. Proportion of 'accurate' responses for monolinguals and bilinguals

		Monolingual Group		Bilingual Group	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
Masculine	Transparent	100%	0%	99.8%	0.2%
	Non-transparent	99.8%	0.2%	100%	0%
Femenine	Transparent	100%	0%	100%	0%
	Non-transparent	99.2%	0.8%	98%	2%

Table 2. Task 1. Response times for monolinguals and bilinguals

		Monolingual Group		Bilingual Group	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Masculine	Transparent	727.40	495.14	688.93	421.97
	Non-transparent	746.29	553.41	685.86	387.06
Femenine	Transparent	654.62	446.50	635.53	384.46
	Non-transparent	749.64	648.72	705.45	472.29

Table 3, Task #2. Proportion of 'accurate' responses for monolinguals and bilinguals

			Monolingual Group		Bilingual Group	
			Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
Masculine	Transparent	Backward	98.2%	1.8%	98.0%	2.0%
		Forward	85.7%	14.2%	88.1%	11.9%
	Non-transparent	Backward	90.2%	9.8%	93.4%	6.6%
		Forward	97.5%	2.5%	92.5%	7.5%
Femenine	Transparent	Backward	48.1%	51.9%	52.6%	47.4%
		Forward	63.8%	36.1%	40%	60%
	Non-transparent	Backward	25%	75%	20.8%	79.2%
		Forward	68.6%	31.4%	44.5%	55.5%

Table 4. Task #2. Response times for monolinguals and bilinguals

			Monolingual Group		Bilingual Group	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Masculine	Transparent	Backward	5263.43	4962.97	3146.67	3934.97
		Forward	4329.14	4867.51	2480.92	2586.11
	Non-transparent	Backward	4475.91	4303.95	2850.19	2456.35
		Forward	4945.92	4552.39	3013.45	3198.15
Femenine	Transparent	Backward	4239.92	4722.83	3069.08	3934.64
		Forward	4686.49	5481.49	2110.95	2055.45
	Non-transparent	Backward	8006.48	6297.06	5524.21	7667.79
		Forward	3721.62	3213.42	2568.74	3119.45

Underlying syntactic representations and L1 transfer: the case of L2 Acquisition of English subject NP comparatives by L1 Mandarin-L2 English learners

BACKGROUND/AIMS This study investigates the L2 acquisition of English comparatives by L1 Mandarin speakers. Taking the simplest forms of comparatives such as the subject NP comparatives (1), the study aims to test what modulates L2 knowledge at the initial and transitional states of interlanguage, given the differences between L1 and L2 in terms of underlying syntactic structures, surface word order, and the limited input provided in the classroom. English comparatives take a clausal structure underlyingly with a full CP in the *than*-clause (1a), yet its derivation also allows a phrasal shape on the surface (1b-c) (Bacskai-Atkari, 2018). The two DPs in comparison (e.g., ‘I’ and ‘he’ in (1a)) also occur on either side of the predicate (e.g., ‘taller’), yielding the order [X Pred Y]. Mandarin comparatives are also underlyingly clausal but with a small vP as in (2) (Hsieh, 2017). Therefore, on surface, they are similar to the phrasal shapes in English as seen in (1b) and (1c). Regarding word order, both arguments in comparison precede the predicate, yielding the [X Y Pred] order. Textbook input in mainland China almost exclusively focuses on (1b) with R-expressions, underrepresenting the use of pronouns and clausal forms in English comparatives ((1a) and (1c)). By studying the acquisition of (1a)-(1c) from the beginner level (the very initial stages) to more proficient levels (transitional stages), we aim to (1) investigate to what extent learners’ knowledge is modulated by the L1 underlying linguistic representation (small vP) and the input available to the learners; and (2) test if/to what extent the surface string word order affects the development of underlying syntactic knowledge of English comparatives.

THE STUDY 69 participants across three proficiency levels - beginner, intermediate and upper intermediate - and 24 L1 English participants participated in a Grammaticality Judgement Task (GJT) and an Elicited Choice Task (ECT) to test their knowledge on the four forms of English comparatives: (1a)-(1c). The GJT also included ungrammatical surface strings following the order in Mandarin in (2) (Table 1).

RESULTS/FINDINGS Firstly, learners do not appear to have transferred the L1 surface word order, as the ungrammatical sentences following [X Y Pred] were correctly rejected even by initial state learners (Fig. 1). Secondly, learners appear to be able to go beyond classroom input. Although textbook input could account for the at-ceiling performance for even initial stage learners on R-expressions, the learners correctly accepted and produced pronoun-ACC while rejecting pronoun-NOM, akin to the native control group (Fig. 1 and 2). This is despite the fact that pronouns in Mandarin do not inflect for case. Thirdly, across all proficiency levels, the learners tend to incorrectly reject the clausal type. Although the acceptance rate increases as proficiency increases (ECT, Fig. 2), the accuracy rate is significantly lower than that of the native control group (GJT, Fig. 1). Interestingly, the learners show high accuracy in distractor items that test their knowledge of copular ‘be’, suggesting that their low accuracy in the clausal type is specific to comparative constructions. From this, we propose that our study lends strong support for L1 transfer of underlying syntactic representations, isolated from other possible confounds such as L2 input and surface word order. Further, the learners’ performance appears not to reach the level of the native control group, and at the same time the results for the clausal type present increasing accuracy and acceptance rates across the proficiency groups. Whether the transferred L1 representation is eventually restructured for L2 target grammar is still to be seen, and left for further study.

How and why insights from different theoretical paradigms in linguistics enrich language pedagogy

In the past decade, there has been a welcome development in research agendas within generative and usage-based SLA that look to inform language pedagogy (e.g., Whong et al, 2013; Tyler et al., 2018). At the same time, there have been efforts to make linguistics more accessible and relevant to language pedagogy and language teachers (Rankin & Whong, 2020). Given this context, this paper proposes that, while different language paradigms (e.g, generative vs. usage-based) compete on the fundamental assumption of language knowledge, research findings taking insights from both paradigms can enrich language pedagogy- an area that should remain agnostic to theoretical orientation. Generative approaches, building on L2 hypotheses that predict learner difficulties in acquiring a set of linguistic properties or language domains (e.g. Bottleneck Hypothesis (Slabakova, 2019a,b); Interface Hypothesis (Sorace, 2011)) are well-equipped to identify areas of grammar likely to pose challenges for learners, thereby identifying ‘what’ properties to manipulate and enhance in classroom input (Whong et al., 2014). Usage-based models, which emphasise the role of attention, frequency and schematisation in the acquisition process, can then provide insights into ‘how’ teachers can encourage learners to engage with these properties in the classroom to overcome predicted challenges (Hammond, 2025).

To put forward the argument above, we present recent work by Alfraikh (2022) and Hammond and Gil (2025). Alfraikh (2022) conducts an intervention study targeting difficulties in L2 acquisition of English tense and aspect by Arabic-speaking learners, deemed to be due to formal differences in morphosyntactic representation in vP and AspP between Arabic and English. The usage-based pedagogic approach in the intervention is founded on research in focus-on-form (Long, 1991; Nassaji, 2011) and working memory (Wright, 2015). The results show that such combined approaches in the intervention led to significant improvement in L2 knowledge of English tense and aspect. Hammond and Gil (2025) use longitudinal corpus data to analyse the development of L2 English wh-questions by Spanish-speaking learners of English, tracking all underlying syntactic derivations for wh-questions including wh-movement, NP(subject)-movement, V-raising and S-V inversion. The results show that those learners who demonstrate knowledge of these underlying syntactic derivations are those who used formulaic expressions and related schematic patterns (FEs, e.g, ‘*what is your name?*’ [*what is*] + X) earlier and more frequently at the initial stages of acquisition. This observation is largely at odds from the theoretical perspective between usage-based and generative approaches due to the conceptualisation of language in the human mind: FEs/schematic patterns as ‘constructions’ in the former, and as language strings subjected to morpho-syntactic segmentation in the latter.

However, both studies demonstrate that the tension between theoretical approaches is agnostic when it comes to language pedagogy; rather, the implementation of both paradigms in these studies leads to complementary insights for improving grammar teaching in instructed contexts, from the ‘what’ vs ‘how’ perspective. As well as suggesting how grammar teaching can be improved in instructed settings, this paper also hopes to encourage more dialogue across traditionally distinct theoretical paradigms by centralising language pedagogy as a space where both can offer genuine, productive contributions.

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Incremental processing without early CP projection: Japanese learners' processing of ambiguous *that*

Research on sentence processing in English has shown that native speakers project upcoming structure in Head-driven Parsing by using verb-based syntactic information (e.g., Pritchett, 1991, 1992). In contrast, Japanese has SOV word order and relies more heavily on case marker cues, leading to different patterns of incremental processing (Mitsugi & MacWhinney, 2010; Miyamoto, 2002).

Verb subcategorization biases—whether a verb favors a direct object (DO) or a sentential complement (SC)—also guide predictive parsing in native English speakers, who show increased reading times when a continuation mismatches the predicted structure (Garnsey et al., 1997; Trueswell, Tanenhaus, & Kello, 1993). According to Dussias & Cramer Scaltz (2008), Spanish learners, whose L1 involves obligatory complementizer *que*, also exhibit early commitment to CP structure under the Full-Transfer Full Access Model (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996). However, little is known about how learners whose L1 lacks overt complementizers, such as Japanese, process the optionally overt English complementizer *that*.

To address this gap, the present study investigates whether Japanese learners of English (JLEs) immediately project a CP structure or instead avoid making a single syntactic commitment, integrating subsequent cues incrementally when they encounter an ambiguous *that* following a verb. The research questions are as follows: (i) Do JLEs use verb bias during online L2 English processing? (ii) If so, is this use predictive or delayed? and (iii) how they interpret post-verbal *that* + NP versus *the* + NP sequences?

Eighteen intermediate JLEs completed a self-paced reading task using a 2×2 design manipulating verb bias (DO vs. SC) and phrase type (*that* + NP vs. *the* + NP). See (1). One experiment consisted of 4 practice items, 9 targets and 18 filler (DO structure) sentences.

- (1) a. DO bias + *that* condition
 The weary traveler | found | *that | suitcase | had | been opened | for inspection.
 b. DO bias + *the* condition
 The weary traveler | found | *the | suitcase | had | been opened | for inspection.
 c. SC bias + *that* condition
 The weary traveler | claimed | *that | suitcase | had | been opened | for inspection.
 d. SC bias + *the* condition
 The weary traveler | claimed | *the | suitcase | had | been opened | for inspection.
Note. *critical region; _disambiguating region

Figure 1 shows reading time in each region. Results showed no effect of verb bias in the *that/the* region, indicating that JLEs did not project a CP structure when encountering *that*. In the disambiguating region, DO-bias verbs produced increased reading times across both *that* and *the* conditions ($p = .033$), suggesting that a DO structure was gradually constructed but not firmly committed until later in the sentence. In the bare noun region immediately following *that/the*, reading times significantly increased in the *the* condition for both bias types ($p = .006$), demonstrating that *the* + NP triggered immediate structural integration, while *that* did not.

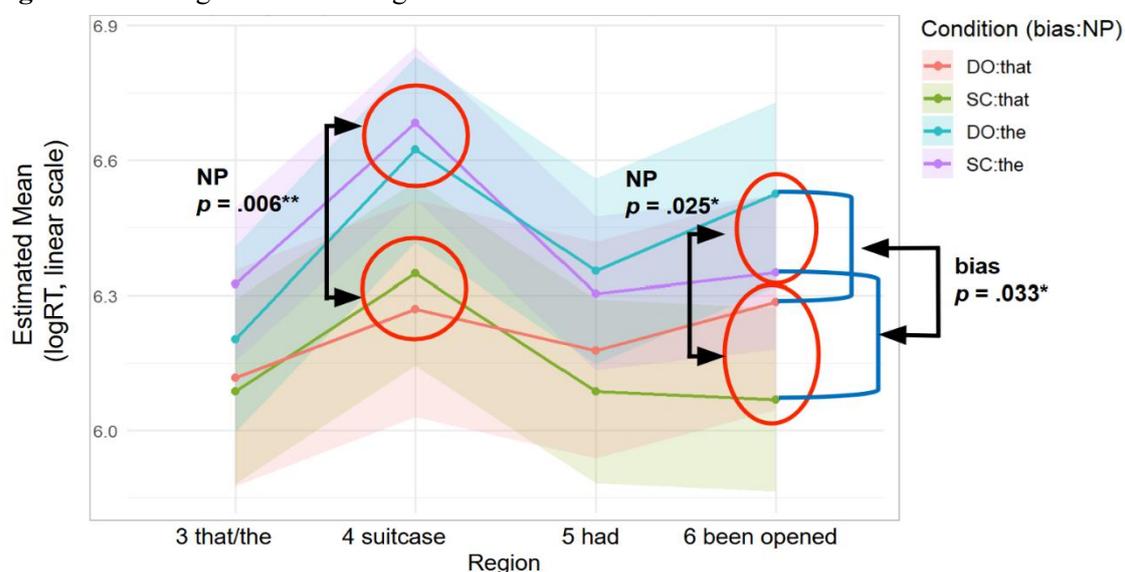
These findings indicate that JLEs do not use verb bias predictively and do not treat *that* as a reliable complementizer cue. Instead, they maintain an underspecified interpretation of *that* until later input forces a structural decision. Taken together, the results suggest that Japanese learners rely on incremental, gradually committing parsing strategies and process *that* as a surface-level demonstrative rather than as an early trigger for CP projection. In contrast to the results from Dussias & Cramer Scaltz (2008), the result can be attributed to the processing strategy of L1 Japanese, whose word order and syntactic cueing patterns differ from those of English and Spanish.

Table 1. Verbs used in the experiment.

verb	Judgement by NSEs in Garnsey et al. (1997)	Judgement by JLEs
confirm	DO-biased	SC-biased
discover	DO-biased	SC-biased
explain	DO-biased	DO-biased
find	DO-biased	DO-biased
admit	SC-biased	SC-biased
claim	SC-biased	SC-biased
prove	SC-biased	SC-biased
suggest	SC-biased	DO-biased

Note. We conducted a Multiple-Choice Task to check if verb bias differs between Native Speakers of English (NSEs) and JLEs. The result indicated that JLEs have different verb bias in their interlanguage, therefore we set the bias condition when conducting the SPRT analysis.

Figure 1. Reading time in each region.



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Priming Residual Verb Second in L1 and L2 English

Word order variation in a second language has been extensively studied in generative second language acquisition to shed light on the nature of L2 syntactic representation and transfer of parametric properties such as verb movement. The current study investigates this using structural priming to test constraints on word order variation in English among native speakers and advanced L2 speakers with L1 German.

Previous research using structural priming among bilinguals and sequential L2 learners has demonstrated priming effects most robustly where word order patterns are shared between the bilingual's languages, assuming shared syntactic representations (Hartsuiker & Bernolet, 2017). Less attention has been paid to priming word order patterns which are ungrammatical in the L2 but grammatical in the L1, or vice-versa. Recent research has, however, identified asymmetric effects of priming on cross-linguistic influence of grammatical and ungrammatical word orders in the L2 (Hopp & Jackson, 2023). We use structural priming to explore such effects further in within-L2 priming, exploiting subtle cross-linguistic (dis)similarities between English and German. This way, we can test the stability of L2 syntactic representations.

English and German differ with respect to the verb second constraint (V2), leading to complementary patterns of grammaticality in main declarative clauses after fronted adverbials (contrasts in 1 - 3). However, after fronted negative adverbials that have sentential scope, English requires subject-auxiliary inversion, resulting in some identical word order patterns (as in 4-5). Previous research using acceptability judgements has found that this residual V2 property poses a learnability problem for L1 German-L2 English speakers, resulting in patterns of overgeneralisation and avoidance (Robertson & Sorace, 1999; Rankin & Wagner, 2025). We investigated this using structural priming.

For each of a series of priming experiments, we recruited one hundred participants (50 L1 English/50 L2 English with L1 German) via Prolific. They provided language background information and completed LexTALE as proxy for advanced proficiency (Lemhöfer & Broersma, 2012). Experiment 1 varied placement of negative adverbials in a prime (fronted/medial). In response, L2 speakers produced subject-auxiliary inversion at significantly lower rates than L1 speakers (Table 1). Critically, in L2, yet not in L1 speakers, inversion rates were affected by priming in that L2 speakers inverted more often after fronted (and thus inverted) prime sentences compared to medial prime sentences. Experiment 2 varied placement of negative adverbials (fronted/medial) as well as the scope of the negative adverbial (sentential vs. local): inversion after fronted local negation is ungrammatical, as in exs. (6-7). The rate of production of inversion was modulated by the scope of negation for both L1 and L2 groups. Interestingly, L1 speakers were more likely to produce ungrammatical subject-auxiliary inversion after fronted local negation (Table 2). Experiment 3 used cross-structural priming such that after a prime containing local negation, participants produced a sentence with a sentential-negation adverbial, and vice-versa. L2 speakers again produced lower rates of inversion, while the L1 group consistently produced subject-auxiliary inversion with sentential-negation adverbials. However, both L1 and L2 speakers were subject to cross-structural priming effects such that they were more likely to produce ungrammatical inversion with local negation after exposure to fronted sentential negation in a prime.

We discuss these results with respect to the nature of the syntactic representation of V2 in L1 and L2 English. While native speakers have a residual V2 representation, making them susceptible to cross-structural priming effects in response to superficially appropriate inversion triggers, L2 speakers appear to have a stronger general non-V2 representation for English, evidenced by lower rates of inversion, in line with previous findings of avoidance. This results in lower rates of suppliance of inversion where it is grammatically triggered, and reduced susceptibility to untriggered inversion in response to local negation. However, L2 speakers are more susceptible to within-structure priming, suggesting that targeted input could help them overcome avoidance.

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Example Sentences (experimental conditions)

- | | |
|---|--|
| (1) a. I often eat sardines for breakfast | b. Ich esse oft Sardellen zum Frühstück. |
| (2) a. Often I eat sardines for breakfast | b. *Oft ich esse Sardellen zum Frühstück. |
| (3) a. *Often eat I sardines for breakfast | b. Oft esse ich Sardellen zum Frühstück. |
| (4) a. Never would I eat sardines for breakfast | b. Nie würde ich Sardellen zum Frühstück essen. |
| (5) a. *Never I would eat sardines for breakfast. | b. *Nie ich würde Sardellen zum Frühstück essen. |
| (6) a. At no time could I see the answer. | b. *At time I could see the answer. |
| (7) a. In no time I could see the answer. | b. *In no time could I see the answer. |

Table 1: Results Experiment 1 by Condition and Prime

L1	Condition	Prime	Rate Production Fronting (%)	Rate Production Inversion After Fronting (%)
English (N = 48)	Neg Adv at no time	Fronted	89.1	97.1
	Neg Adv at no time	Medial	70.5	97.8
	Neg Adv in no way	Fronted	85.1	93.8
	Neg Adv in no way	Medial	50.0	98.9
German (N = 51)	Neg Adv at no time	Fronted	82.9	67.9
	Neg Adv at no time	Medial	52.0	56.7
	Neg Adv in no way	Fronted	83.5	68.9
	Neg Adv in no way	Medial	44.0	53.4

Table 2: Results Experiment 2 by Condition and Prime

L1	Condition	Prime	Rate Production Fronting (%)	Rate Production Inversion After Fronting (%)
English (N = 50)	Sent Neg Adv at no time	Fronted	86.9	94.3
	Sent Neg Adv at no time	Medial	71.7	92.2
	Loc Neg Adv in no time	Fronted	58.6	16.7
	Loc Neg Adv in no time	Medial	30.5	9.3
German (N = 51)	Sent Neg Adv at no time	Fronted	92.9	61.5
	Sent Neg Adv at no time	Medial	55.4	50.0
	Loc Neg Adv in no time	Fronted	59.3	10.4
	Loc Neg Adv in no time	Medial	20.4	10.0

Differential Object Marking in Child and Adult Persian Heritage Speakers in the U.S.

Differential Object Marking (DOM) is a well-known vulnerable property in heritage grammars, especially because its distribution depends on mappings at the syntax-semantics-pragmatics interface (Montrul, 2016; Polinsky & Scontras, 2020), as in (1) and (2). Persian DOM, realized by the postnominal clitic =*râ*, is particularly relevant because its conditioning factor is specificity, rather than definiteness or animacy (Karimi, 1990, 1996, 2003). While the theoretical literature on Persian DOM is extensive, almost no empirical work has examined how DOM is maintained or variable across generations in the diaspora. It has been claimed that linguistic patterns in heritage speakers could arise from changes in the parental languages due to attrition (Sorace, 2012, 2020). This study investigates DOM production in Persian heritage families in the United States, testing (i) whether heritage language children converge on their mothers' DOM patterns, and (ii) which individual factors predict children's accuracy with *râ*.

Fifty-two Persian–English bilinguals participated (26 mother–child dyads). The child heritage speakers were 6–10 years old ($M = 8.50$, $SD = 1.42$). All completed two tasks: (a) a story telling task eliciting spontaneous DOM in discourse (405 analyzable tokens), and (b) a sentence repetition task (SRT) containing 22 DOM-target items (1,144 DOM responses). DOM-licensed tokens were coded for specificity, accuracy, and error type. Mixed-effects logistic models tested group and item-type effects, and multiple regressions evaluated predictors including proficiency, birthplace, daily input, and age of English acquisition.

Results show clear generational differences. In the story telling task, mothers supplied *râ* in 97.6% of Specific contexts, while children reached 82.5%, producing significantly more omissions (17.5% vs. 2.4%). Accuracy in nonspecific contexts was at ceiling for both groups. Error analysis revealed that omissions rather than overuse or substitutions, as in (3), accounted for nearly all errors, concentrated almost entirely among children. Children also showed wide inter-speaker variability, while mothers were uniformly stable.

The SRT magnified these differences. Mothers performed at near-ceiling (94.9–99.6%), whereas children's accuracy ranged from near-zero to ceiling (0–72%). Mixed-effects modeling showed significant effects of Group and DOM Type. Crucially, regression analyses identified overall Persian proficiency as the only robust predictor of children's DOM accuracy, with input, birthplace, age, and AoA English rendered non-significant once proficiency was included.

These findings provide the first empirical evidence on Persian DOM in U.S. heritage speakers. DOM remains fully stable in the adult generation, while children exhibit proficiency-driven variability specifically in specificity-driven contexts. There is no evidence that parents are attrited so parental transmission of DOM omission is not attested. The results support a protracted/incomplete acquisition account (Montrul, 2025), not parental attrition, and underscore the central role of proficiency in maintaining morphosyntactic features at the syntax–semantics interface.

Appendix:

Linguistic Examples (Persian DOM)

(1) Specific → DOM required

ye pesar-râ did-am
One boy-DOM see.PST-1SG
'I saw a certain (specific) boy.'

(2) non-specific → no DOM

ye pesar did-am
One boy see.PST-1SG
'I saw a boy (non-specific).'

(3) Child omission from data (DOM-required context)

Shanel-qermezi ham mi-khore
Hood-Red also IPFV-eat.3SG
'He eats Little Red Riding Hood too.'

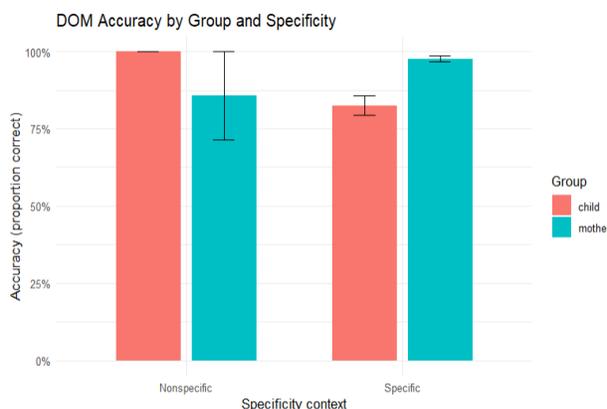


Figure 1. DOM Accuracy by Group × Specificity (StoryTelling Task)

Table 1. Sentence Repetition Task (SRT) Accuracy

Group	LITMUS DOM (%)	Added DOM (%)
Mothers	94.9	99.6
Children	67.3	71.5

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Ways Forward in Second and Heritage Language Acquisition Research: The Role of Timing in Development

Building on the Timing Hypothesis ([1]), we propose, a) an explanation for the absence of age of onset effects in second language (L2) acquisition for late acquired phenomena, and b) an extension of the TH to heritage language (HL) acquisition.

The Timing Hypothesis (TH) posits that age of onset and L2 input in bilingual acquisition interact with the timing of acquisition of the same phenomena in monolingual development in a systematic way: early acquired phenomena, mastered before age three by monolingual children, are subject to age of onset effects whereas late acquired phenomena mastered after age three are not affected by age of onset but by L2 input alone. Empirical support for the TH in L2 acquisition has grown in recent years. Comparing German 2L1 and eL2 children across six early and late phenomena, [2] found that the two groups performed similarly on late phenomena, while 2L1 children outperformed eL2 children on early phenomena. Studies directly comparing the predictive strength of AoO and L2 input for late phenomena have consistently reported that L2 input is a stronger predictor of children's performance than AoO ([3]: Dutch gender; [4]: German wh-questions; [5]: German temporal connectives).

Drawing on these findings, we argue that late acquired phenomena are not subject to age of onset effects in L2 acquisition, regarding the acquisition path (including error patterns) and likely also regarding pace and outcome, because of the nature of the cues. The rationale is as follows: late phenomena typically involve the integration of semantic and/or pragmatic properties with syntactic structure [1]. The type of cues needed for acquiring the relevant representations (and interpretations) go well beyond discovering the macroparametric and microparametric L1 properties at the single phrasal level, associated with early phenomena (see e.g., [1],[6]). These linguistic cues are often non-local, involving scope relations and long-distance dependencies as well as ambiguity, inferences, information-structural and discourse-related properties, and reanalysis (e.g., syntactic garden path, event-semantic kindergarten path, [7]). Consequently, monolingual learners need time for conceptual development and a sufficient amount of input to establish the target representations for late structures, supported by increasing working memory resources.

Crucially for **L2 acquisition**, unlike cues for early parameter settings, cues for late phenomena remain accessible across the lifespan ([8],[1]). We therefore predict that bilingual children will acquire late phenomena in their L2 in the same way as monolingual children, independently of AoO, progressing through the same acquisition stages and achieving comparable levels of success, though not necessarily at the same chronological age (e.g., with a two-year delay for temporal connectives in child L2 learners, see [5]).

For **heritage language acquisition**, the TH yields two specific predictions, for early and late phenomena, respectively. Early phenomena should be successfully acquired since AoO for the HL is at birth, while acquisition patterns should not be affected by amount of HL input (e.g., mediated by the AoO of the L2). Evidence from accusative object clitics, mastered early in monolingual Greek children ([9], [10]) shows similar acquisition patterns in HL Greek clitic production for Greek-German bilingual children with distinct profiles in AoO in L2 German and HL input [11]. Second, late phenomena should be sensitive to input quantity and quality and cognitive maturity (cf. [12],[13]). Specifically, more HL/L1 input, typically associated with a later AoO of the dominant L2, should benefit the acquisition of late phenomena. Evidence from the comprehension of temporal connectives in HL Greek (w/L2 German) supports this prediction: both L2-AoO and HL input (measured with PABIQ) predicted children's HL performance ([14], but see [15] for SRT). We propose that the comparison between 2L1 and HL children is essential to disentangle AoO (in L2) from L1 input effects in early acquired phenomena. To this end, we will present evidence from clitics, subject-verb agreement and null subjects from Greek simultaneous bilinguals and HL Greek-German bilingual children.

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From lexical to structural prediction: Accuracy in filler-gap formation reflects differences in the information L2 learners rely on during comprehension

Research on wh-question processing provides insight into how second language (L2) learners anticipate and build syntactic dependencies in real time. This study tests whether differences in the accuracy of filler gap formation in *unambiguous* sentences such as (1a) predict how learners rely on surface-level versus structural cues when processing *ambiguous* sentences such as (1b). Building on prior work contrasting the Shallow Structure Hypothesis (SSH; Clahsen & Felser, 2006) with convergence-based accounts (Hopp, 2013; Cunnings, 2017; Kaan, 2014), we ask whether L2 learners share a single processing mechanism regardless of their proficiency level or whether their processing changes as their linguistic abilities develop, and if it does, whether accuracy in filler gap formation indexes the information they rely on during comprehension. According to the SSH, L2 comprehension relies more on lexical or surface cues than abstract syntactic structure, even among highly proficient learners. In contrast, convergence accounts argue that L2 and native L1 parsing draw on the same mechanisms, with variation arising from differences in proficiency levels, cue reliability, and cognitive resources. On this view, native-like predictive parsing can emerge as learners develop more stable and reliably accessible syntactic representations.

We tested Japanese L2 learners of English ($n=50$) and native English speakers who served as a control group ($n=25$). The L2 learners were further subdivided into high- ($n=27$) and low-accuracy groups ($n=23$) based on their comprehension of unambiguous filler-gap dependency sentences such as (1a), which we used as an index of the reliability of their filler-gap formation. Using a visual world eye-tracking paradigm, we then examined how participants resolved the ambiguity in sentences such as (1b) while listening to the stimulus sentence and viewing pictures corresponding to main clause (MC; e.g., the “telling” location) and embedded clause (EC; e.g., the “catching” location) interpretations. Participants first heard a context sentence that introduced two potential locations, then heard the target sentence while their eye-movements were recorded. At the end of the sentence, they pressed a key corresponding to their interpretation of the question.

Key-press responses indicated that native speakers preferred the MC interpretation for ambiguous filler-gap dependency structures (left panel, Fig. 2). L2 learners showed an overall MC bias, but the preference was stronger in the high-accuracy group (middle panel, Fig. 2) whereas the low-accuracy group more often chose the EC interpretation (right panel, Fig. 2). A generalized linear mixed-effects model revealed a significant preference for the MC response for the native and high-accuracy group ($ps < .001$), but not for the low-accuracy group; they did not show a significant MC preference ($p = 0.23$).

With respect to the eye-tracking data, a cluster-based permutation analysis identified time windows during which fixations to the MC and EC pictures diverged significantly. Both native speakers and L2 learners showed a higher proportion of looks to the MC picture, though the timing and pattern of divergence differed across groups (Figs. 3, 4). Native speakers showed a single significant cluster between 1440 to 2580ms (top panel, Fig.3). Among L2 learners, the high-accuracy group showed fixation patterns closely resembling those of native speakers (left panel, Fig. 4). In contrast, the low-accuracy group exhibited markedly different eye-movement patterns (right panel, Fig. 4), showing two significant clusters, including an early anticipatory bias toward the MC location before the onset of the matrix verb (first grey-shaded region). This early MC bias is unexpected, as no structural information was available at this point in the sentence to distinguish MC from EC interpretations. Given that approximately one half of the experimental sentences contained *tell* as the matrix verb, this early fixation pattern is likely a learning-based adaptation whereby low accuracy L2 learners rely on lexical cues tied to the frequently used verb, “tell”, before they have established a sufficiently robust structural representation of structures involving English wh-dependencies.

Taken together, these findings suggest that native-like, structure-based predictive parsing in L2 comprehension emerges as learners develop stable and reliably accessible structural representations, which can be indexed by their accuracy in forming unambiguous filler-gap dependencies. Low-accuracy learners showed early, lexically driven anticipation, whereas high-accuracy learners showed later, structure-based prediction patterns resembling those of native English speakers. These patterns indicate that L2 predictive parsing develops from exposure-based lexical anticipation toward structurally-guided processing.

(1) Example ambiguous and unambiguous wh- question

a. Where did Lizzie tell someone *how* she was going to catch butterflies? (*unambiguous*)

b. Where did Lizzie tell someone *that* she was going to catch butterflies? (*ambiguous*)



a. Main clause (MC) interpretation



b. Embedded clause (EC) interpretation



c. Distracter (Dis)

Fig. 1 Three pictures presented with (1a, b)

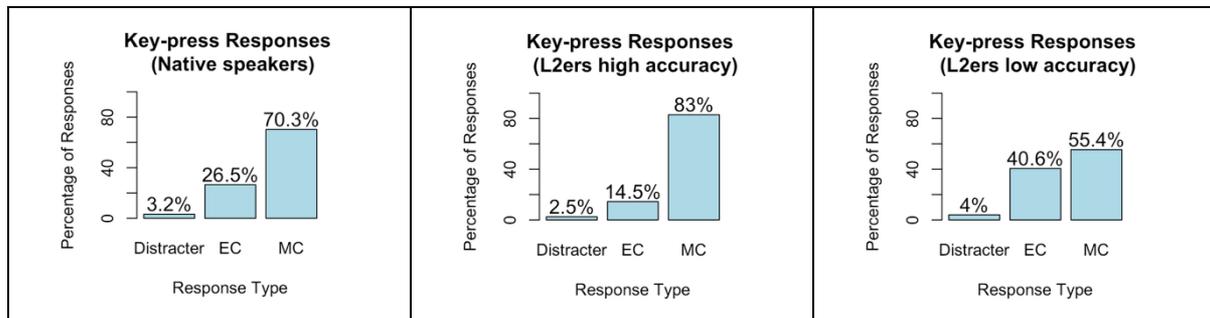


Fig. 2. Key-press responses for ambiguous questions (1a). Native speakers (left panel), high-accuracy L2 learners (middle panel), and low-accuracy L2 learners (right panel).

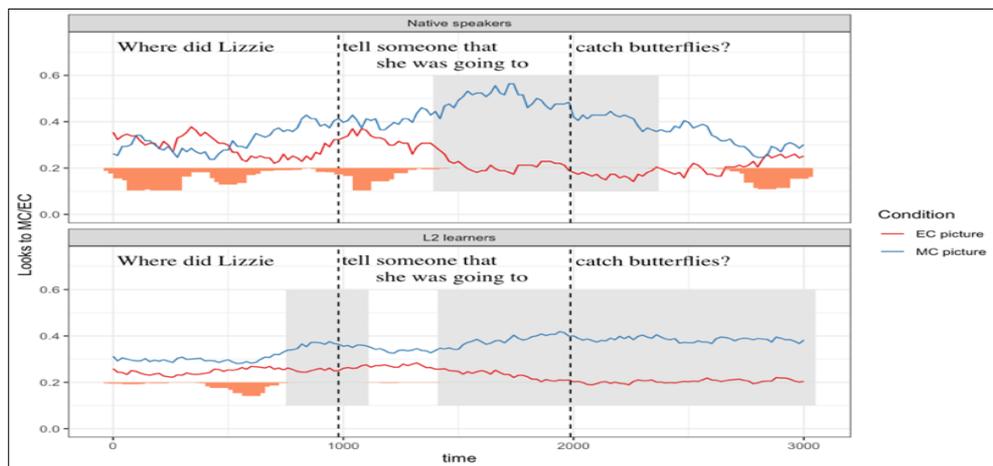


Fig. 3. Proportion of looks to the MC and EC pictures for native speakers (top panel) and for L2 learners with the two subgroups combined (bottom panel). Vertical lines mark the onsets of the matrix verb (e.g., tell, 979 ms) and embedded verb (e.g., catch, 1986 ms). Grey-shaded areas indicate time windows of significant divergence based on permutation analysis.

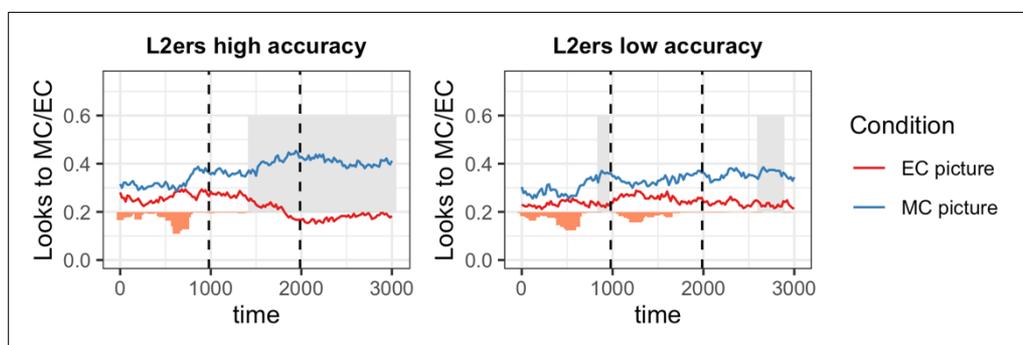


Fig. 4. Permutation analysis results for high-accuracy L2 learners (left panel) and low-accuracy L2 learners (right panel).

Aspect Interpretation across Simple and Complex Sentences: More Evidence for Feature Reassembly in L2 Spanish

Background. The traditional testing ground for the acquisition of Grammatical Aspect in a second language (L2) has involved temporal interpretation in simple (one-clause) sentences (1-4) [1]. Yet, complex sentences (main & embedded clauses) provide a litmus test for the acquisition of the core ordering function of Aspect (5-8) [2]. Imperfective (IPFV), but not perfective (PFV), aspect determines an overlap relation among temporal intervals, yielding an ‘Ongoing’ reading in (1-2) but not (3-4), and a ‘Simultaneous’ (SIM) reading in (5-6) but not (7-8) [3-5]. Testing simple and complex sentences *in tandem* offers deeper insights, enabling us to examine how learners connect the notion of the unfolding of an eventuality in simple sentences to that of temporal ordering between the intervals of two clauses in complex sentences. Following the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis (FRH) [6], acquiring Aspect in an L2 may be conceptualised as reassembling PFV and IPFV features, which is predicted to be particularly taxing when the L1-L2 form-meaning mappings do not match [1-2]. Spanish and English constitute a suitable testing pair given the one-to-one mapping for (selected) aspect forms and meanings with eventive predicates, but a one-to-many mapping with stative predicates across the two languages.

Present Study. This study investigates the extent to which beginner, intermediate, and advanced learners of L2 Spanish can apply their knowledge of Aspect across simple and complex sentences, to assess the degree to which this category has been fully reassembled. Eighty-four L1 English-L2 Spanish learners and 84 L1 Spanish controls completed two interpretation tasks and a proficiency test. The Context-Stories Task presented brief contexts in English eliciting an Ongoing reading, followed by two Spanish simple sentences varying PFV and IPFV (Fig. 1). The Timelines Task displayed schematic timelines eliciting a SIM reading, followed by one Spanish complex sentence varying aspect in the embedded clause (Fig. 2). Items involved eventive predicates with *Preterito Indefinido* (PFV) vs. Progressive Periphrasis (IPFV) and stative predicates with the former PFV form vs. *Preterito Imperfecto* (IPFV) as in (1-8).

Predictions. If Aspect has been fully acquired, learners should consistently generalise its ordering function across structures, as both Ongoing and SIM depend on the temporal overlap mechanism of IPFV aspect. Under the FRH, greater difficulty is expected for mismatching L1-L2 mappings (states) than for matching ones (events). Higher proficiency is predicted to facilitate reassembly and yield target-like interpretation.

Results. Mixed-effects logistic regression models on accept/reject responses examined the effects of Aspect (PFV, IPFV), Event Type (events, states), and Proficiency. For simple sentences, all learner groups correctly accepted IPFV over PFV with events, but only advanced learners did so with states. For complex sentences, learners correctly distinguished IPFV from PFV with events from the intermediate level onward, yet no learner group distinguished aspect forms with states. Native controls consistently accepted IPFV across event and sentence types (Fig. 3).

Discussion. These results show that Aspect knowledge was *not* consistently carried over from simple to complex sentences, with advanced learners being unable to generalise this knowledge across structures. While learners managed to acquire superficial aspect distinctions, as shown for simple sentences, they did not fully master the core ordering function of Aspect tested in complex ones, suggesting that feature reassembly was incomplete. These findings provide additional evidence for the FRH, indicating greater difficulty with L1-L2 mismatching mappings and highlighting disruptive L1 transfer effects on the acquisition of Aspect. Methodologically, these results reveal that a comprehensive account of Aspect acquisition requires testing simple and complex sentences *in tandem*, as target-like temporal interpretation in one task is not necessarily an indication of target-like feature reassembly. Finally, the findings suggest that generative L2 research can and should inform teaching practice by helping to identify areas where learners may benefit from explicit focus on form-meaning mismatches, particularly in complex sentences, where interpretation relies on the underlying ordering mechanism of Aspect.

Events		States	
Simple Sentences			
(1) Juan <i>est-aba</i> <i>haciendo</i> pan. John be-PST.IPFV.3SG making bread 'John was making bread.'	(2) Juan <i>est-aba</i> enfermo. John be-PST.IPFV.3SG sick 'John was sick.'		
(3) Juan <i>hizo</i> pan. John make-PST.PFV.3SG bread 'John made bread.'	(4) Juan <i>est-uvo</i> enfermo. John be-PST.PFV.3SG sick 'John was sick.'		
Complex Sentences			
(5) María dijo que Juan <i>est-aba</i> <i>haciendo</i> pan. Mary said that John be-PST.IPFV.3SG making bread 'Mary said that John was making bread.'	(6) María dijo que Juan <i>est-aba</i> enfermo. Mary said that John be-PST.IPFV.3SG sick 'Mary said that John was sick.'		
(7) María dijo que Juan <i>hizo</i> pan. Mary said that John make-PST.PFV.3SG bread 'Mary said that John made bread.'	(8) María dijo que Juan <i>est-uvo</i> enfermo. Mary said that John be-PST.PFV.3SG sick 'Mary said that John was sick.'		
Grammatical Aspect: <i>IPFV</i>, <i>PFV</i>			

Figure 1. Sample trial for the Context-Stories Task presenting an Ongoing reading

Juan was preparing the whole meal by himself for his wife's birthday. While his wife was setting the table, he had his hands in the dough for his famous homemade bread.

Are the descriptions correct?

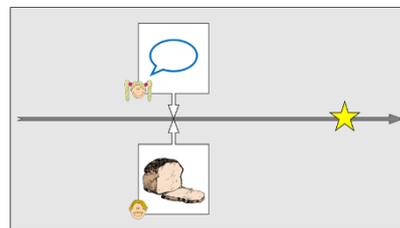
Juan hizo pan.

YES NO

Juan estaba haciendo pan.

YES NO

Figure 2. Sample trial for the Timelines Task depicting a SIM reading

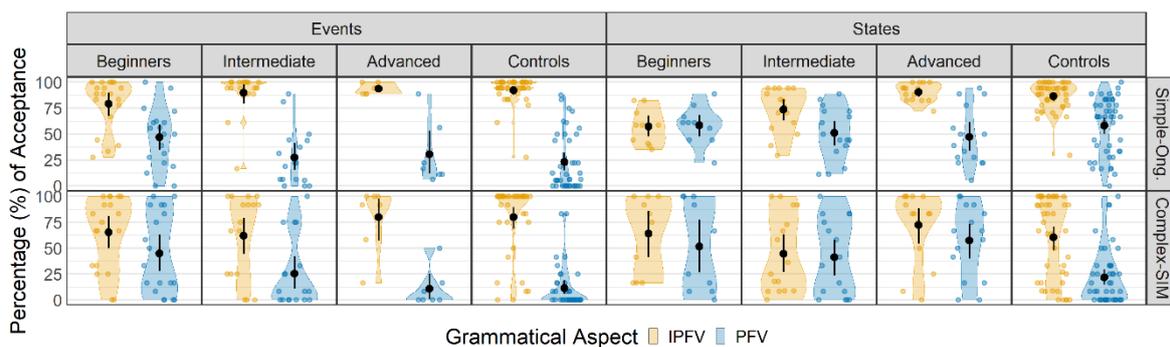


María dijo que Juan estaba haciendo pan.

Is the sentence a good description of the timeline?

YES NO

Figure 3. Mean percentage of acceptance for each aspect form (black dots) with 95% CI, individual participants' score (coloured dots), and distribution of the data (violins) for simple (Ongoing) and complex sentences (SIM) by event type and participant group.



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Conceptual Transfer at the Syntax–Pragmatics Interface: Vietnamese Cultural Models of Certainty and Politeness in L2 English Modality and Evidentiality

Abstract

This investigation analyzes how culturally ingrained conceptualizations of certainty, politeness, and socio-pragmatic stance influence the reconfiguration of epistemic and evidential features within the L2 English grammar of Vietnamese learners. While generative theories of second language acquisition have recognized epistemic modality and evidentiality as areas with enduring representational difficulties attributed to intricate feature specifications and the dependencies among syntax, semantics, and pragmatics limited attention has been paid to the role of cultural conceptualizations in constraining feature reassembly. Vietnamese primarily encodes stance through discourse particles, inferential cues, and face-sensitive politeness norms, whereas English encodes epistemic strength and evidential sources via modal operators and evidential adverbials. This conceptual and typological incongruity provides a comprehensively rich environment for testing how conceptual transfer interacts with the acquisition of formal features.

Drawing on the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis (Lardiere 2009), the Interface Hypothesis (Sorace 2011), and cultural conceptualization theory (Sharifian 2017), this study predicts that Vietnamese learners will (i) underuse [+strong] epistemic features (must, certainly), (ii) overextend mitigated operators (might, seem) aligned with culturally preferred low-certainty models, and (iii) misinterpret evidential markers as politeness strategies rather than source-of-information encoders. These predictions were tested using a mixed-methods design comprising an acceptability judgment task, a forced-choice interpretation task, and a context-dependent discourse production task, administered to 120 Vietnamese university learners of English across proficiency levels.

Preliminary analyses indicate a systematic avoidance of strong epistemic markers and a recategorization of evidentials as tools for interpersonal mitigation. This supports the view that interface vulnerabilities are influenced not only by structural complexity but also by culturally rooted conceptual biases. The findings contribute to ongoing discussions regarding L2 representations and learnability, illustrating that conceptual transfer can influence the trajectory of feature reassembly within epistemic and evidential domains.

Keywords: epistemic modality; evidentiality; feature reassembly; conceptual transfer; syntax–pragmatics interface

EXTRA PAGE (Examples, Table, References)

1. Illustrative Examples

No	English (Target L2)	Vietnamese (L1 Conceptual Patterns)
1	a. <i>She must be home by now.</i> [+STRONG epistemic] b. <i>She might be home.</i> [+WEAK epistemic]	a. <i>Chắc là cô ấy về rồi.</i> (“maybe/probably”) [low-certainty, face-preserving]
2	a. <i>Apparently, he left early.</i> [+EVID: indirect/inferential] b. <i>Evidently, she knew the answer.</i> [+EVID: indirect evidence]	a. <i>Hình như anh ấy đi sớm.</i> (“it seems like...”) [mitigated inference] b. <i>Thì ra...</i> (often expresses surprise or evaluation rather than source marking)

2. Table 1. Mapping of L2 English Features to L1 Vietnamese Cultural Scripts

Domain	English (Formal Features)	Vietnamese (Conceptual Scripts)	Predicted L2 Effect
Epistemic Force	[+STRONG] / [+WEAK] grammaticalized via modals	Cultural preference for indirectness; avoidance of certainty	Underuse of <i>must</i> , <i>certainly</i>
Mitigation	Weak modals encode low certainty	“Té nhị,” hedging, avoidance of imposition	Overuse of <i>might</i> , <i>maybe</i> , <i>seem</i>
Evidentiality	Lexicalized evidentials mark the information source	Evidentiality inferred pragmatically; particles used for stance	Misinterpret evidentials as politeness
Stance Encoding	Grammatical	Sociocultural, relational	Conceptual transfer → feature misalignment

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Supporting Multilingual Pupils in Northern Ireland

In recent years, the school system in Northern Ireland has undergone rapid demographic change. The number of EAL pupils (termed ‘Newcomers’ by the Department of Education NI) almost doubled in the years from 2012 to 2021, to a point where they constitute 7% of primary pupils (DENI 2023). The rapidity of this change means that schools in Northern Ireland have had much less time to prepare to support these pupils than schools in other regions such as England. Moreover, Newcomer pupils complete much of their education in mainstream classrooms, taught by teachers who may have relatively little formal background in EAL education (Kelly 2021).

In this talk, we present a project to provide additional support to Newcomer pupils through the development and testing of teaching materials informed by generative SLA theories. The first phase of this project involved qualitative interviews with staff from primary schools across NI, to understand their current Newcomer situation and gauge their needs for future support. We found that none of the schools interviewed had dedicated EAL staff in place; instead, schools made what use they could of any regular staff who might have prior EAL experience. As a result of these findings, we sought ways to embed linguistically informed pedagogy more deeply into the standard PGCE Primary curriculum, to make insights from generative SLA available to the non-specialist teachers who will constitute the main source of support for these children. We met with PGCE students at a Northern Ireland university to gather feedback on what materials they might find useful. A common theme was the desire for materials that could be used ‘off the shelf’, to give them confidence in dealing with EAL pupils.

The next phase involved the design of linguistically informed teaching resources for classroom interventions. The interventions were aimed at children in Key Stages 1–2 (NI Years 3–7), who had already been receiving support in school with basic communication but who might be struggling to reach higher levels of proficiency. They were designed to be interesting and engaging for L1 English pupils as well, giving them the potential to be used for all children together during regular class time. Drawing upon previous work with ‘Newcomers’ in Northern Ireland (Kane et al. 2019), as well as more general work on areas where EAL learners may need support (e.g. Swan & Smith 2001), four areas were targeted: determiners, prepositions, auxiliaries, and non-finite verb forms. Each intervention included four stories based on traditional folktales, with accompanying exercises (see Figure 1).

The interventions were implemented by pairing PGCE students undertaking placements in schools with linguistics students who took on the role of classroom assistants. Before the placements took place, an introductory briefing session was held, designed to familiarise the PGCE students with fundamental concepts and insights from generative SLA research. The aim was that while the assistants supported children with the activities in these materials, the PGCE students would gain experience with the theory and practice of the interventions, and would thus have a template to use for future materials of their own. Following these placements, qualitative interviews were conducted with the linguistics and PGCE students involved in this project, exploring their own experiences and those of the pupils that they supported. These interviews yielded feedback that will inform future iterations of this approach.

To engage the wider NI educational community with this work, we also conducted a workshop and roundtable with principals and teachers. Schools with a variety of demographic profiles were represented. Participants had the opportunity to learn about our interventions and some of the basic elements of the underlying linguistic concepts, and to meet with staff from the Education Authority’s Intercultural Education Service and learn more about existing forms of support for Newcomer pupils. Such forums are essential for ensuring that best practices in this area become more widely known and adopted.

Figures



1. Go through this story and circle anything that looks wrong:

Once there was a hare who challenged a tortoise a race. They asked a fox to be the judge of the race.

The hare was sure that he would win, because he was faster from the tortoise....

Figure 1: Intervention Example

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Difficulty with 3SG -s in L2 English: A Perceptual Problem, Not a Knowledge Deficit

Background: For those learning a second language (L2), certain grammatical forms of the target language present consistent challenges, regardless of first language (L1) background. Functional morphemes have received particular attention as a bottleneck in L2 acquisition (Slabakova, 2008). Among such morphemes, English third-person-singular (3SG) -s is regarded as one of the most challenging, with errors persisting even for advanced learners (e.g., Lardiere, 1998). Previous L2 research has attributed difficulty with 3SG -s to various factors ranging from representational deficits (e.g., Li & Yang, 2022) to problems with input processing (e.g., Slabakova, 2019). According to the Sentence Position Principle (Barcroft & VanPatten, 1997), a morpheme's position influences its perceptual salience, with sentence-medial position being more challenging than sentence-final position. While Sundara et al. (2011) reported that sentence-medial -s is indeed harder for L1 children to perceive than sentence-final -s, no empirical studies have probed for similar effects among L2 learners. The current study investigates (a) whether L2 learners' difficulty with 3SG -s is a perceptual problem or a representational problem and (b) whether sentence position contributes to that difficulty.

Study: We examined real-time perception of 3SG -s in a visual-world eye-tracking task and receptive knowledge of 3SG -s in a fill-in-the-blank task. Both tasks had a 2×2 design (Table 1) crossing POSITION (sentence-medial vs. sentence-final) and NUMBER (singular subject vs. plural subject). There were 16 critical items (4 conditions \times 4 tokens, Latin-squared) and 44 fillers. Participants' eye movements were monitored while they listened to recorded stimuli and selected the corresponding pictures on a computer screen. There were always two pictures to choose from: one depicting an event with a singular subject and one depicting an event with a plural subject. The verb in each stimulus began with a sibilant, thereby masking any plural marking on the subject—which immediately preceded it—and forcing the participant to rely on verbal morphology to select the correct picture (Johnson et al., 2005). Participants also completed a Cloze test (Brown, 1980) as a proficiency measure. We reasoned that if L2ers' difficulty with 3SG -s stems from perceptual challenges alone, they should be slower and less accurate than L1 speakers in the eye-tracking task while also displaying high accuracy in the fill-in-the-blank task.

Results: Eye-tracking data from 24 L1-English controls and 23 adult L1-Korean L2-English learners showed a significant effect for POSITION, with both groups being slower to perceive sentence-medial -s than sentence-final -s (Figure 1). This outcome lends support to the Sentence Position Principle by indicating that 3SG -s is in fact harder to perceive in sentence-medial position than in sentence-final position. While L2 learners exhibited slower morpheme perception and lower picture-selection accuracy than L1 speakers (Figure 2), they also performed at ceiling in the fill-in-the-blank task assessing their knowledge of 3SG -s (Figure 3). These results suggest that for the L2 learners in our study, just like the L1 children in Sundara et al. (2011), difficulty with 3SG -s stems from processing factors rather than a knowledge deficit.

(497 words)

Table 1. Critical conditions in the eye-tracking task (and the fill-in-the-blank task)

Sentence Position	Subject Type	Example Stimulus
Medial	Singular	The duck swims in the water.
Medial	Plural	The ducks swim in the water.
Final	Singular	In the water, the duck swims.
Final	Plural	In the water, the ducks swim.

Figure 1. Elogit-transformed proportion of fixations to Target and Competitor by *Group*, *Position*, and *Number* in the eye-tracking task

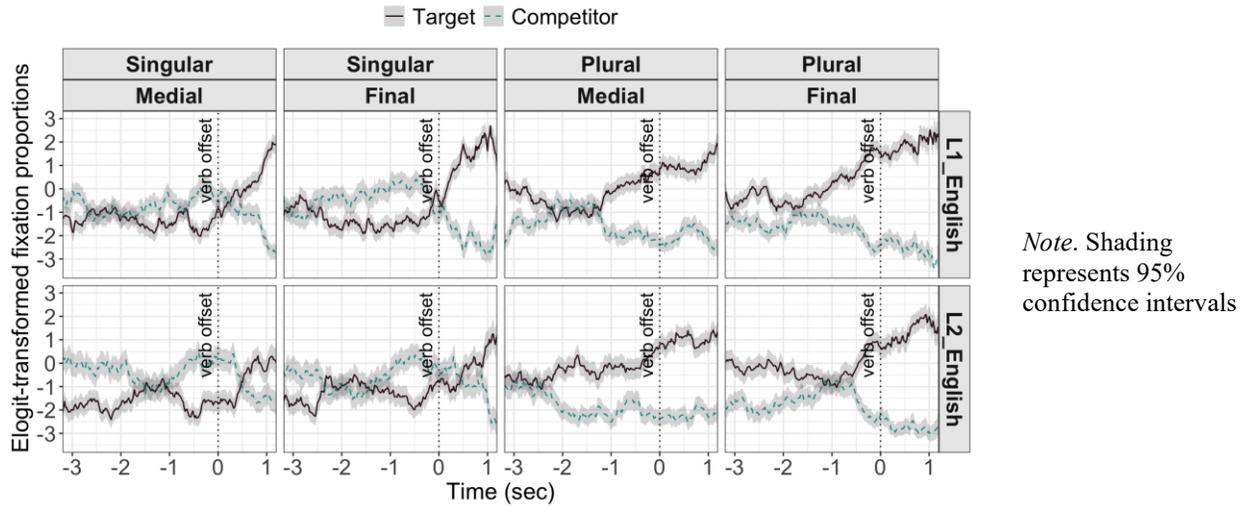


Figure 2. Mean picture-selection accuracy in the eye-tracking task

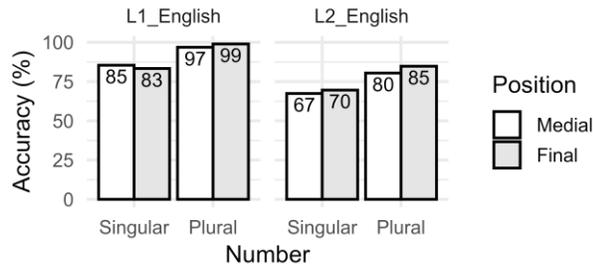
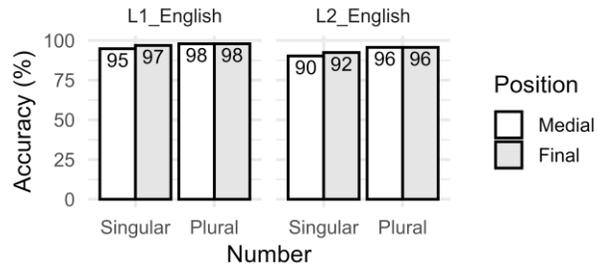


Figure 3. Mean response accuracy in the fill-in-the-blank task



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Structural Constraints on Non-Coargument Pronoun Interpretation in L2 English

This study investigates how structural constraints influence the interpretation of non-coargument pronouns in L2 English. In canonical coargument structures, Binding Principle B requires pronouns to be free within their local domain, thereby restricting interpretation to non-local antecedents (e.g., Chomsky, 1981). In contrast, non-coargument structures permit both local and non-local antecedents, introducing ambiguity (e.g., Reinhart & Reuland, 1993). To examine how native speakers and L2 learners interpret such ambiguity, the study compares the canonical coargument structure with two types of non-coargument structures: picture noun phrases (PNPs; e.g., *a picture of him*) and short-distance pronouns (SDPs; e.g., *a snake near him*). Previous findings show that native English speakers generally prefer non-local antecedents in PNPs but find SDPs ambiguous (e.g., Cunnings & Sturt, 2018; Patterson et al., 2014). For L2 learners, the findings are limited. Studies reported mixed preferences in PNPs (e.g., Kim et al., 2015), and only one study reported a non-local preference in SDPs (Patterson et al., 2014). The variations may stem from differences in task designs or materials, and more empirical evidence is needed. Thus, this study adapted a multiple-choice task to systematically examine (i) whether pronoun resolution differs across syntactic structures (the coargument structure/PNPs/SDPs), and (ii) whether native speakers and L2 learners differ in their interpretation patterns. One group of native English speakers ($n=28$) and one group of high-intermediate to advanced L1-Mandarin/L2-English learners ($n=40$) were tested. For each of the three sentence structures, 24 test sentences were constructed, each containing two potential antecedents and one pronoun (Table 1). In the test paradigm, both proper names matched the gender of the pronoun. Participants were instructed to choose the most suitable referent of the pronoun from three options: the non-local antecedent, the local antecedent, and either antecedent.

The results yielded several important findings. First, for native speakers (Figure 1, left panel), the non-local antecedent was the predominant choice across all three structures, but its selection rate decreased from the coargument structure to PNPs to SDPs ($ps < .05$). Conversely, “either” responses increased across these structures (Coargument < PNP < SDP, $ps < .05$). Such pattern suggests a graded application of Principle B (Fagen & Xiang, 2024), driven by structural differences: the constraint applies most strongly in the coargument structure, weakens in PNPs where pronouns sit inside argument NPs, and is weakest in SDPs where pronouns occur in adjuncts. Second, L2 learners overall showed a more categorical application of Principle B (Figure 1, right panel): they preferred the non-local antecedent in the coargument structure ($ps < .05$), but in both PNPs and SDPs, the proportions of “non-local” and “either” responses did not differ significantly ($ps > .10$), suggesting that both non-coargument structures were treated as ambiguous. Third, further analyses dividing the L2 learners into two proficiency groups showed that only the higher-proficiency group exhibited a slight non-local preference in PNPs ($p < .10$), indicating that L2 pronoun interpretation is modulated by proficiency (Figure 2). Additionally, individual-level analysis supported the group-level patterns: both native speakers and L2 learners consistently chose the non-local antecedent in the coargument structure; native speakers maintained this consistency in PNPs, whereas half of L2 learners were inconsistent in PNPs; and both groups showed greater uncertainty in SDPs (Figure 3). Overall, these findings suggest that native speakers apply Binding Principle B in a graded manner, whereas L2 learners show reduced sensitivity to the nuanced syntactic distinctions between PNPs and SDPs. By directly comparing native speakers and L2 learners across multiple syntactic structures, this study provides new insights for generative accounts of pronoun resolution, showing how structural constraints and language background jointly shape interpretation.

Table 1. Example of Test Materials

Sentence Structure	Example Item
<i>Coargument Structure</i>	Tom said that James called <i>him</i> in the morning.
<i>PNP Structure</i>	Mike said that Charles printed a picture of <i>him</i> with the printer.
<i>SDP Structure</i>	John said that George saw a snake near <i>him</i> during the trip.

Figure 1. Proportion of choice by native speakers and L2 learners

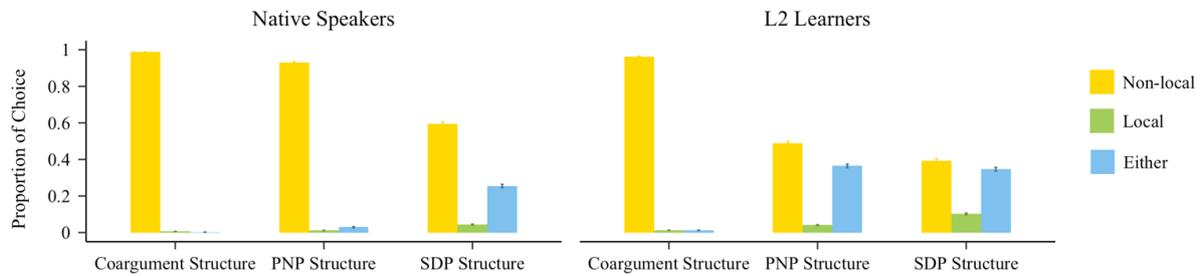


Figure 2. Proportion of choice by higher-proficiency and lower-proficiency L2 learners

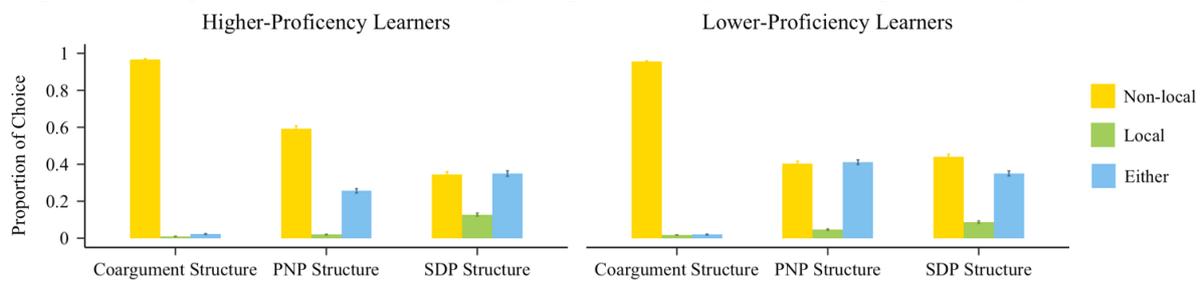
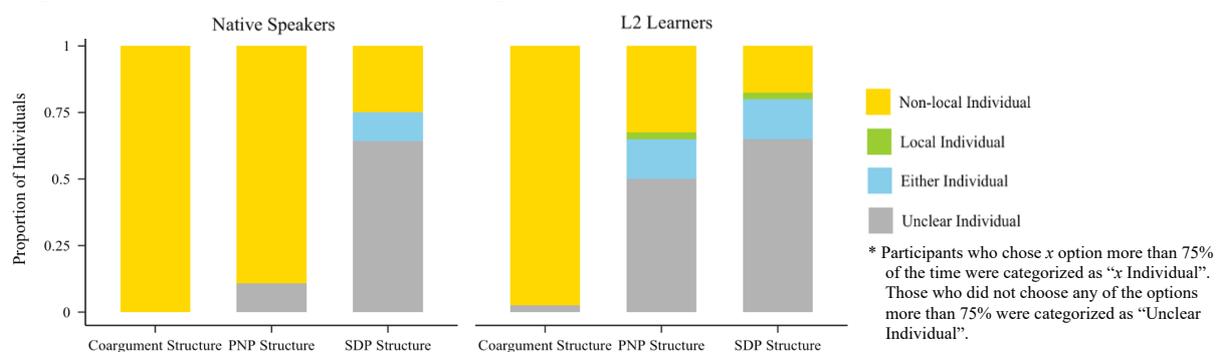


Figure 3. Distribution of individual preferences



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L3 Chinese Null Subjects: Insights from L1-Japanese L2-English speakers

East Asian languages remain underexplored in UG-based L3 research compared to European languages. This study fills the gap by examining null subject interpretations in L3 Chinese by L1 Japanese–L2 English speakers, focusing on cross-linguistic influence (CLI).

Oku (1998) argues that Japanese null arguments stem from argument ellipsis (AE), not null subject pronouns, *pro*, as they allow sloppy readings. Takahashi (2020) links AE to the absence of uninterpretable ϕ -features in T (Saito, 2007), which makes Japanese agreement-less. However, Chinese does not permit sloppy readings with null subjects, despite lacking subject–verb agreement like Japanese (Huang, 1982). Takahashi (2014) attributes this to a [+Def] feature blocking sloppy readings in Chinese subject positions.

In light of these theoretical results, Author et al. (forthcoming) examined how L1-Chinese L2 English speakers interpret null arguments in L3 Japanese, finding patterns similar to L1 Japanese speakers (over 80% accuracy). Interestingly, in a follow-up study, accuracy did not correlate with proficiency: some advanced learners still used strict identity readings for sloppy contexts, while some early-stage learners had acquired sloppy readings appropriately.

The current study complements the prior work on L3 Japanese, offering a bi-directional perspective on CLI between Japanese and Chinese. Our research questions are: (1) Do L1-Japanese L2-English learners of L3 Chinese interpret embedded null subjects as AE or *pro*? (2) Do L3 learners transfer null subject knowledge from L1 to L3?

We tested 22 L1 Japanese–L2 English learners of L3 Chinese (Table 1), ranging from lower to upper proficiency levels, studying at universities in Taiwan, along with five native Mandarin speakers as a control group. Two tasks were administered: a Truth-Value Judgment Task (TVJT) to examine null argument interpretations (four conditions, four items each, plus eight fillers), and a screening test to ensure dialogue comprehension.

All L3 learners passed the screening test, and accepted sloppy identity readings with null subjects 60.2% of the time (Table 2). A breakdown revealed that 13 learners consistently allowed sloppy readings, six fluctuated between sloppy and strict identity readings, and three categorically allowed only strict identity readings, similar to the Chinese control group (Table 3). These findings suggest that more than half of our L3 learners interpreted null subjects as AE, while three interpreted them as *pro*. Thus, most of the L3 learners have difficulty acquiring Chinese null subjects.

Although both Japanese and Chinese allow null subjects, those in Chinese pose greater acquisition challenges for L1 Japanese learners. This contrasts with the results from L3 Japanese learners, who achieved 80% accuracy (Author et al., forthcoming). It has been argued that L3 Japanese learners may benefit from support provided by L2 English, since English, like Japanese, lacks [+Def] features in T, which facilitate their acquiring L3 Japanese null subjects. Our L3 Chinese learners, however, may receive no such support from L2 English. We assume that learners need a certain amount of time to recognize [+Def] to override transfer of Japanese null subject knowledge in their developing L3 Chinese grammar (cf. Yuan 2001).

L3 Chinese learners transferred null subject knowledge from L1 Japanese, and acquisition of the [+Def] feature was slow. Their results also indicate that CLI is not limited to the initial stage since even the learners at the upper level did not interpret Chinese null subjects appropriately. Moreover, some L3 Chinese learners showed fluctuation in interpretation, suggesting that they sometimes treated null subjects as AE when [+Def] was not yet recognized in T, and at other times they interpreted them as *pro* when [+Def] in T was identified. This fluctuation likely reflects structural similarities in null subjects between Japanese and Chinese.

We argue that these facts support the Full Transfer Potential (Slabakova 2021; Westergaard 2021; Westergaard et al. 2023). Our study shows that structural similarities between Chinese and Japanese play an important role in CLI; L1 influence is more persistent in L3 Chinese grammar where learners need to acquire a new feature. At the same time, however, the previous results indicate that L2 can be facilitative to acquire L3, and hence, both L1 and L2 are active in the course of L3 acquisition.

Examples of strict and sloppy readings (Oku 1998: 166)

- (1) a. Mary-wa [zibun-no ronbun-ga saiyoosareru]-to omotteiru.
 Mary-top self-gen paper-nom will be accepted-that think
 ‘Mary thinks that her paper will be accepted.’
 b. John-mo [[e]saiyoosareru]-to omotteiru.
 John-also will be accepted-that think
 ‘John also thinks that [e] will be accepted.’ [e] = Mary’s paper [strict reading]
 [e] = John’s paper [sloppy reading]

Example of the TVJT *condition: null subject in sloppy identity context

(2) *Conversation:*

Sakura: I’ll have a rice ball party tonight at my house. Hi, Emma, have you brought your cooked rice? Did you cook it well?
 Emma: Hello, Sakura. Yes, I did, but my cooked rice is soft. It seems that I put too much water.
 Sakura: Let’s see...wow! It looks soft and fluffy!
 (After 30 minutes, here comes Kai.)
 Sakura: Hi Kai. Come in. What’s wrong? You look sad. Have you brought your cooked rice?
 Kai: I’m sorry, but my cooked rice is hard. It seems I should have put much more water.
 Sakura: Let’s see...wow! It smells good!

Test sentence:

Emma does not think that self’s cooked rice is hard.
 Kai thinks that [e] is soft. True / False

Table 1: Participants’ biographical and proficiency information

	Age	Level	
		L2 English	**L3 Chinese
L3 Chinese (n=22)	19–22 (mean=20.8)	Elementary to *Upper int. CEFR A2(n=2), B1(n=14), B2(n=6)	Elementary to *Upper int. CEFR A2 (n=2), B1 (n=18), B2 (n=2)
Chinese control (n=5)	20–22 (mean=21.2)	-	-

*Upper int. = Upper intermediate

**Chinese proficiency level is based on learners’ TOCFL (Test of Chinese as Foreign Language) scores. Their scores were ones they attained when they entered a university in Taiwan.

Table 2: Acceptance rates percentages on the Truth-Value Judgment Task

		Null subject	
		*Sloppy	Strict
L3 Chinese group	(n=22)	60.2	39.8
Chinese control group	(n=5)	0	100

Table 3: Individual results for sloppy null subjects (% in parentheses)

		Full rejection	Rejection	Fluctuation	Acceptance
		0/4	1/4	2/4	3/4 or 4/4
L3 Chinese	(n=22)	3 (13.6)	0 (0)	6 (27.3)	13 (59.1)

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L1 Transfer Effects on Word Order in L2 English Reading

Verb-Subject (VS) inversion in English is a subtle phenomenon, rarely taught explicitly in L2 contexts and involving both syntax-lexicon and syntax-discourse interfaces. In English, VS inversion is restricted to certain classes of unaccusative verbs, and only in broad focus contexts (Teixeira 2020). Spanish, however, prefers VS in narrow focus contexts regardless of verb-type, while in broad focus, only unaccusatives can have VS order (Lozano et al. 2010). The Interface Hypothesis (IH; Sorace 2011) claims that interface phenomena (such as syntax mapping to information structure) are difficult for L2ers to acquire regardless of L1 transfer. Others claim L1-transfer effects, such that learners have difficulty only with interface phenomena differing from the L1 (Slabakova 2015). Research on English VS inversion finds L2-sensitivity to verb type and context distinctions not present in the L1, and native-like performance in some production tasks and timed judgment tasks (Lozano et al. 2010, Teixeira 2020). As the IH predicts processing to be particularly challenging, testing learners' online performance is ideal.

This study tests L1-Spanish advanced L2-English learners' sensitivity to discourse interface properties (broad vs. narrow focus) and syntax-internal properties (verb type) guiding VS inversion in online processing. 20 L1-Spanish advanced L2-English learners (L2ers) and 21 native English speakers (NSs) completed an online self-paced reading task (SPRT) with region-by-region presentation and an offline acceptability judgment task (AJT) examining their perception of English VS sentences. The tasks use a 2x2 (contextXverb) design, with 32 experimental items (8 per condition) distributed over 4 counterbalanced lists alongside 64 distractors and 32 fillers. Token sets consist of length matched verbs with an unaccusative/unergative distinction (Table 1). This study contributes to the current body of research in that it **1) tests knowledge of English VS inversion, while previous research focuses mainly on knowledge of Spanish, and 2) uses the SPRT to test online processing of inversion, which has not previously been done.**

AJT results (Table 2) show NSs and L2ers rating VS with unaccusative verbs higher than with unergative verbs, unexpectedly in both focus contexts. A mixed-effects linear regression model for participant-normalized ratings was run on both populations with the interaction between verb type and focus type as fixed effects. NSs significantly disprefer unergative verbs ($p < .001$), and surprisingly have a marginal preference for narrow focus ($p = 0.063$). L2ers also disprefer unergative verbs ($p = .038$) and show a narrow focus preference ($p < .001$). The SPRT results (Figure 1) demonstrate a methodological difficulty in comparing broad focus and narrow focus contexts, as narrow focus contexts present old information in the target sentence, which speeds up reading times even before the critical region. A generalized mixed-effects regression model fitted for Gamma distribution (run on both populations with verb type and focus type as fixed effect and speaker and as random effects) shows NSs marginally slow down for unergatives in the post critical region ($p = .079$) and L2ers slow for unergatives in the critical region ($p = .004$). Ongoing analyses include adding proficiency and verb frequency as variables.

Contrary to the IH predictions, L2ers exhibit sensitivity both to verb type and to focus, showing largely the same patterns as the NSs, in both offline and online tasks. The preference for VS with narrow focus could be attributed to L1-transfer from Spanish for the L2ers, but the same preference is, surprisingly, exhibited by the NSs; we will discuss possible reasons for this preference, as a task effect vs. a genuine property of English information structure.

Table 1: Sample Token Set

Condition	Context Sentence	Target Sentence	Predicted English Acceptability	Acceptability based on Spanish L1-transfer
Broad Unaccusative	I didn't hear the end of the spooky story last night. What happened next?	Near the graveyard there appeared a ghost and it was creepy.	Acceptable	Acceptable
Broad Unergative	I didn't hear the end of the spooky story last night. What happened next?	Near the graveyard there screamed a ghost and it was creepy.	Unacceptable	Unacceptable
Narrow Unaccusative	I didn't hear the end of the spooky story last night. What appeared near the graveyard after dark?	Near the graveyard there appeared a ghost and it was creepy.	Unacceptable	Acceptable
Narrow Unergative	I didn't hear the end of the spooky story last night. What screamed near the graveyard after dark?	Near the graveyard there screamed a ghost and it was creepy.	Unacceptable	Acceptable

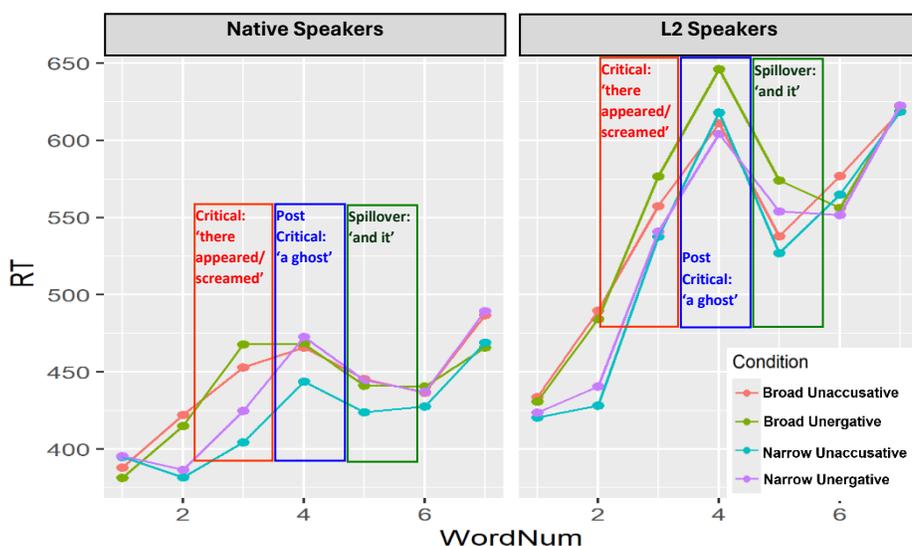


Figure 2: SPRT Reading Times

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Condition	Average NS Rating	Average L2 Rating
Broad Unaccusative	5.35	5.51
Broad Unergative	4.92	5.15
Narrow Unaccusative	5.48	5.99
Narrow Unergative	5.24	5.52

Table 2: AJT Judgments, 1-7 Likert Scale

Grammatical Overlap and Verb Type in the L2 Acquisition of English Resultatives

English resultatives are challenging for learners, showing difficulty even at advanced proficiency levels (Kim et al., 2020; Park & Lakshmanan, 2007). Resultatives predicate a state of an NP which is a result of the verb (Hovav & Levin, 2001), for example *dry* in (1) and (2). English resultatives adhere to the Direct Object Restriction (Levin & Hovav, 1995) because they can only be predicated of objects. Therefore, they are grammatical with transitives and unaccusatives, but ungrammatical with unergatives (3) without a fake reflexive object, as in (4).

- (1) The woman wrung the towel *dry*.
- (2) The pot boiled *dry*.
- (3) *The audience laughed silly.
- (4) The audience laughed *themselves* silly.

This study investigates the acquisition of English resultatives by L1 Korean learners while controlling for verb class, which is known to affect monolinguals' acceptability judgments (Park & Lakshmanan, 2007). Examples (5), (6) and (7) show Korean resultatives with transitives, unaccusatives, and unergatives respectively.

- (5) con-i pipimpap-i sekki-key pipyesta
John-NOM rice.dish-NOM mix-RES stirred
*‘John stirred the rice dish mixed.’
- (6) swuphu-ka cca-key kkulhyecyessta
soup-NOM salty-RES boiled
*‘The soup boiled salty.’
- (7) kwankayktul-i wusukkwangsulep-key wusessta
audience-NOM silly-RES laughed
*‘The audience laughed silly.’

Importantly, the translations of (1)-(3) are all grammatical in Korean, while the translations of (5)-(7) are ungrammatical in English. Including such items allowed us to examine the effects of shared grammaticality. Given this backdrop, the research questions are as follows:

RQ1: Do L1 Korean learners of English transfer the (un)grammaticality of resultatives from their L1 to English?

RQ2: Does verb class play a role in the L2 acquisition of English resultatives?

If learners transfer, we expect facilitation where Korean and English overlap in grammaticality (Grammatical Transitive/Grammatical Unaccusative conditions). Where there is no overlap, we expect non-facilitation. If verb class plays a role, L2 learners should show greater variability with unaccusatives like native speakers (Park & Lakshmanan, 2007).

Participants were Korean learners of English and native English speakers (Table 1). The Korean group completed the LEAP-Q (Marian et al., 2007), the MINT Sprint (Garcia & Gollan, 2022) and 2 context-based acceptability judgment tasks, one in each language. The English task contained 6 experimental conditions: transitive, unergative, and unaccusative and corresponding ungrammatical conditions. The Korean task contained the translations of the English items, which were all grammatical, except for the unergative resultative condition in (3).

Both tasks were analyzed with cumulative link mixed models (Christensen, 2018). Significant differences were found between Korean and English groups in all experimental conditions. For grammatical conditions (Figure 1), shared grammaticality was not facilitative, contrary to prediction. For ungrammatical conditions (Figure 2), there was non-facilitation, demonstrating an L1 transfer effect. Furthermore, both groups showed a verb class effect: a significant difference was found between the grammatical transitive resultative and the unaccusative resultative conditions. Overall, these results show that L1 transfer is selective rather than wholesale and speak to the acquisitional difficulty resultative constructions present to L2 learners of English.

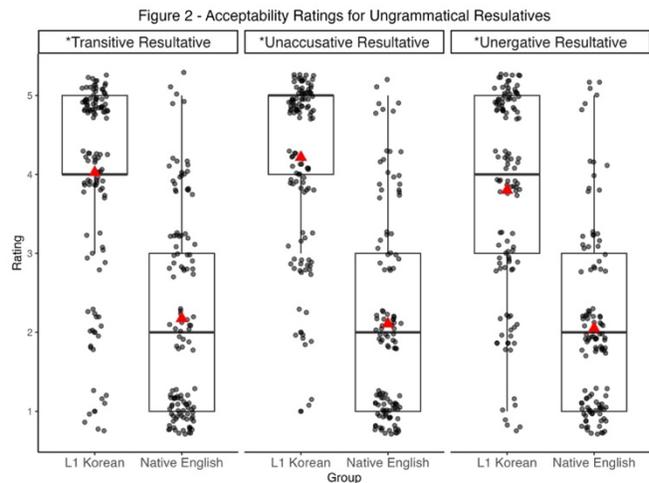
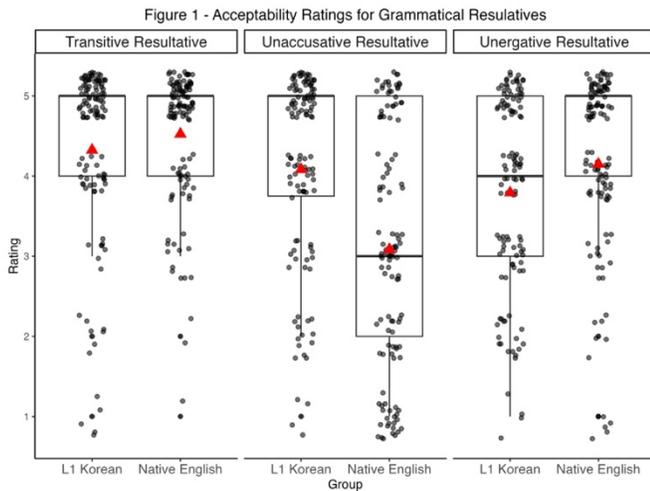


Table 1 - Participant Data

Group	Sample Size	Mean MINT Sprint (Max 80)
Native English	26	N/A
L1 Korean	27	57.2 (7.24)

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L1 Attrition Effects on the Processing Constraints of Mandarin Relative Clauses

Previous research has consistently reported a robust subject–object asymmetry in the processing of relative clauses (RCs) in head-initial languages, with subject-extracted RCs (SRCs) processed more easily than object-extracted RCs (ORCs) (e.g., Gibson et al., 2005). Although early studies on Mandarin, a head-final language, suggested an ORC advantage (Hsiao & Gibson, 2003), more recent research has shown that these findings were largely driven by uncontrolled semantic cues and locality ambiguities that induce garden-path misanalyses (Hu et al., 2022; Jäger et al., 2015). When these confounds are removed, Mandarin aligns with cross-linguistic patterns and exhibits a reliable SRC advantage.

Some processing constraints have been proposed to account for this universal SRC advantage. The Structural Distance Hypothesis (SDH; Hu et al., 2022) attributes ORC difficulty to the longer structural distance and the intervening noun phrase between the gap and the head noun (HN), which increases the cost of dependency formation at HN integration. In contrast, expectation-based accounts (Jäger et al., 2015) argue that comprehenders exploit probabilistic knowledge of grammatical structure: because SRCs are more frequent than ORCs, SRC continuations are more strongly expected, facilitating their processing. Besides, although garden-path dynamics do not predict an SRC advantage, they also function as a processing constraint by showing how local ambiguity triggers misanalysis. In Mandarin ORCs, the initial NP+VP sequence aligns with canonical SVO order, encouraging a confident and faster, but ultimately incorrect, main-clause parse. Comparatively, the VP+NP onset of SRCs does not support an SVO misparse and therefore must be maintained under multiple analyses, which slows processing.

Although these constraints have been extensively examined in L1 speakers and L2 learners, little is known about how they behave under L1 attrition, where syntactic properties, probabilistic expectations, and parsing routines may be differentially vulnerable. First, given that core syntactic properties such as structural distance are highly resilient in L1 attrition (Tsimplici et al., 2004), SDH-driven SRC advantages at the HN region are predicted to remain stable. Second, because attriters receive reduced Mandarin input and extensive English exposure, the expectation-driven SRC advantage in the pre-DE region is predicted to diminish or even reverse. Crucially, although English exhibits a high frequency of SRCs, their surface form (overt subjects and canonical SVO order) does not map onto Mandarin SRCs, which begin with a VP. Thus, English-driven expectations for SRCs may not facilitate Mandarin SRC processing. Finally, because English strongly favours NP-initial SVO parsing and has obligatory subjects, garden-path effects, particularly the faster processing of the NP+VP region in ORCs, are expected to be amplified under attrition.

To test these hypotheses, we conducted a self-paced reading experiment using (1) ambiguous RCs that elicit spontaneous misanalysis and (2) disambiguated Det+Cl+Adv RCs adapted from Jäger et al. (2015) to isolate RC-specific, non-ambiguity-driven processing. Examples are provided on the next page. Both types appeared in subject-modifying position and included SRC and ORC versions. Preliminary pilot data (12 items, 17 participants) support our predictions, showing preserved SDH-based integration effects (see Region 3 in Figure 2), a partial reversal of expectation-based facilitation (see Region 2 in Figure 2), and amplified garden-path effects in attriters (see Region 1 in Figure 1).

Examples:

(1) Ambiguous RCs:

喜欢 歌手 的 作家 去过 意大利。

like singer DE writer has been Italy

“The writer who likes the singer has been to Italy.”

(2) Disambiguated Det+Cl+Adv RCs:

那位 最近 抱怨了 房东 好多次 的 住户 找了 律师。

the recently complain landlord many times DE tenant has found lawyer

“The tenant who has complained to the landlord many times recently has found a lawyer.”

Figures:

Figure 1. Mean reading times for each region of interest in ambiguous relative clauses

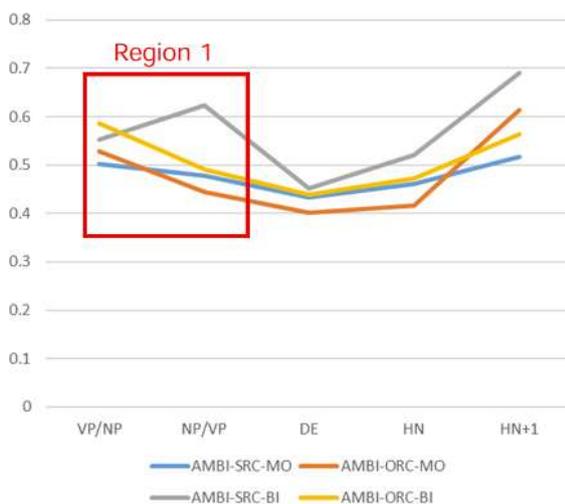
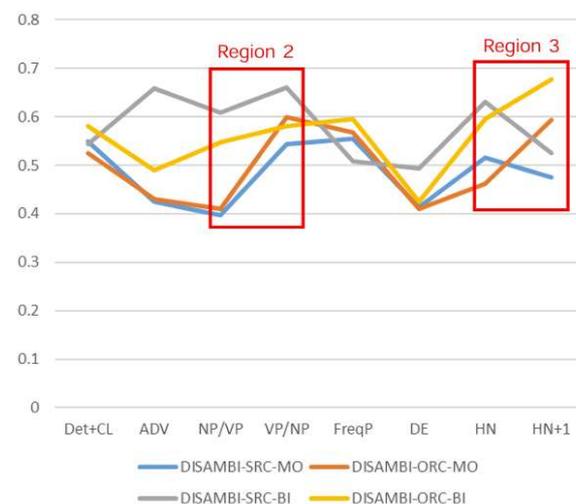


Figure 2. Mean reading times for each region of interest in disambiguated relative clauses



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Heritage Learner Comprehension of Gapped Relative Clauses in Marathi

We investigate child heritage comprehension of relative clauses (RCs) in Marathi (a split ergative language spoken in India). Eventive verbs are ergative-absolutive in the perfective; nominative-accusative in the imperfective. Stative verbs exhibit quirky case: dative (DAT) subjects (widely considered true subjects, Wali, 2004) and nominative (NOM) objects in both aspects. Marathi has two relativization strategies: a gapless correlative construction, available for any combination of aspect and verb-type, and a gapped RC (examples 1 and 2, note case patterns, particularly nominative-objects), which is more frequent in usage but limited to certain combinations of verb-type and aspect. While child Marathi speakers in India show no subject and object RC asymmetry, our study examining heritage child comprehension of gapped RCs, finds that heritage children show a clear subject-advantage, showing increased misinterpretations of ORCs as SRCs. Additionally, heritage speakers perform much better in the eventive verb conditions than the stative conditions.

Marathi eventive verbs (1a, 1b) are NOM-ACC in the imperfective and ERG-ABS in the perfective, while stative verbs (2a, 2b) are DAT-NOM in both aspects/alignments. The Marathi gapped RC pattern has restrictions on extracting ERG subjects, making perfective eventive SRCs ungrammatical (Damle, 1965; Dhongde & Wali, 2009), but eventive imperfective SRCs grammatical. Similarly, dative subject extraction is restricted, making stative SRCs (in both aspects/alignments) ungrammatical (*ibid*). Thus, SRCs are quite restricted (available only with eventive imperfective verbs), while ORCs are more available (with eventive perfective verbs, stative perfective and imperfective verbs).

A widely known property of relative clauses is there is a strong subject advantage. This cross-linguistic subject-advantage is well noted (see Lau & Tanaka, 2021), though there are exceptions. Suzuki (2011) finds that Japanese children are better able to process ORCs than English children due to the facilitatory effects of case-marking. Hasegawa (2007) also notes similar facilitation of grammatical case in RC comprehension for Japanese heritage children. As our previous study on child Marathi speakers in India reports no subject-advantage for gapped RC comprehension, we investigate whether heritage child Marathi speakers perform similarly to their Indian counterparts (no subject-advantage), if they exhibit subject preference but have facilitation through case marking like Japanese native/heritage children, or if they behave more like English children with a definitive subject preference.

Heritage child Marathi-speakers aged between 5;2-14;6 (n=37 to-date, total 50 anticipated) were tested with a character selection task (Fig 1) in the four grammatical gapped RC conditions: imperfective eventive SRC (3a), perfective eventive ORC (3b), imperfective stative ORC (3c), and perfective stative ORC (3d). Heritage children show an overwhelming subject-preference, with accuracy being above chance (25%) in only the SRC condition. Heritage children perform poorly on the ORC conditions in both verb types, though better in the eventive ORCs. Overall, heritage Marathi children are not able to effectively use case or verbal agreement information and default to English subject-preference to interpret RCs in Marathi. This may be due to the non-canonical word order of the prenominal RC which heritage children are not able to process, even with case information.

Example Sentences

1a	Muləga mul-i-la dhakəl-t-o	1b	Mul-a-ne mul-i-la dhakəl-l-ə
	Boy.NOM child-FEM-ACC push-IPFV-MASC		child-MASC-ERG child-FEM-ABS push-PFV-NEU
	“The boy pushes the girl”		“The boy pushed the girl”
2a	Mul-a-la muləgi awad-t-e	2b	Mul-a-la muləgi awad-l-i
	child-MASC-DAT girl.NOM like-IPFV-FEM		child-MASC-DAT girl.NOM like-PFV-FEM
	“The boy likes the girl”		“The boy liked the girl”
	Imperfective Eventive SRC		Perfective Eventive ORC
3a	Mul-i-la dhakəl-nar-a muləga	3b	Mul-a-ne dhakəl-l-el-i muləgi
	Child-FEM-ACC push-PTCP-MASC boy.NOM		Child-MASC-ERG push-PTCP-FEM girl.NOM
	“the boy who pushes the girl”		“the girl who the boy pushed
	Imperfective Stative ORC		Perfective Stative ORC
3c	Mul-a-la awad-nar-i muləgi	3d	Mul-a-la awad-l-el-i muləgi
	Child-MASC-DAT like-PTCP-FEM girl.NOM		Child-MASC-DAT like-PTCP-FEM girl.NOM
	“the girl who the boy likes”		“the girl who the boy liked”

Figure 1. Example Character Selection Test Item

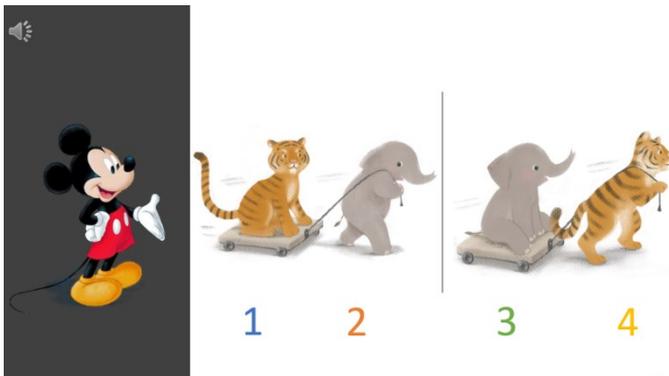
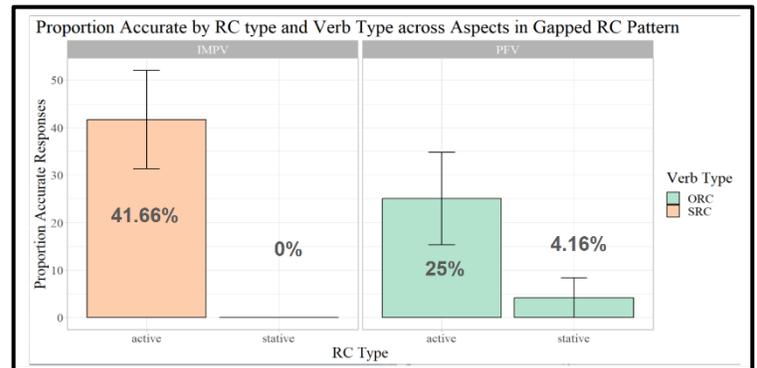


Figure 2. Comprehension Accuracy



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Investigating L2 English Overpassivization by L1-Korean and L1-Japanese Learners

Background: Overpassivization—the erroneous use of passive morphology with unaccusative verbs (e.g., **The event was happened* or *#The door was closed* in agentless contexts)—has been widely documented among L2 English learners. Multiple explanations have been proposed, including L1-driven morphological transfer (Montrul, 2001), verb-class constraints (transitive alternation; Levin & Rappaport Hovav, 1995), and discourse-level factors (e.g., causation context, conceptualizable agent; Ju, 2000); however, the relative contributions of these factors remain underexplored. To clarify the sources of overpassivization, this study compared L1-Korean and L1-Japanese English L2ers to address the following three research questions: (1) Does L1-morphology contribute to overpassivization? (2) Does transitive alternation increase the likelihood of overpassivization? (3) Does causation context modulate overpassivization patterns?

Hypotheses: L1-Korean learners whose L1 exhibits homophonous anticausative and passive morphology (e.g., *-i*, *-hi*, *-li*, *-ki*, and *-ci*; Yeon, 2015) would overpassivize more from morphological overgeneralization than L1-Japanese learners whose L1 maintains a clear morphological distinction; (2) alternating verbs (e.g., *close*) would be more prone to overpassivization than non-alternating verbs (e.g., *happen*); and (3) external causation contexts containing a conceptualizable agent would elicit higher rates of overpassivization than internal causation contexts.

Study: 43 participants took part in the study (data collection ongoing): 13 L1-Korean and 14 L1-Japanese intermediate learners of English, as indicated by their C-test scores ($M=30.23$, $SD=8.79$ and $M=27.08$, $SD=9.38$, out of 50), and 16 native speakers of English. They completed an online sentence-selection task (see Fig.1). 16 unaccusative verbs were categorized according to (i) L1 marker (homophony vs. non-homophony; based on Korean translation equivalents) and (ii) Transitive alternation (alternating vs. non-alternating verbs). These verbs were presented in two Causation contexts (internal vs. external), followed by a grammatical vs. overpassivized sentence selection, yielding 32 experimental items (see Table 1). Participants additionally completed an L1 translation task, a C-test, and a language background questionnaire.

Results: Both L1-Korean and L1-Japanese learners showed substantially higher overpassivization rates ($M=0.34$, $SD=0.47$ and $M=0.41$, $SD=0.49$), compared to English native speakers ($M=0.07$, $SD=0.26$) (see Fig.2). Mixed-effects logistic regression models were fitted separately for each L2 group to examine the effects of L1 marker, Transitive alternation, and Causation context. Korean learners showed significant effects of Transitive alternation ($\beta=1.29$, $p=.02$) and Causation context ($\beta=1.17$, $p=.04$), with no L1 marker effect nor further interactions. Similarly, Transitive alternation ($\beta=1.31$, $p=.01$) and Causation context ($\beta=1.70$, $p=.001$) were significant for Japanese learners with a significant Transitive alternation \times Causation context interaction ($\beta=-1.41$, $p=.04$). Taken together, our preliminary results with no L1 marker effect in L1-Korean learners indicate that homophonous L1 morphology does not reliably trigger negative transfer. Instead, both L2 groups appear to rely more consistently on Transitive alternation and Causation context, giving preliminary support to the view that overpassivization reflects a general developmental pattern in L2 interlanguage in line with Ju (2000) (see also Chung and Kim, 2024).

(462 words)

Table 1. Verbs used in the sentence-selection task

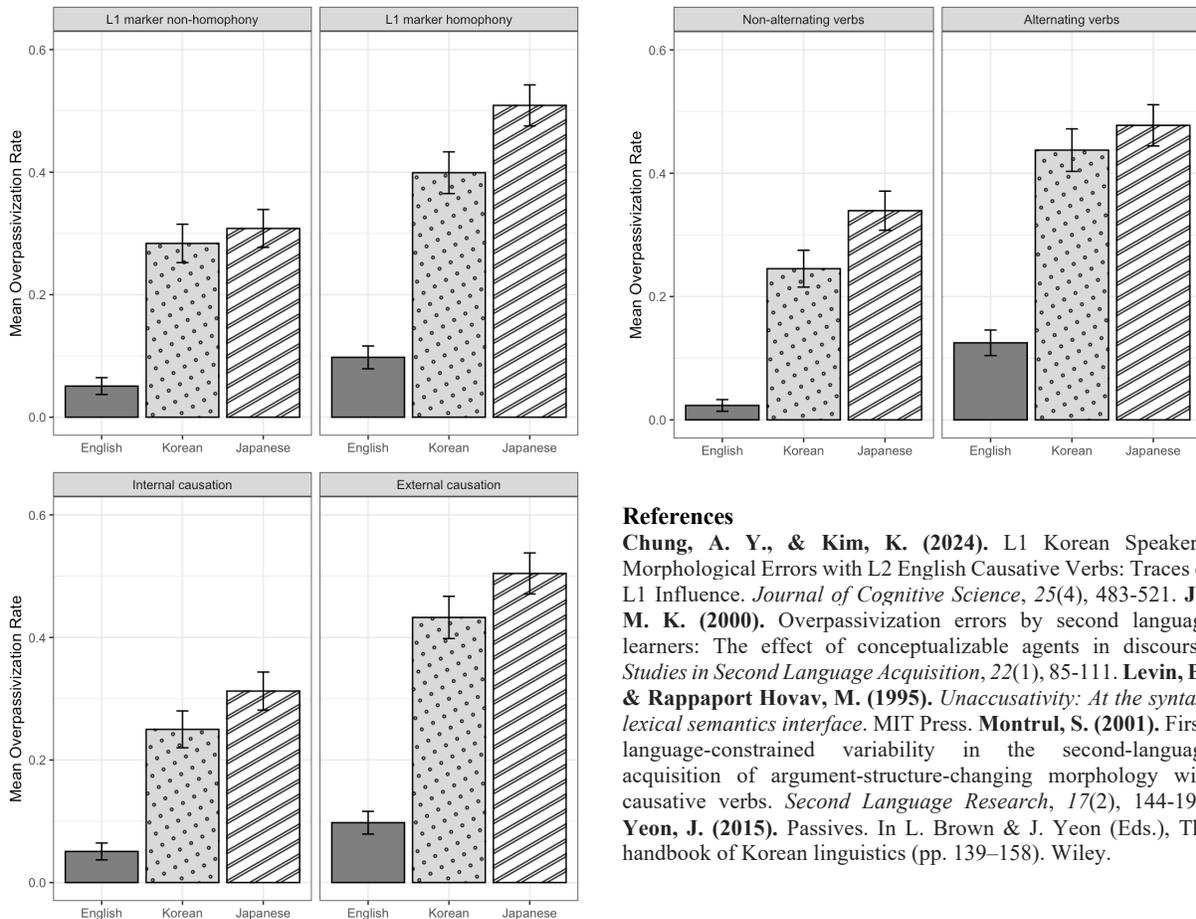
	Alternating	Non-alternating
L1 marker homophony	Open, close, break, shake	Disappear, vanish, collapse, fall
L1 marker non-homophony	Melt, freeze, burn, dry	Appear, emerge, happen, die

Fig.1. A Sample of sentence selection task (adapted from Ju, 2000)

<p>8. The wooden bridge was very old. *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The bridge broke gradually.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The bridge was broken gradually.</p>	<p>38. Heavy trucks put more and more pressure on the bridge. *</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The bridge broke gradually.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> The bridge was broken gradually.</p>
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Note. Left panels: internal causation context; right panels: external causation context

Fig.2. Overpassivization rates across L1 marker, Transitive alternation, Causation context



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Notes. Model formula: Overpassivization ~ L1 marker*Transitive alternation*Causation context + (1 | participantID), family = binominal); Error bars represent standard errors.

Referential Pronoun Omission and Retention in L2 English and L2 Thai: A Bidirectional Study

English typically requires overt pronominal subjects and objects, whereas Thai freely omits referential arguments when discourse licensing is available (Chomsky, 1981; Phimsawat, 2011). Given that the two languages occupy opposite ends of the argument-expression continuum (Roberts & Holmberg, 2010), they provide ideal bidirectional test conditions for investigating pronoun omission and retention in second language acquisition (SLA). We adopt Full Transfer/Full Access (FTFA), which holds that the initial interlanguage grammar reflects wholesale L1 transfer and that subsequent development proceeds with continued access to Universal Grammar (UG) as learners receive input (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996, 2021a, 2021b). To the best of our knowledge, this is the first bidirectional study to compare pronoun realization across L2 Thai and L2 English using matched materials and procedures. Our objective is to pinpoint the direction of difficulty in cross-linguistic pronoun realization across English and Thai, assessing comprehension and production patterns for both learner groups and noting any subject–object asymmetries, within the FTFA framework, which emphasizes L1 transfer, UG-constrained restructuring, and input effects.

We conducted a parallel, bidirectional pilot with six groups ($n = 5$ per group): native English, native Thai, L1 English learners of L2 Thai at intermediate and advanced levels, and L1 Thai learners of L2 English at intermediate and advanced levels. Two competence-oriented instruments were used. The Acceptability Judgment Task (AJT) used a four-point scale (+2, +1, -1, -2) to test required overt expression in English versus licensed null expression in Thai. The Fill-in-the-Blank Task (FBT) elicited second-mention choices among null pronouns, overt pronouns, and repeated NPs, indexing production in the same conditions. Each task contained 70 items: 28 experimental (seven sentence types, four tokens each) and 42 distractors. Both tasks were administered online via Zoom with timed presentation to reduce metalinguistic reasoning.

The results from the pilot suggested bidirectional trends. In L2 English (AJT), the L1 Thai learners were close to ceiling on subjects but weaker on objects (intermediate 62% overall: subjects 67%, objects 55%; advanced 90%: subjects 95%, objects 83%). L2 English (FBT) production showed the same split (intermediate 69%: subjects 74%, objects 65%; advanced 91%: subjects 95%, objects 85%). In L2 Thai (AJT), acceptance was 65% for the intermediate group and 91% for the advanced group (subjects 67%, objects 62%; subjects 91%, objects 92%, respectively). A closer look at acceptance for sentences with null versus overt pronouns, both grammatical under discourse licensing, revealed that the intermediate learners accepted sentences with null pronouns far less often (52%) than advanced learners (93%), whereas acceptance of sentences with overt pronouns remained high (80% vs. 90%). In L2 Thai (FBT), null pronoun production was lower for the intermediate learners (41.43%) than for the advanced learners (56.43%) and the natives (71.43%). These descriptive trends, based on a small pilot without inferential testing, tentatively aligned with our FTFA-based expectations and helped shape the full study: We see early L1-shaped divergence, UG-constrained restructuring with proficiency for both L1s, and input effects in opposite directions. Thai's consistent non-expression of recoverable pronouns supplies indirect negative evidence that supports convergence on null licensing among L1 English learners, whereas English offers inconsistent positive evidence for object obligatoriness across transitivity alternations, which contributes to persistent difficulty with objects among L1 Thai learners.

1. Sample Target Items

1.1 Acceptability Judgment Task (AJT)

1.1.1 For L2 English Learners (embedded subject coindexed with a noun in the matrix clause)

Null: Paul thought his cell phone was too expensive for him. *He said that Ø used it for texting only.

Overt: In 2022, Halle and Kate visited several countries in Europe. They thought that they had the greatest time in their life.

1.1.2 For L2 Thai Learners (matrix subject coindexed with a noun in the preceding sentence)

Null: Jane_i kàp may_i paj hǎ: k^hunk^hru: t^hî: ro:ŋ-ri:an mûa wan sà:w
Jane CONJ May go visit teacher PREP school when Saturday

“Jane and May visited their teacher at school on Saturday.”

Ø_i te^hûaj k^hun k^hru: teàt kìtjàkam wan lɔ:j krà^hoŋ tãŋtè: chà:w
help teacher organize activity Loy Krathong Day PREP morning

“Ø helped the teacher organize Loy Krathong Day activities since morning.”

Overt: plɔ:j paj jãam k^huntà: t^hî: ro:ŋ p^ha ja: ba:n mûawa:n
Ploy go visit grandfather PREP hospital yesterday

“Ploy visited her grandfather at the hospital yesterday.”

t^hɯ: hîw p^hõnlámáj kàp k^hanõm paj fà:k k^huntà: dũaj
she carry fruit CONJ snack DIR give grandfather ADV

“She carried fruit and snacks to give to him as well.”

1.2 Fill-in-the-Blank Task (FBT)

1.1.1 For L2 English Learners (matrix object coindexed with a noun in the preceding sentence)

Mark never socialized with any of his classmates. They hated _____ because he was rude and selfish.

1.1.2 For L2 Thai Learners (embedded object coindexed with a noun in the matrix clause)

James kàp boom tex: p^hûan kào naj rá:nʔa:hǎ:n jìpùn mûawa:n
James CONJ Boom meet friend old PREP restaurant Japanese yesterday

“James and Boom met an old friend at a Japanese restaurant yesterday.”

James kàp Boom lâw wá: p^hûan kào t^hák _____ tɔ:nt^hî: rá:n klâj pít
James CONJ Boom tell COMP friend old greet _____ when shop ADV close

“They said that the old friend greeted _____ when the restaurant was about to close.”

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Arabic L1 learners' sensitivity to English article misuse in definite and indefinite contexts

The Morphological Congruency Hypothesis (MCH) proposes that L2 learners are less sensitive to grammaticality during real-time processing when their L1 lacks a congruent grammatical morpheme (Jiang et al., 2017). Research on English article acquisition has challenged this proposal, showing that learners with articleless L1s, such as Mandarin and Korean, display online sensitivity to English article violations (Cho, 2022; Ionin et al., 2021, 2022). This raises the question of which aspects of “congruency” drive sensitivity to L2 morphology.

This study addresses this question by examining a different type of incongruence. Arabic and English both grammaticalize the definite versus indefinite contrast, yet they differ in the surface realization of [\pm definite]. Definiteness is overtly marked in both languages (Arabic *ʔal-* and English *the*), whereas indefiniteness is overtly marked only in English (*a/an*). In Arabic, indefiniteness is typically encoded by a null article and optionally marked by the numeral *wa:hid* ‘one’ to convey referential meaning (Brustad, 2000). This configuration allows us to separate congruence of grammatical features from congruence of surface marking. Building on the MCH, we develop a time-sensitive account that predicts stronger and earlier online sensitivity to article misuse in definite contexts, where L1 and L2 share an overt exponent, than in indefinite contexts, where the L2 indefinite article lacks an overt counterpart in the L1.

Thirty-one Arabic-speaking learners of English (cloze scores 27–38/40) completed a Self-Paced Reading (SPR) task and a Grammaticality Judgement (GJ) task. Using materials adapted from Ionin et al. (2022), we constructed 64 target items, 32 in definite contexts (anaphoric and bridging) and 32 in indefinite contexts (referential and non-referential). Each item combined a context with a target sentence that contained either an appropriate or inappropriate article (#), as in (1)–(4). The same materials were used for both the SPR and GJ tasks, with 64 fillers.

- (1) Anaphoric: Catherine picked up a banana peel from the counter.
Target: And_then_she_threw_(the/#a)_peel_in_the_trash.
- (2) Bridging: Catherine picked up a banana from the counter.
Target: And_then_she_threw_(the/#a)_peel_in_the_trash.
- (3) Referential: Mary felt lonely last week.
Target: So_she_finally_got_(a/#the)_cat_from_a_shelter.
- (4) Non-referential: Mary feels lonely this week.
Target: So_she_may_get_(a/#the)_cat_from_a_shelter.

Grammaticality judgements were target-like across all conditions, suggesting that the learners had acquired underlying knowledge of the [\pm definite] contrast. The online data, however, showed timing asymmetries. In definite contexts, learners displayed early sensitivity to article misuse, with grammaticality effects in the article and post-critical regions. Anaphoric definites yielded stronger effects than bridging definites (Fig. 1). In indefinite contexts, sensitivity to misuse of *the* appeared only in later regions. At the article itself, *a/an* was read more slowly than *#the*, but in the post-critical region, this pattern reversed, and *#the* was read more slowly than *a/an* in both referential and non-referential contexts. Referentiality did not interact with grammaticality (Fig. 2).

This asymmetry indicates that shared grammatical features alone cannot ensure target-like online sensitivity. When both L1 and L2 grammaticalize and mark a feature overtly, shared marking enables rapid form-meaning mapping and early misuse detection. When the feature is shared but L1 lacks an overt morpheme matching the L2 article, form-meaning mapping is slower, with delayed misuse penalties. We refine the MCH by distinguishing feature congruence from surface marking congruence, limiting target-like processing to morphemes congruent in both dimensions.

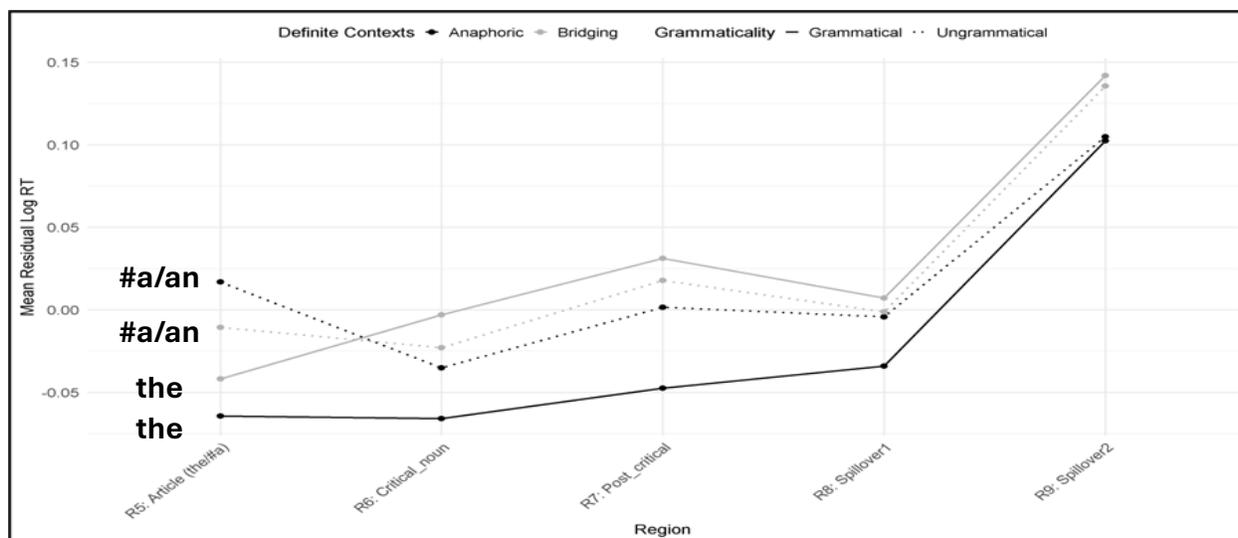


Fig. 1. Log-RT residuals across five regions by grammaticality in definite contexts.

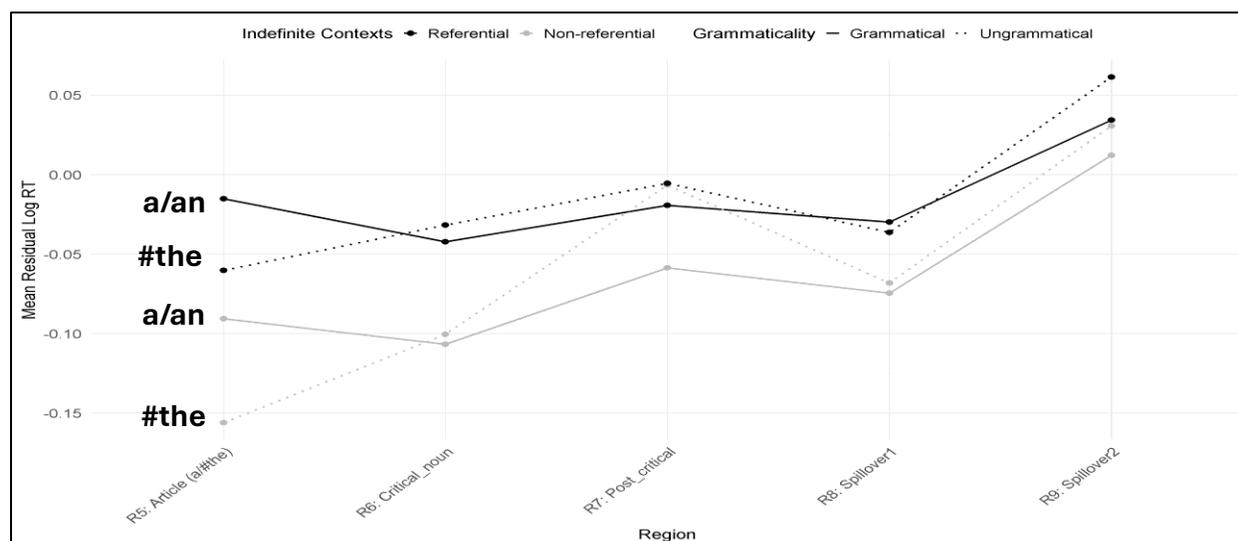


Fig. 2. Log-RT residuals across five regions by grammaticality in indefinite contexts.

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Explicit positive evidence in the acquisition of null, overt and postverbal subjects in L2 Italian

Parameter setting in a second language does not always proceed in a natural fashion, especially when properties at the syntax-discourse interface are involved (Sorace & Filiaci 2006; Tsimpli & Sorace 2006). In this work, we investigate whether explicit positive evidence - i.e. explicit mention of the relevant properties, grounded on linguistic theory - may influence L2ers choices in anaphora resolution and answering strategies in Italian. A well-known property related to the positive setting of the null subject parameter is the possibility of having post-verbal subjects, exploited in Italian when a new-information focus is involved (Belletti 2004). As first noted by Calabrese (1986), there is a division of labor between null and overt subject pronouns in Italian, with null pronouns picking up the subject of primary predication of a preceding clause. Advanced L2ers of Italian do not resort to the postverbal subject option as native speakers when answering questions requiring the identification of the subject, although the null subject option is correctly set (Belletti & Leonini 2004). They also interpret overt subject pronouns as co-referent with a subject antecedent (Sorace & Filiaci 2006) and tend to overuse them (Belletti et al. 2007) also when their L1 is a null subject-language (Bini 1993). In this work we address the following research questions: a) Can linguistically grounded explicit mention of the relevant properties have an influence on L2ers choices? b) Is this influence long-lasting, i.e. does it reveal a real change? 26 adult advanced late L2ers of Italian with different L1s and 26 Controls were administered two forced-choice tasks to assess their preferences (Task 1: null pronouns, overt pronouns or lexical DPs for subject/object resumption; Task 2: SV, VS, clefts or reduced clefts to answer questions on the identification of the subject). L2ers' comprehension (> 90%) was assessed through a preliminary task. A sub-group (13 EXP L2ers) was then explicitly taught on the null subject option and its related properties, and then participated in an immediate post-test session. Another sub-group (13 NEXP L2ers) did not receive explicit positive evidence. A follow-up testing session for EXP and NEXP L2ers took place 5 weeks later. **Main results** show that: **a)** pre-test L2ers significantly differ from Controls, in line with previous literature. As for Task 1 (Figure 1), when subject interpretations are elicited, L2ers choose less null pronouns ($p=.001$), more overt pronouns ($p=.013$) and more lexical DPs ($p=.016$); when object interpretations are elicited, L2ers choose less overt pronouns ($p=.039$) and more lexical DPs ($p=.012$) than Controls. As for Task 2 (Figure 2), L2ers choose less the VS option ($p=.000$) and more the cleft option ($p=.031$); **b)** EXP L2ers significantly differ in the pre and in the post testing session. As for Task 1 (Figure 3), when subject interpretations are elicited, EXP post choose more null pronouns ($p=.011$) and less overt pronouns ($p=.009$); when object interpretations are elicited, EXP post choose more overt pronouns ($p=.015$) and less lexical DPs ($p=.000$) than EXP pre. As for Task 2 (Figure 4), EXP post choose significantly less the preverbal ($p=.011$) and the cleft option ($p=.040$), and more the postverbal option ($p=.000$) **c)** EXP L2ers choices partially change in the follow-up testing session. A comparison with Controls, however, reveals that EXP L2ers' choices in the follow-up do not significantly differ from those of Controls, in both tasks (Figures 5 and 6). **d)** NEXP L2ers choices in the follow-up instead significantly differ from those of Controls in many respects. As for Task 1 (Figure 7), when subject interpretations are elicited, NEXP L2ers choose less null subjects ($p=.031$) and more overt subjects ($p=.25$) than Controls. As for Task 2 (Figure 8), NEXP L2ers choose significantly less the postverbal option ($p=.000$) and significantly more the cleft option ($p=.041$) than Controls. With respect to our research questions we can **conclude** that explicit positive evidence, in the form of explicit mention of the relevant properties grounded on linguistic theory, has an effect in influencing L2ers choices, and this effect reveals a real change. It is particularly strong in the testing session immediately after exposure, but it still holds 5 weeks later, where EXP L2ers choices do not significantly differ from those of Controls, in anaphora resolution as well as in answering strategies. NEXP L2ers in the follow-up testing session, instead, show significant differences with respect to Controls in both tasks.

Figure 1. L2ers pre-/Controls Task 1

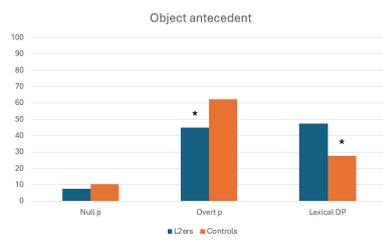
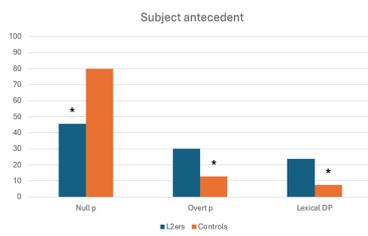


Figure 2. L2ers pre-/Controls Task 2

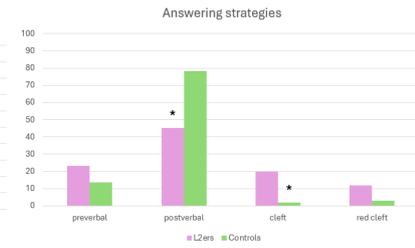


Figure 3. EXP pre/post Task 1

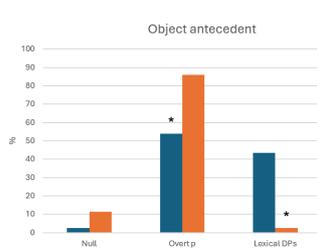
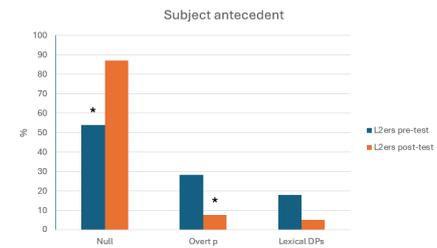


Figure 4 EXP pre/post Task 2

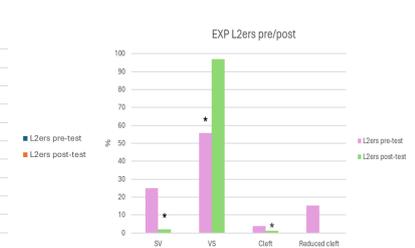


Figure 5. EXP follow/Controls Task 1

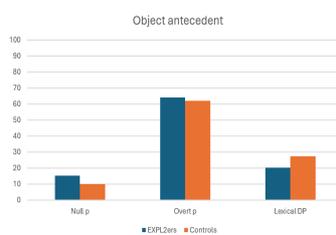
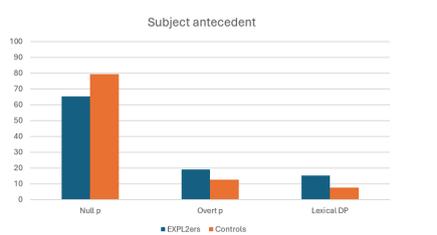


Figure 6. EXP follow/Controls Task 2

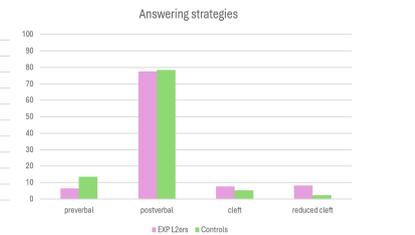


Figure 7. NEXP follow/Controls Task 1

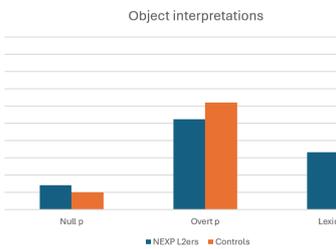
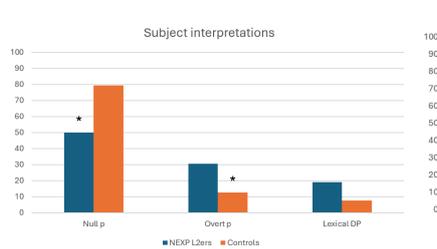
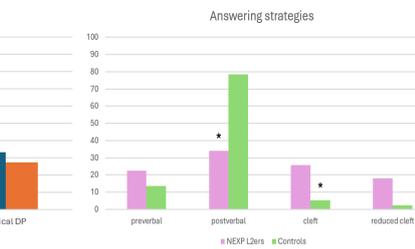


Figure 8. NEXP follow/Controls Task 2



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Morphosyntactic complexities in L2 Italian:
A cross-sectional study.

As highlighted by previous literature, some topics concerning the morphosyntax of Italian (auxiliary selection, clitics, the use of null, overt and post-verbal subjects) are problematic for L2ers even at advanced levels (Ježek & Rastelli 2008; Leonini & Belletti 2004; Pona 2009; Sorace & Filiaci 2006; Belletti & Guasti 2015 and the reference quoted there).

In this work we examine the data emerged from the administration of seven tasks to a group of 77 adult L2ers of Italian with different L1s, at three different CEFR proficiency levels: A2 (22p), B1(33p).

The aim is to observe how competence evolves, which aspects are more problematic and which specific can be observed at each level.

Two tasks concerned auxiliary selection (T1.Production; T2.Forced choice), two concerned clitics (T3.Production, T4.Forced choice), two tasks focused on null vs. overt pronouns (T5.Forced choice, T7.Interpretation) and one on answering strategies after a question requiring the identification of the subject (/6.Forced choice). Each task contained 12 experimental items, 2 trial items and 13 fillers. The fillers of T1 and T7 were also used to assess comprehension (>80% in all participants).

Main results show that:

- In line with previous literature, all the topics considered are problematic for advanced L2ers, though at different extents (as shown in Figure 1 for auxiliaries and clitics).
- For all topics (except null subjects, see below), target answers/choices significantly increase ($p=.005$) only at the C1 level. This is so irrespective of whether early teaching (auxiliaries, clitics) or no teaching (anaphoric and post-verbal subjects) was given. We are currently administering all tasks to a group of B2 participants.
- With respect to auxiliary selection and clitics, most non-target answers/choices are the result of avoidance strategies (use of tenses not requiring auxiliaries, argument omission, use of lexical DPs).
- For what concerns the discourse-related syntax of subjects, we observe interesting developmental trends and dissociations. Null pronouns are not frequently chosen at the A2 level (22% for subject antecedents), and their choice starts increasing also at the B1 level ($p=.05$), reaching a final choice rate of 54% at the C1 level (Figure 2).

The choice of overt pronouns in coreference with a subject antecedent, as well as the choice of null pronouns in coreference with an object antecedent, which reveal a partial mastering of their division of labour, start decreasing significantly only at the C1 level (Figure 2).

Choices of the post-verbal subject answering strategy (VS) as well start increasing later.

We are currently examining variation in this respect according to the null/non null subject nature of the participants' L1.

The main results of this study give interesting indications to both researchers and practitioners, since they reveal a process of acquisition more akin to L1 acquisition (avoidance strategies) than what currently assumed, and partially independent from what/ when is taught. This in turn suggests the need of a tighter relation between teaching practices and L2 acquisition studies. Specific results, not presented for space reasons, give further additional indications along these lines.

Figure 1. Target answers for auxiliary selection (Task 1) and clitics (Task 3)

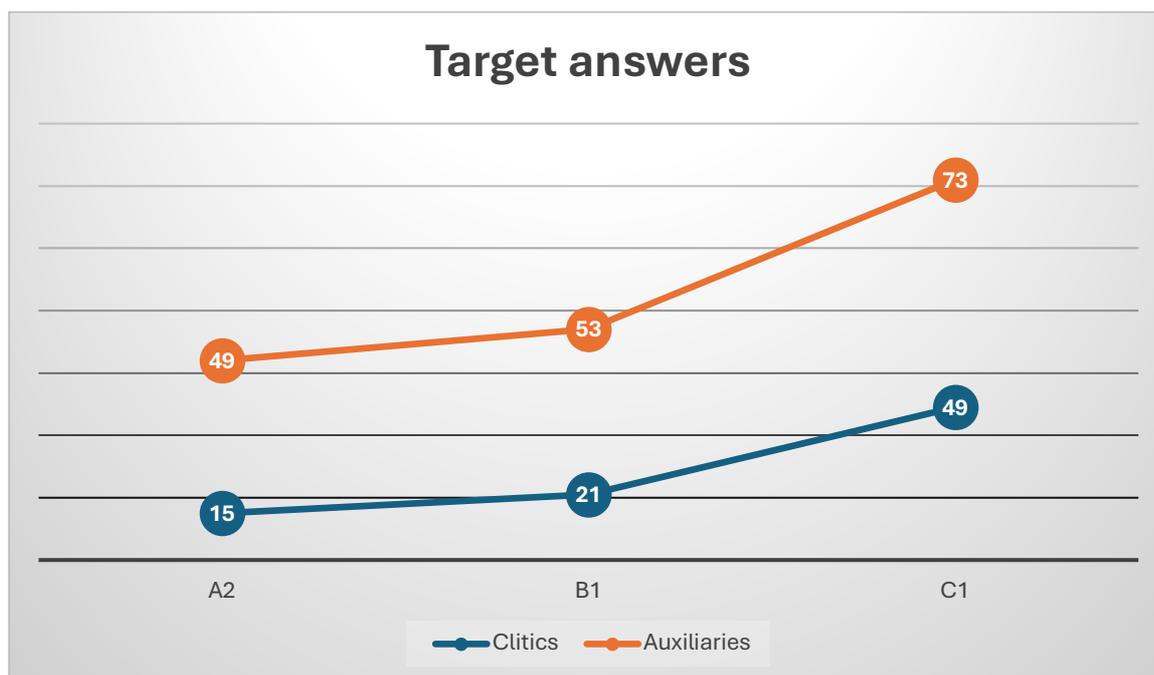
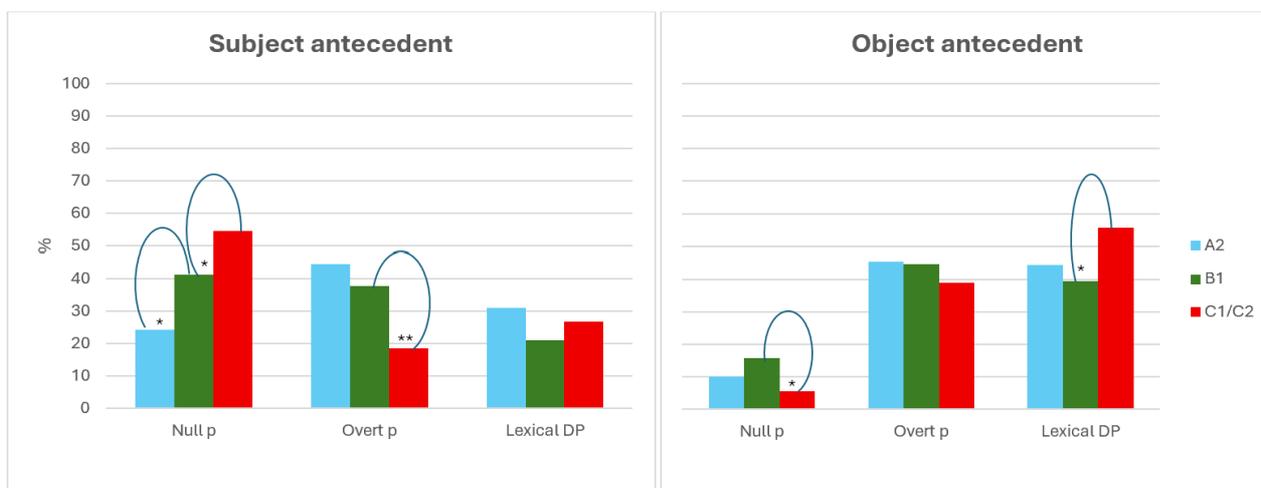


Figure 2. Anaphoric device choices (Task 5)



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Referential Anchoring in Monodialectal and Bidialectal Mandarin

Background Referential Anchoring (RA) refers to the mechanism in episodic contexts that anchors a sentence’s verbal and nominal elements to contextually identified events and referents. In (1), the context introduces a particular novel-reading event and the novel as its referent. Sentence (2a) is infelicitous because both the VP *kan wan* ‘read-finish’ and NP *xiaoshuo* ‘novel’ lacks contextual anchoring. A range of strategies have been identified to anchor the VP and NP in declarative episodic sentences (see Hu & Shi, 2005; Tsai, 2008). The VP may be anchored by the perfective *-le* as in (2b), denoting a terminated reading event (Smith, 1994). The NP may be anchored to a referent via the demonstrative *nà* ‘that’ (with a classifier) as in (2c), or through topicalisation as in (2d). RA behaves differently in Mandarin *wh*-questions. A bare *in-situ wh*-object *shenme* ‘what’ is acceptable as in (2e), likely because it is licensed by the Q-operator via unselective binding (Tsai, 1994). However, fronting a bare *wh*-object sharply degrades acceptability as in (2f). In contrast, only complex *wh*-phrases with the *wh*-determiner *nǎ* “which” can undergo fronting, as in (2g), suggesting that their D(iscourse)-linked status (Pesetsky, 1987) supplies the required anchoring.

Cantonese overlaps with Mandarin in using the perfective aspect marker, demonstrative and topicalisation to anchor verbal and nominal elements, but it also employs strategies unavailable in Mandarin. For instance, Cantonese can anchor the VP through tone change alone (Cheung, 2007), and classifiers can anchor NP without a demonstrative (Cheng & Sybesma, 1999). However, regarding *wh*-questions, the patterns converge: *in-situ* forms are licensed via unselective binding, whereas fronting is restricted to D-linked *wh*-complex phrases.

This study examines how Cantonese-Mandarin (C-M) bidialectals evaluate RA strategies in Mandarin and whether their patterns align with those of monodialectal Mandarin speakers.

Current Study A contextually embedded acceptability judgement task (AJT) was conducted with 80 monodialectal Mandarin speakers and 80 C-M bidialectal speakers. The experiment used a 2×2×2 design manipulating VP anchoring (*-le* vs. *-wan*), NP anchoring (determiner vs. no determiner), and object position (fronted vs. *in situ*), across both declaratives and *wh*-questions (treated as two sub-experiments). Eight presentation lists were created using a Latin Square design.

A proficiency test showed no group differences in Mandarin proficiency. Visualised results of the AJT are presented in Figure 1. Cumulative Link Mixed Models (*ordinal* R package) were used for statistical analysis. The results showed that both groups were sensitive to RA by the aspect marker *le* and by determiners, across both sentence types. Unexpectedly, fronting bare nominal objects reduced acceptability relative to *in-situ* bare NPs for both groups, likely because the contexts favoured fronted deictic nominals, whereas fronted bare nouns, though definite, lacked the deictic feature. As predicted, both groups showed a strongly preference for fronted *wh*-complexes (with *nǎ*) over bare *wh*-simplexes. Significant between-group contrasts also emerged (see asterisks in Figure 1): compared to the Mandarin group, the C-M group showed greater tolerance for unanchored VPs but a stronger dispreference for both NP-fronting and *wh*-fronting.

Discussion These divergences suggest that despite near-native proficiency, bidialectal speakers employ distinct underlying strategies. The tolerance for unanchored VPs may be traced to their L1, where tonal changes alone without *-zo* can anchor the VP. This pattern also echoes the predictions of the Shallow Structure Hypothesis (Clahsen & Felser, 2006): they draw more heavily on the pragmatically sufficient event information, thereby reducing reliance on morphosyntactic anchoring via *-le*. Conversely, although object fronting exists in Cantonese, their avoidance of it in Mandarin likely reflects a retreat to canonical word order, serving to circumvent the derivational complexity of fronting (Jakubowicz & Strik, 2008) and thereby simplify the integration of movement and discourse features at the syntax-discourse interface (Tsimplici & Sorace, 2006).

Examples

(1) *One day, Xiaofei and Xiaoyue were reading novels together. After Xiaoyue finished reading a novel, she left. Their friend Xiaocheng, after knowing this, also arrived. Xiaofei pointed to a novel on the table and said to Xiaocheng:*

- (2) a ^{??}*Xiaoyue kan wan xiaoshuo.* d [*Xiaoshuo*]_i *Xiaoyue kan le t_i.*
 Xiaoyue read RES novel novel Xiaoyue read ASP
 Intended: ‘Xiaoyue has ead the novel.’ ‘The novel, Xiaoyue has read it.’
 (RES = resultative particle) e *Xiaoyue kan le shenme?*
 Xiaoyue read ASP what
 Intended: ‘Xiaoyue has read the novel.’ ‘What has Xiaoyue read?’
 (ASP = aspect marker) f ^{???}*Shenme Xiaoyue kan le t_i?*
 what Xiaoyue read ASP
 Intended: ‘What has Xiaoyue read?’
 c *Xiaoyue kan le na ben xiaoshuo.* g [*Na ben xiaoshuo*] *Xiaoyue kan le t_i?*
 Xiaoyue read ASP that CL novel Which CL novel Xiaoyue read ASP
 ‘Xiaoyue has read that novel.’ ‘Which novel has Xiaoyue read?’

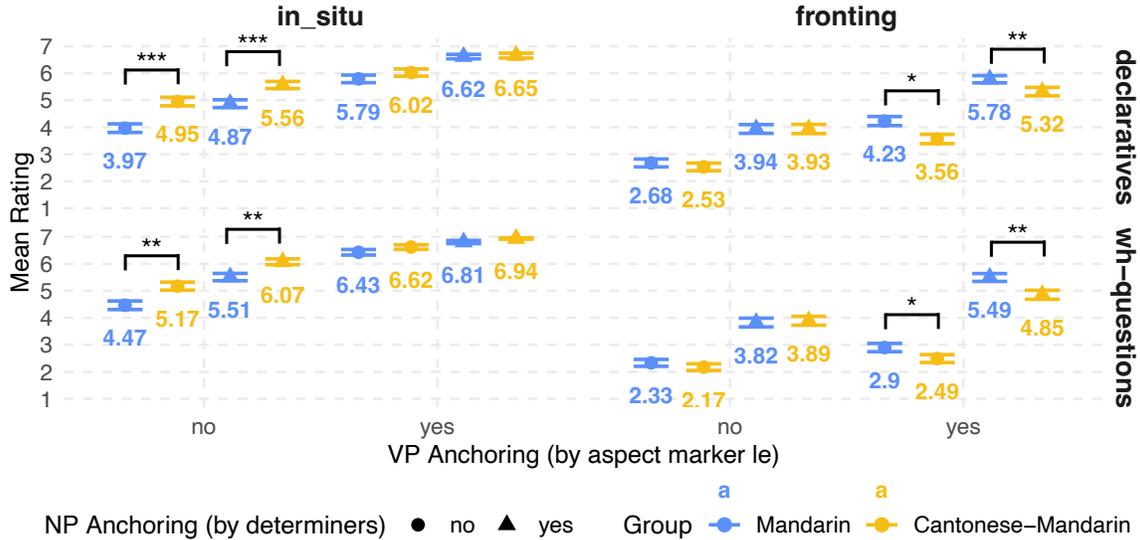


Figure 1 The figure presents mean ratings (scale: 1 to 7) faceted by sentence type and object position. Within each panel, the x-axis represents VP anchoring, and point shape represents NP anchoring. Error bars indicate 95% confidence intervals.

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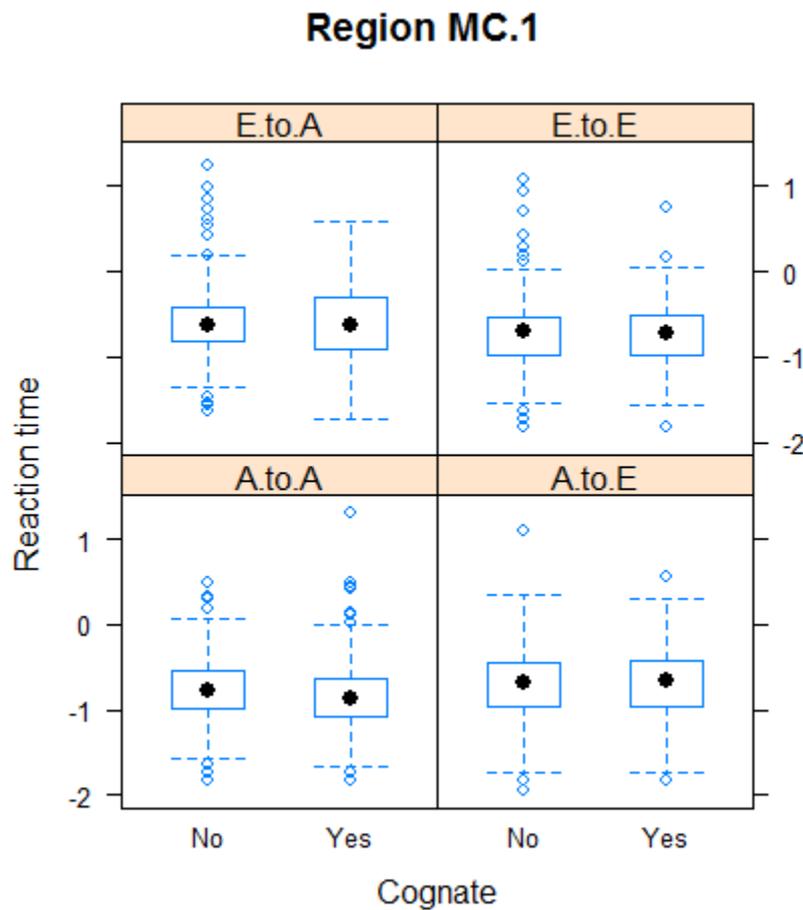
The Role of Cognates in the Process of Code switching among L2- High Proficient Arabic-English Bilinguals

Evidence from a Self-Paced Arabic-English Reading Task.

Many linguistic researchers have been interested in exploring reasons and interpretations for why a bilingual speaker selects one linguistic variety rather than another. Grosjean (2010) indicated that most linguistic researchers, who have paid attention to the phenomenon of code-switching (CS) in bilingual speech, have focused on a sociological interpretation of CS, where social factors (such as the interlocutors, social role, domain, topic, venue, medium and type of interaction) play an important role in stimulating a bilingual speaker to shift from one language to another. Aside from this systematic factor, there is another factor that could facilitate CS, which has not yet been widely considered; this factor is ‘psycholinguistically motivated code switching’, which means language alternation that is prompted not by the intentions of the speaker but by the specific conditions of language production. For example, Fricke and Kootstra (2016) pointed out that some lexical items that are similar or identical in both languages can function as a trigger for the alternation from one language to another. Such instances provide interesting insights into the processes of mental representation of bilingualism as well as bilingual language processing. In addition, this psycholinguistic perspective of CS can visualise the mechanisms of cross-language activation in the bilingual mind. This psycholinguistic factor of CS was discussed first by Michael Clyne in a number of his publications (e.g., Clyne, 1987; 2003). Clyne noticed that CSs seemed to occur relatively often in the neighbourhood of a cognate. Dijkstra et al. (1999, p.497) described cognates as ‘words that belong to different languages can share semantics in addition to their orthographic and phonological overlap (either partial or complete)’. It is now commonly acknowledged that cross-language cognates are processed differently and faster than other, non-cognate kinds of words. Therefore, they can cause or at least facilitate the process of CS.

Consequently, this study aims particularly at investigating CS from a psycholinguistic perspective. It particularly aims at examining the switching that is not by the intention of a bilingual but that takes place by the facilitation of cognate lexical triggering. The present study examined the influence of cognate facilitation on the process of code switching in a sentence context among 30 L2 high-proficient Arabic-English bilinguals. In addition, it examined how language switching direction (from L1 Arabic to L2 English and from L2 English to L1 Arabic) influenced the size of switch cost and the cognate facilitation effect. A self-paced word-by-word reading task was utilised in this study. In this task, the Arabic-English bilinguals were asked to read sentence that either contained cognates or non- cognates, word –by- word. These sentences also contained either a codeswitch or not, in both language direction. The participants’ reaction times were measured and they were analysed using different models in R program. Overall, the results of this study indicated a main effect of the native language on the RTs: the RT of the intercept (direction A.to.A) was faster than the RTs of all the variables at different levels. This means that the words in participants’ L1 were read significantly faster than those in their L2. The noticeably shorter and quicker RT of cognates was significant evidence for the cognate facilitation effect. Moreover, the facilitation effect of cognates on the process of code switching was clearly present in this study where the RTs after cognates were quicker that those after non-cognates. The statistically significant effect of switching direction on the size of switch cost was more present when participants switched from their L1 (Arabic) to their L2 (English) than when they switched from their L2 to their L1 because as stated by Bultena et al. (2015) that accessing one’s L1 is far easier than accessing one’s L2. Furthermore, this study found that the facilitation effect of cognates did not vary according to the direction

of switching: the RT after a cognate, was faster regardless of whether the switching direction was A.to.E or E.to.A. The results of this study represent the first experimental confirmation of the cognate facilitation effect on the process of code switching in a sentence context in two typologically very different languages, that is, Arabic and English.



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The acquisition of Turkish evidentiality: Results from two acceptability judgment tasks

Background: Though linguistic judgments are a cornerstone of generative approaches, questions about the appropriateness of different experimental instruments for measuring acceptability remain. This is certainly true of judgment data for second language (L2) research (Spinner & Gass 2019). In two judgment tasks, this study takes up the question of L1 English L2 Turkish representations of evidentiality. Whereas evidentiality is not obligatory in English, Turkish grammaticalizes a two-way evidential distinction in past-tense utterances: The direct evidential *-DI* refers to occurrences a speaker witnessed firsthand, and the indirect evidential *-miş* is utilized for non-witnessed events (Aksu-Koç & Slobin 1986).

Previous scholarship suggests that evidentiality is susceptible to incomplete acquisition by heritage and L2 Turkish speakers (Tosun & Filipović 2022; 2024; Kaya-Soykan et al. 2020; Karayayla 2020). However, such work has targeted implicit knowledge, utilizing oral elicitation and translation tasks. Therefore, this study empirically examines L1 English L2 Turkish learners' explicit knowledge of Turkish's evidential distinction in two offline acceptability judgment tasks (AJTs). I hypothesized that the acceptability of each evidential would be determined by the speaker's involvement in the action, with the indirect evidential dispreferred in contexts wherein the speaker is involved.

Methods: In Experiment 1, data were collected via a 7-point Likert-scale AJT from L1 Turkish speakers (n=37) and L1 English L2 Turkish learners (n=18). I utilized a 2x2 factorial design, manipulating two factors, *Involvement* and *Evidential*, each with two levels: *involved* versus *uninvolved* and *direct* versus *indirect*. I conducted ordinal regression analysis on raw ratings in R, with *Involvement* and *Evidential* as fixed factors and participant and test item as random factors.

In Experiment 2, data were collected via a forced-choice AJT from L1 Turkish speakers (n=10). The same factors as in Experiment 1 were manipulated, but this task presented contrasting sentences jointly, as depicted in Table 1. Data were not collected from L1 English L2 Turkish learners due to time constraints. Analysis procedures were nearly analogous to those for Experiment 1, but, notably, logistic regression, rather than ordinal regression, was utilized to account for the binary nature of forced-choice data.

Results & Discussion: Experiment 1 failed to find support for the hypothesis. While L1 Turkish speakers demonstrated a significant effect for *Evidential*, with a general preference for the direct evidential (Estimate = -1.22, SE = 0.29, $p < 0.001$ ***), no significant interaction effect between *Involvement* and *Evidential* arose. For L1 English L2 Turkish learners, ordinal regression found no significant effect of *Evidential*, nor an interaction effect. This is likely because of a failure of task design: Indeed, the uninvolved condition appears acceptable with either direct or indirect evidential markers. By contrast, Experiment 2 demonstrated robust support for the interaction between *Involvement* and *Evidential* among L1 Turkish speakers, as hypothesized. The direct evidential was overwhelmingly preferred in the *Involved* condition, while the choice between the direct and indirect evidentials was mixed in the *Uninvolved* condition. This data is depicted in Figure 1.

Experiment 1's lack of significance suggests that the design tested participants' sensitivity to some property other than acceptability. This is likely because of inaccurate hypothesizing about the uninvolved condition, where, in actuality, both the direct and indirect evidential conditions may be acceptable. However, the forced-choice design of Experiment 2 presents a promising avenue to accurately explore this acceptability contrast for L1 and L2 learners alike. Therefore, I will collect and analyze forced-choice data from L1 English L2 Turkish learners by the conference date. The discussion will analyze the implications for L2 Turkish explicit knowledge of the evidential contrast. It will also connect the methodological findings to previous work on the benefits afforded by forced-choice AJTs in terms of statistical sensitivity (Marty et al. 2020; Sprouse & Almeida 2017).

Table 1: Forced-choice AJT 2x2 factorial design

Condition	Contextual Support	Critical Clause
Involved	<i>Dün annem ve ben birlikte bir restoranda yemek yedik.</i>	A. (direct) <i>Annem balık sipariş etti.</i> Annem balık sipariş etti. Mother-1POSS fish order-DL3SG
	<i>Dün anne-m ve ben birlikte Yesterday mother-1POSS and I together bir restoran-da yemek yedik.</i> a restaurant-LCV food eat-DL1PL.	B. (indirect) <i>*Annem balık sipariş etmiş.</i> Annem balık sipariş etmiş. Mother-1POSS fish order-MIŞ.3SG
‘Yesterday, my mom and I ate at a restaurant together (I saw).’ A. ‘My mom ordered fish (I saw).’ B. ‘My mom ordered fish (reportedly).’		
Uninvolved	<i>Dün anne ve oğlu birlikte bir restoranda yemek yediler.</i>	A. (direct) <i>Anne balık sipariş etti.</i> Anne balık sipariş etti. Mother fish order-DL3SG
	<i>Dün anne ve oğlu birlikte Yesterday mother and son together bir restoran-da yemek yediler.</i> a restaurant-LCV food eat-DL3PL.	B. (indirect) <i>Anne balık sipariş etmiş.</i> Anne balık sipariş etmiş. Mother fish order-MIŞ.3SG
‘Yesterday, mother and son ate at a restaurant together (I saw).’ A. ‘The mother ordered fish (I saw).’ B. ‘The mother ordered fish (reportedly).’		

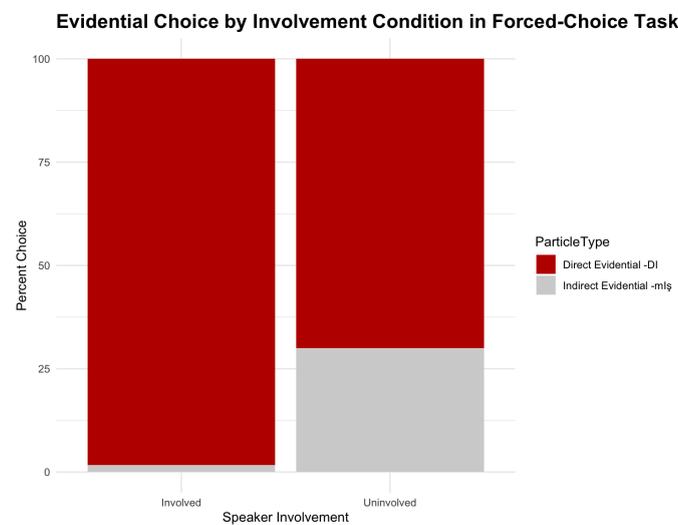


Figure 1: L1 Turkish speakers' percent choice of evidential particle by condition in Experiment 2

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Implicational Universals and Input Frequency: The Case of L1 Romance/L2 English Grammar Restructuring

One of the primary tensions in second language (L2) research, and language acquisition generally, is the relationship between input frequency and mechanisms of innate linguistic competence for acquiring the target grammar (e.g., Rothman & Slabakova, 2018). One particularly intriguing approach is the Variational Learning Model (Yang, 2002) and its application to L2 acquisition (Yang & Montrul, 2017), stating that more frequent, unambiguous input will lead to faster acquisition of properties, but that the hypothesis space is constrained by innate mechanisms. We adopt this approach in examining the interaction of input frequency and implicational universals associated with modal existential *wh*-constructions (MECs).

MECs are a sub-type of possibility clause and are closely related to the predicate *available* (Šimík, 2011). MECs consist of three core properties: (a) modality realized through the use of infinitive or subjunctive mood, (b) existential quantification derived from one of a few distinct classes of selecting verb containing an existential component, and (c) a fronted *wh*-word. Based on cross-linguistic evidence, as well as semantic decomposition of individual verbs, Šimík proposes implicational universals for b and c (1 and 2, respectively). While most Romance languages, including Spanish (3) and French (4), display MECs, English does not (5).

We tested 60 L2 English learners (L1 Spanish: $n = 30$; L1 French: $n = 30$) and 22 L1 English controls using a speeded 88-item bimodally presented, contextualized acceptability judgement task with a 4-point Likert scale. Items consisted of combinations of the 5 verb types and 6 questions words ($n = 29$), combinations of the verb types with indefinites ($n = 29$), and fillers testing bi-clausal sentences with indefinites ($n = 24$). A sample test item is provided in Figure 1. Participants also completed an English proficiency test, a second version of the acceptability judgment task in their L1, and a language background questionnaire.

Both L2 English groups exhibited significant restructuring across verb types and *wh*-question words, though we still observed residual effects of transfer (Figures 2 and 3). For the L1 Spanish speakers, we see greater acceptance of MECs with *have*- and *find*-type embedding verbs. For the L1 French speakers, we only see greater acceptance of MECs with *find*-type verbs. Increased acceptance of MECs with *find*-type verbs may be due to analysis of the sentences as containing infinitival relative clauses, even though contexts were designed to make this analysis less appropriate. Increased acceptance of MECs with *have*-type verbs suggests a tendency to restructure peripheral properties before core properties, following the implicational hierarchy.

Both groups are also more accepting of MECs with *where* and less accepting for MECs with *why*, with the other *wh*-words accepted similarly. The low acceptance of MECs with *why* aligns with the findings for verb type, i.e., more peripheral elements are restructured first. Additionally, Šimík's (2008) corpus results suggest MECs with *what* and *who* occur more frequently than MECs with the other *wh*-words. We argue that the high frequency of suitable contexts for *what* and *who* leads to faster restructuring. Consistent with Yang's (2002) model, because they are lower on the implicational hierarchy, their restructuring forces restructuring of *wh*-words higher in the hierarchy, despite lower frequency; however, as *where* is at the same level of the hierarchy, its frequency-based restructuring is not affected by the restructuring of *what* and *who*.

Differences between the two L2 groups may be due to English proficiency: the L1 French group had higher proficiency than the L1 Spanish group. As such, we interpret the results as two stages in the acquisition process, with the L1 Spanish group's performance a precursor to the L1 French group's performance.

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- (1) {have-type} > {find-type} > {give-, build-type}; {want-type} universally unavailable
- (2) {what, who, where} > {when, how} > {why}
- (3) Tienes con qué escribir? (Spanish)
have.2sg with what write.INF
'Do you have anything to write with?' (Šimík, 2011, p. 6)
- (4) Il n'a pas où mourir. (French)
he NEG-have NEG where die.INF
'He doesn't have a place to die.' (Hirschbühler, 1978, p. 218)
- (5) *I have what to eat in the fridge. (English)

Patricia is hanging out with her friends at a bar when she realizes she locked her keys in the house. She asks her friends for help, and one says:

I can give you where to sleep.

Figure 1. Sample test item.



Figure 2. Proportion selection of each rating level for MECs by L1 and verb type (1 = worst; 4 = best).

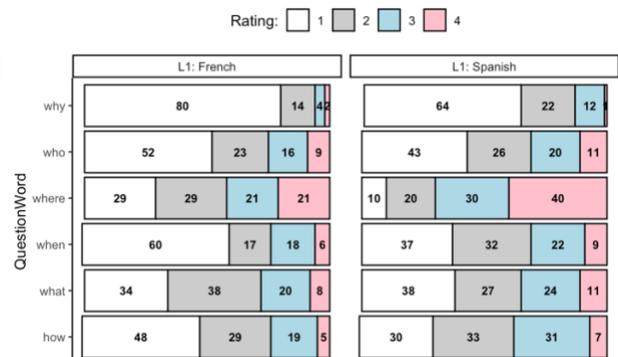


Figure 3. Proportion selection of each rating level for MECs by L1 and wh-question word (1 = worst; 4 = best).

First Language Retention in International Adoptees

International adoptees (IAs) have been shown to demonstrate long-term retention of their pre-adoptive languages into adulthood, consistent with the Permanence Hypothesis (Bowers et al., 2009). Yet, considerable variance across and within sample exists. This study investigates whether age of adoption, re-exposure, and/or racial/ethnic identification may account for the individual variation in the L1 retention of IAs. Sixty adult Korean adoptees residing in the United States were tested. Participants completed a Korean phonetic discrimination task, Korean and English lexical production tasks, and a Korean morphosyntactic comprehension task. Preliminary results show a negative correlation between age of adoption and phonetic discrimination for IAs adopted before the age of one, and a positive correlation between classroom study hours and residence in Korea. For IAs adopted after the age of one, there was a positive correlation between age of adoption and morphosyntactic comprehension as well as classroom study hours and Korean lexical production. The results suggest that both age of adoption and re-exposure explain individual variation in the population, especially for IAs with a later age of adoption. We reason that a later age of adoption results in a greater amount of L1 acquisition and more time for neural networks to stabilize, mitigating the effects of attrition post-adoption. Re-exposure aids in the re-establishment of former neural networks, adding credence to the Permanence Hypothesis.

Keywords: International Adoptees, language retention, bilingualism

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On Transmission Direction in L1-change in Immigrant Communities

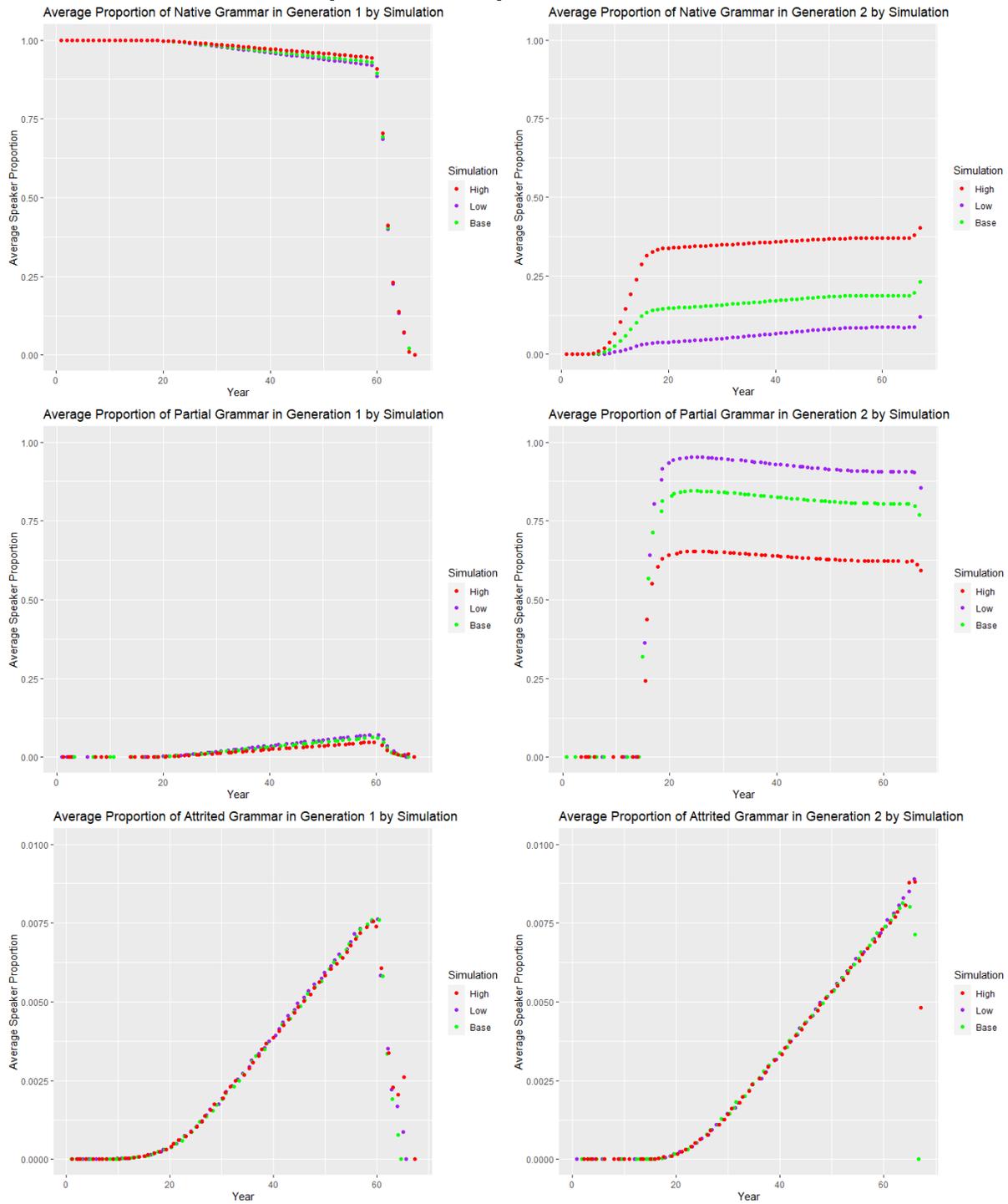
In this paper we argue that L1 changes in (Spanish) first- (G1) and second-generation (G2) immigrants (in the US), are almost exclusively driven by the G2 incompletely acquiring the L1 grammar rather than transmission of attrited grammars (spontaneously forgotten L1 grammars after nativelike acquisition) in G1. Traditionally, L1 changes in immigrant communities have been argued to be due to intergenerational transmission of attrited grammars from G1 to G2 immigrants, since changes in G1 are often amplified in G2 (1). However, changes are (in general) found in G2 speakers *before* G1 speakers, calling for a reversed transmission direction (2). This reversed transmission direction holds in our simulation hold even when attrition appears first in the speech community. Rather than being a source of change, attrited grammars are a marginal parallel development in the community. The direction of intergenerational transmission of changes is from G2 to G1, not from G1 to G2.

We developed a dynamic agent-based virus spread simulation of L1 change in a community of over 200 G1 and G2 immigrants. The simulation tracked the types of grammars in the community per year per generation: native (unchanged L1), partial (incompletely acquired L1), and attrited (spontaneously forgotten L1). The agents' attributes were: *age*, length of residence abroad, *generation*, pregnancy status, life-status (alive, dead, fetus), *number of familiar and extra-familiar L1 connections*, *sex*, and L1 grammar. All initial adults (age ≥ 14) had a native L1 grammar with children (age < 14) being *tabula rasa*. Agents differed randomly in the cursive attributes following the mean results of the language background questionnaire in (3) and the US census results for Hispanics (4). Each year in the simulation consisted of the following steps in order: **death**, birth, **conception**, **grammar transmission**, **forgetting of L1**, aging, maturation (at age 14) and the portion of each grammar for each generation was recorded, until the extinction of the first-generation. Partial grammars entered the simulation if a child reached maturation without acquiring a grammar. Attrited grammars entered the simulation via adult agents forgetting their L1. After entry, both could be spread in the network. Outcomes of bolded steps were based on random number generation (RNG) depending on length of residence (adult transmission) or age (all others) using a logistic function that calculated the success chance of a step as a fraction of a constant. For non-linguistic steps the constant was 1 (100% chance). The constant for the chance of adopting a grammar was kept equal within generations, thus prepubescent agents modelled the superior language acquisition skills of children and no grammar was inherently more likely to be transmitted.¹ The likelihood of an adult adopting a grammar was set to 0.01% chance per interaction, based on the estimate in (5) that 5% of long-term immigrants are L1 attriters. Childhood adoption chance is difficult to estimate and thus three models with different constant were compared: low (0.01% chance), baseline (0.4% chance), and high (0.1% chance) scenarios. Each scenario was run 100.000 times and tracking averages per year per generation for each scenario RNG was controlled between scenarios, with runs within a scenario differing in RNG but each run across scenarios sharing the same RNG.

In all scenarios, partial grammars formed the majority of changed grammars in all generations (see row 2 vs 3 in fig.), even when attrited grammars emerged first in the community. Also, only the spread of partial grammars was affected between scenarios. The spread of attrited grammars was not affected by changing assumptions of how well children acquire the L1 in childhood.

¹ L2 effects such as decreased L1 use was modeled indirectly in the adoption chances.

Simulation Scenario Results per Grammar per Generation



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Negative Concord in English: An Eye-Tracking Study of Native and L2 Speakers

Our study contributes to the understanding of how speakers process multiple negation in English and how such processing patterns inform theoretical debates on the grammatical status of Negative Concord (NC). While multiple negation structures in English allow both double negation interpretations (e.g., Puskás 2012) and single negation interpretations associated with NC (e.g., Blanchette 2013), the latter are socially stigmatized and judged unacceptable (Blanchette 2016). The present project has two main aims: first, to determine whether native speakers (NS) of Southern British English show real-time sensitivity to NC readings; and second, to examine whether non-native speakers (NNS) whose L1 grammars include NC (Spanish) maintain NC interpretations in L2 English or whether they restructure their grammars to a DN configuration.

To this end, we entertain the following three interrelated research questions: (a) do native speakers of Southern British English show real-time sensitivity to Negative Concord in English, or do they allow NC readings during online processing? (b) given the high salience of prescriptive instruction emphasizing the ungrammaticality of Negative Concord, do highly proficient L2 speakers of English whose L1 permits NC (Spanish) restructure their grammars accordingly, or do they maintain NC despite explicit instruction? and (c) are single-negation structures involving a negative quantifier (e.g., I said nothing) processed similarly to negation-plus-NPI structures (e.g., I didn't say anything) by both native and non-native speakers?

To address these questions, we designed an eye-tracking-while-reading experiment with three critical conditions (see page 2): (i) multiple negation (I didn't say nothing), (ii) control A (negation + NPI: I didn't say anything), and (iii) control B (negative quantifier: I said nothing). Each condition included 16 items, accompanied by an equal number of fillers and comprehension questions. Target sentences were followed by disambiguating continuations that forced either a single negation (NC) or a double negation interpretation. Thus far, we have tested 40 native speakers of British English (ages 18–45) raised in the Southeast or Southwest of England. Data collection for the NNS group (40 L1-Spanish speakers) is currently underway and expected to conclude in February 2026.

Preliminary results from the NS group show comparable first-fixation durations on the AOI of interest (NQ/NPI) across all conditions (see Figure 1), suggesting that participants do not treat multiple negation as ungrammatical at initial exposure. Re-reading patterns are broadly similar, with a slight tendency for increased regressions when the target is disambiguated toward an NC interpretation (see figure 2). Taken together, these findings indicate that multiple negation does not impose additional cognitive load during processing and that, in the absence of contextual cues, NS do not treat NC-like structures as ungrammatical. In contrast, preliminary analyses of the limited NNS data collected to date reveal increased cognitive load when processing NC structures in English, suggesting ongoing restructuring of their grammars from an NC system toward a DN one, likely influenced by the salience of prescriptive instruction. These findings will be discussed in light of the weighting and interaction of different types of input in L2 acquisition (Marsden 2023) and within the broader claims of the Competing Systems Hypothesis (Long and Rothman 2013).

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Examples of Experimental Items

Target: DN-biased in the

Ryan went to a pastry class, and everyone said that he didn't make nothing so he must have baked something.

Target: NC-biased

Millie lost her books, and everyone said that she didn't find nothing so she must have lost them for good.

Control condition A:

Archie went to the bookshop, and everyone said that he didn't buy anything so he must have left with his bag empty.

Control condition B:

Ben was walking to class, and everyone said that he carried nothing so he must have been empty handed.

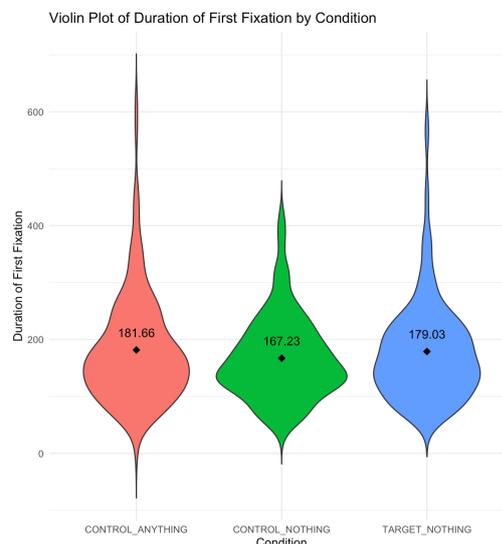


Figure 1. Duration of First Fixation on the NQ/NPI AOI for the NS group.

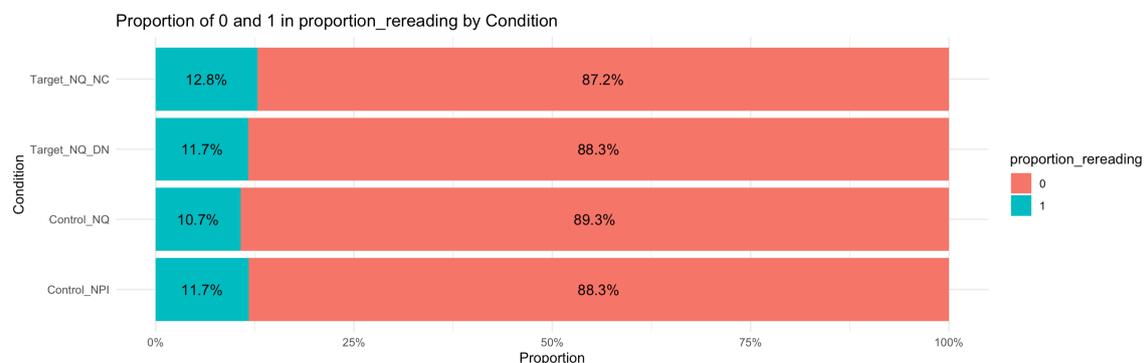


Figure 2. Proportion of re-reading of the NQ/NPI AOI for the NS group.

Auditory processing of German plural allomorphs in noise by L2 listeners: An eye-tracking study

German uses a range of plural markers, including umlaut and a number of suffixes, i.e., <-(e)n> /-(ə)n/, <-e> /-ə/, <-er> /-ɐ/, <-s> /-s/, and a phonetically non-overt marker. This study focuses on words that mark their plural forms with the three most productive overt suffixes: -(e)n, -e, and -s. **Background.** The processing and acquisition of German nominal plural forms has been accounted for by two opposing theories. *Dual-route* models (e.g., Clahsen 1999, Marcus et al. 1995, *inter alia*) propose that forms with the suffix -s are regular plurals, which are processed fastest owing to rule-based stem–affix composition, in contrast to holistically stored irregular forms. Expanded versions of the model also afford a special, 'regular'-like status to the suffix -n for (feminine) nouns ending in schwa (Penke and Krause 2002; Sonnenstuhl-Henning 2010). In Köpcke's *single-route* schema model (e.g., Köpcke 1988, 1993, 1998; Köpcke et al. 2021), processing differences depend on whether forms appear like typical plurals. How strongly forms signal plurality is driven by differences in the forms' relevant features, which include salience, type frequency, cue validity, and iconicity. For the suffixes included in this study, the schema model predicts that plural forms ending in -(e)n should be easiest to recognize, followed by forms in -s, then -e. Here, we evaluate the predictions of these competing models for auditory processing of plural forms in L1 and L2 listeners. To increase ecological validity and reflect the demands of speech comprehension under adverse listening conditions, including hearing impairment, speech stimuli were presented in noise. Background noise generally has a more detrimental effect on the language performance of bilingual and L2 listeners than that of L1 listeners (e.g., Black & Hast 1962; Rogers et al. 2006; *among others*). Eye-tracking allowed us to measure listeners' fine-grained, *online* processing under such challenging conditions.

Methods. We employed an eye-tracking study with a two-picture visual world paradigm. The stimuli were presented in slightly adverse listening conditions (speech-shaped noise of +2 SNR). In each of the 72 trials, participants heard the singular or plural noun form (ratio: 50%-50%) of objects presented on the screen. Their eye movements and responses (accuracy, RT) were recorded while they selected either the image of a single object or the image of two objects.

Research questions. This study asks whether listeners' ability to discriminate between singular and plural nouns in noise depends on the plural suffix (-n, -e, -s), and whether this process is modulated by language proficiency.

Results. The gaze data were analyzed with GAMMs, the accuracy data with GLMMs and the logged RT with LMMs. Overall, results from 39 L1 German listeners and 101 L2 German listeners in four proficiency levels (<A1, A1, A2, B1) from different L1 language backgrounds reveal significant differences between L2 and L1 German listeners, between suffixes (Fig.s 1, 2), and between L2 proficiency levels (Fig. 3a-d). In particular, plural forms in -s versus those in -e or -n yield more looks to the plural target (Fig.s 1, 3), faster, and more accurate responses for L2 German learners in the aggregate and at the two to three lowest proficiency levels. Plural forms with the suffixes -e and -n are responded to significantly slower than those with the suffix -s up to A2, but never significantly different from each other. The suffix -e shows less accurate responses than the suffix -n at the A1 and A2 levels, and fewer looks to the target than -n at all levels except A2 (Fig. 3); however, looks to plurals in -n generally peak later than for plurals in -e (Fig. 3). As L2 proficiency increases, L2 listeners' processing of the suffixes -e and -n comes to approach that of -s for all three measures (e.g., Fig. 3). **Discussion.** In line with the predictions of dual-route models, the L2 learners' gaze, RT, and accuracy data show a clear processing advantage for the plural forms marked with the 'regular' suffix -s compared to the other two tested plural forms. Further in line with the expanded dual-route model, the gaze data of L2 learners show that plural forms marked with -n outperform those marked with -e, an effect that is driven by listeners in the two lowest proficiency levels.

Figures:

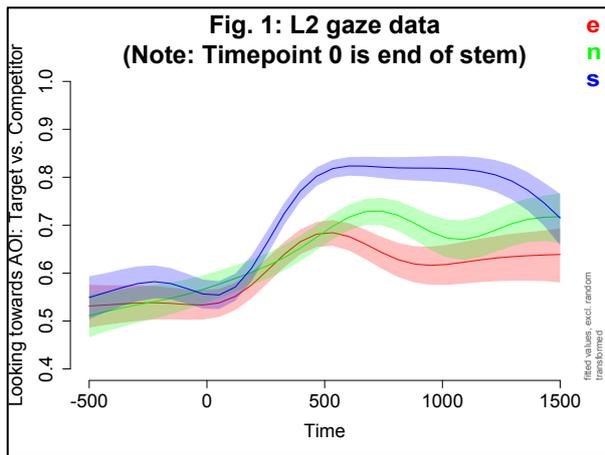


Fig. 1. L2 listeners' looks to plural target vs. singular.

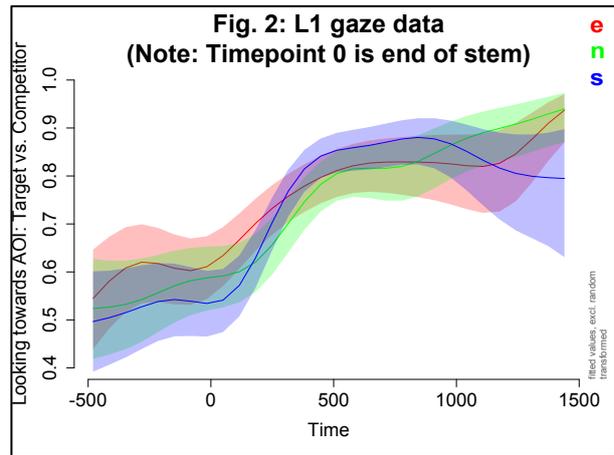


Fig. 2. L1 listeners' looks to plural target vs. singular.

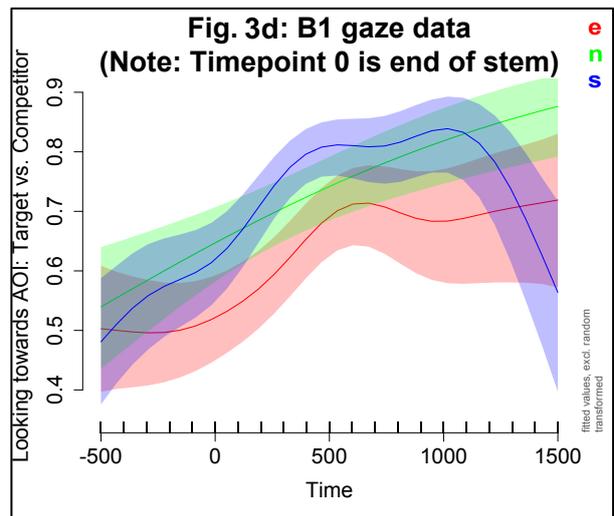
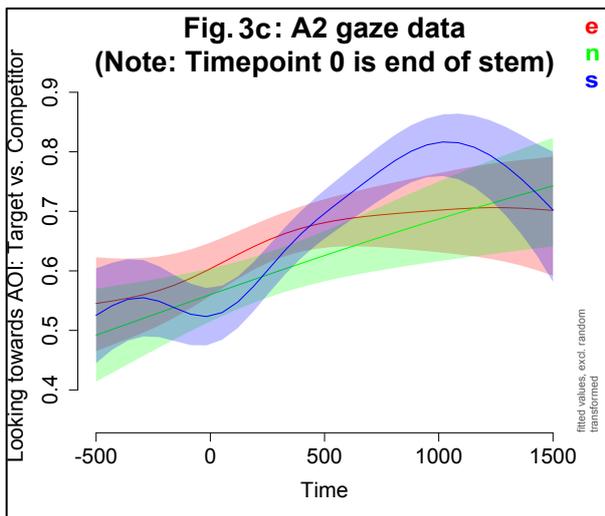
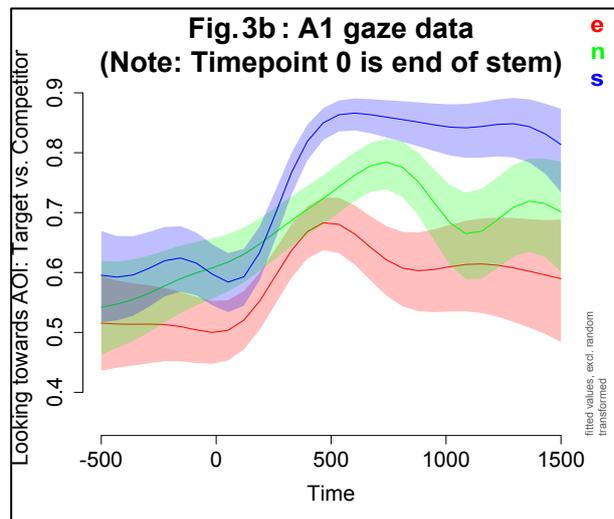
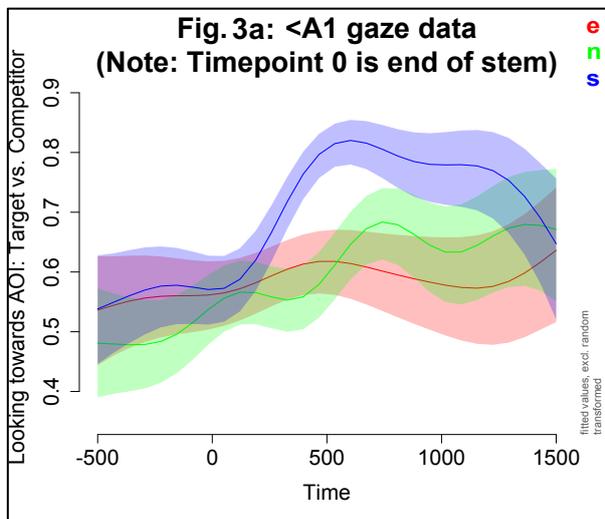


Figure 3. L2 listeners' looks to plural target vs. singular across the four tested proficiency levels (<A1-B1).

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Accessing L2 phonological knowledge– the case of English stress computation by Mandarin L1s

Introduction: Native speakers of non-stress accent languages like Mandarin have been described as memorizing the stress patterns of English words rather than computing them on the fly (Archibald 1997). This is in contrast to speakers of stress-accent languages like Spanish, who transfer their knowledge of stress, such as quantity sensitivity and extrametricality, from their L1 grammar (Archibald 1998; Garcia & Guzzo 2017; Pater 1997).

However, previous work on stress acquisition used word list reading and explicit stress identification tasks to probe learners' knowledge, which may have introduced confounding factors (e.g., cognitive load, frequency effects), thereby underestimating learners' phonological knowledge. In this paper, we employ a nonce-word experiment which shows that Mandarin speakers show sensitivity to syllable weight and perform stress-shift similarly to English speakers.

Background: In English nouns and adjectives, if the penult is heavy, stress lands on it (e.g., *veránda*, *potáto*); if the penult is light, stress is on the antepenult (e.g., *Cánada*) (e.g., Chomsky & Halle 1968; Halle & Vergnaud, 1987). 'Class 1' suffixes can impact the location of stress, whereas 'class 2' cannot (e.g., Siegel 1974). If a heavy penult is created via class 1 suffixation, stress shifts rightward, as in (1a); cf. (1b). When a similarly shaped base is affixed with a class 2 suffix, as in (2), there is no change in stress location; that is, class 2 suffixes are invisible to stress assignment. Archibald's (1997) claim that Mandarin speakers only memorize stress location suggests that learners will be insensitive to syllable weight and affix class on English stress.

Predictions: If Mandarin speakers memorize stress location, they will (P1) treat novel words with class 1 and 2 affixes the same way, and (P2) treat novel derived forms the same way regardless of syllable structure. If their behaviour is not congruent with both of these predictions, they must be computing stress in some fashion, even if not with the target grammar.

Current study: We ran a novel word experiment on 12 Mandarin speakers with limited exposure to English prior to age 14 and native speaker controls. We used novel town-demonym pairs to test P1 and P2. Tasks included Reading, reading a passage with real pairs (see (3)) aloud; Production, disguised as a reading comprehension task and eliciting town-demonym pairs; and Judgement, where participants heard a novel town name and selected between two demonyms with stress on the correct or incorrect syllable (see (4)).

We had three types of demonyms: Shift (S) (affixed with class 1 *-ian*, (4a)), NoShift (NS) (affixed with class 2 *-er* or *-ite*, (4b)), and Quantity (Q) (new heavy penults following affixation of class 2 suffix, (4c)). Items in S were erroneous when there was no stress shift, NS when there was stress shift, and Q when speakers shifted stress with class 2 suffixes to a heavy penult (4c).

Results: 17.9% of productions of real base-derived pairs by Mandarin speakers had stress errors. English controls made no errors. Mandarin speakers performed differently on underived and derived forms ($p < 1.331e-05$) and on shifting and non-shifting derived forms ($p < 0.00029$). We analysed the Production and Judgement data in R (R Core Team, 2024) using the *lme4* package (Bates et al., 2015). Models were fitted with restricted maximum likelihood to examine the effects of participant Language and word Type on Error in Production and Judgement tasks. In both tasks, there was a main effect of Type and no effect of Language or Language×Type. In the Production task, Q had higher errors than S ($\beta = -66.25$, $SE = 16.18$, $df = 11.13$, $t = -4.09$, $p = .0017$) and NS ($\beta = -59.59$, $SE = 16.18$, $df = 11.13$, $t = -3.68$, $p = .0035$). On the Judgement task, Q had higher errors than S ($\beta = -20.78$, $p = .046$) and NS ($\beta = -28.42$, $p = .0079$). These results indicate that, contra P1 and P2, Mandarin speakers do take syllable weight into account in computing English stress. Critically, their behaviour differed on real words and novel words, highlighting the importance of methodological factors for evaluating L2 knowledge of stress.

Examples:

- (1) Class 1 *-al*: a. párent (paréntal, *párental)
 b. péron (péronal, *persónal)
- (2) Class 2 *-y*: fréquent (fréquency, *frequéncy)

(3) Classes of demonym-forming suffixes

City	Suffix	Class	Correct Demonym	Incorrect Demonym
a) Brístol	-ian	1	Bristólian	*Brístolian
b) Vancóuver	-ite	2	Vancóuverite	*Vancouvérite
c) Lóndon	-er	2	Lóndoner	*Londóner

(4) Judgement stimuli

Town Name	Suffix	Correct	Incorrect	Type
a) Dáwsitran	-ian	Dawsitránian	Dáwsitranian	Shift (S)
b) Tálerin	-ite	Tálerinite	Talérinite	No-shift (NS)
c) Lámigale	-er	Lámigaler	Lamigáler	Quantity (Q)

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**Naturalistic acquisition of a new language in a multilingual context:
Insights from Nepali L1 Adult Migrant Workers' Use of Tamil L2 in Chennai, India**

Adult L2 acquisition is typically regarded as being unsuccessful with respect to ultimate L2 attainment, especially in relation to functional/grammatical morphology¹. Previous adult L2 research has focused on instructed settings; Studies on uninstructed settings are limited to adults from developing countries acquiring a high-status L2 in a developed country, where monolingualism/native-speaking ability is the norm.² To date, no studies exist in naturalistic “multilingual” contexts, characterized by positive attitudes toward bi/multilingualism. The current research builds upon previous work on child Tamil³ by investigating adult Nepali migrant-workers’ acquisition and use of Tamil in Chennai in Tamil-Nadu, India, where they have been working for more than 10 years⁴. Tamil, a diglossic Dravidian language, is widely used both informally and formally in Chennai, along with English, and to a lesser extent, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Hindi, Saurashtra, Marathi. A challenge facing Nepali migrant workers is how to pick up the complex aspects of Tamil “on the fly” after arriving in multilingual Chennai, via limited exposure to spoken input. Focusing on verb and case morphology, the study asks: Can acquisition of a new language during adulthood in uninstructed settings with exposure only to spoken (colloquial Tamil) input succeed?

Nepali (an Indo-Aryan language)⁵ and Tamil⁶ are both SOV languages, with flexible word-order, rich verb and case inflections, dative-experiencer subjects, honorification marking, verb-stacking, and shared vocabulary (via Sanskrit) etc. There are differences as well. Tamil has agglutinative nominal and verbal inflectional morphology, whereas Nepali has fusional verbal morphology and agglutinative nominal morphology. Negative indicative verbs using the auxiliary *illai* (be-not) in Tamil, unlike their affirmative counterparts, are unmarked for tense and bear default agreement. Similar to young Tamil children, the spoken-Tamil adult L2 users are exposed to does not provide the direct mapping to the underlying categories as, for example, the formal variety does to a great extent. Data in Tamil (spontaneous speech, picture-cued production, and story narrations) were gathered from seven participants. Results from 4 (2 Males and 2 females: Table 1) are reported here.

The two male migrant workers (Chandran, cook/chef; Ram, security-guard) were near-perfect in their use of functional and grammatical morphology (Fig 1; Table 2); there were hardly any errors (Ram: 2 instances (1.25%) and Chandran: 7 cases (4.07%) involving agreement marking on finite verbs in affirmative indicatives (e.g., substituting 3sn for 3sHon [M/F], 3SN for 3P). They outperformed the two female migrant-workers, employed in a beauty salon (Fig 2; Table 3), who produced many errors. However, the errors were restricted to the use of dative-case instead of accusative for direct objects, which could be due to L1 influence, as well as subject-verb agreement marking, i.e., overgeneralization of 3SN for *all* persons, number and gender, which may stem from English and Hindi being used in the workplace, along with Tamil, or due to their exposure to a different (mixed) colloquial variety of Tamil (*Madras Bashai*). The success of the adult males in acquiring the complex linguistic aspects of Tamil based solely on exposure to spoken Tamil highlights the facilitative role of psycholinguistic and sociocultural factors (i.e., naturalistic/uninstructed setting promotes direct linkage of sound to meaning, use of chunking, cognitive engagement involved in figuring out the word and morphemic boundaries, purposeful engagement over time, and positive attitudes to bi/multilingual/non-native speech).

Prctpt	Age (yrs)	Sex	AOA in Chennai	Yrs lived in Chennai	Occupation	Education Level	Self-Rtg Nepali (N), Hindi (H), Tamil (T), Eng (E)	Lgs used on a daily basis	Literacy: Nepali/Hindi/Tamil/English
Chandran	30	M	18	12	Cook/Chef	9 th grade	N, H, T: 10 E: understand some English; can't speak it	N & T	N & H only; Read/write some English
Ram	41	M	17	24	Security Guard (apt Bldg.)	3 rd grade	N, H, T: all 10 Understand a little E; does not speak it	N, T, H	N & H only
Maya	33	F	18	15	Beautician	No schooling	N:8; H: 10; T: 6; E: 10	H, E, N (very little T)	N & H only
Indu	34	F	18	16	Hair Stylist	12 th grade	N:10; T:10; E:10; Bengali: 10	E, H, N; (very little T);	N, E and Bengali

Figure 2: Finite Verb Inflections (Maya & Indu)

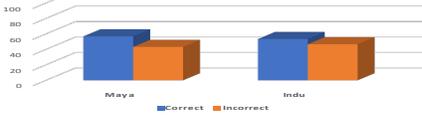


Table 3: Number and Percentage of Finite Verb Inflections by Indicative Verb Type (Maya & Indu)

Participant	Correct-Affirmative	Correct Negative N (%)	Correct Dative Sbj Affirmative	Correct Dative Sbj Negative	Total Correct	Total Incorrect (Affirmative)
Maya	47 (35.60%)	8 (6.06%)	14 (10.61%)	6 (4.55%)	75 (56.82%)	57 (43.18%)
Indu	48 (36.09%)	0 (0%)	18 (13.53%)	5 (3.66%)	71 (53.38%)	62 (46.62%)

Errors: Many in relation to agreement (especially when the subject is other than 3SN). Overgeneralization of default agreement (3SN) for all persons and genders (including for first person). Honorification unmarked. Tense and Aspectual distinctions and the use of the various auxiliaries are perfect. Use of Dative case form for direct object (influence from Nepali).

Figure 1: Finite Verb Inflections (Chandran and Ram)

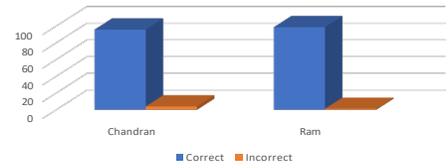


Table 2: Number and Percentage of Finite Verb Inflections by Indicative Verb Types (Chandran & Ram)

	Affirmative	Negative	Dative Sbj Affirmative	Dative Sbj Negative	Correct	Incorrect (Affirmative)
Chandran	129 (75%)	8 (4.65%)	21 (12.21%)	7 (4.07%)	165 (95.93%)	7 (4.07%)
Ram	136 (85%)	7 (4.38%)	7 (4.38%)	8 (5.00%)	158 (98.75%)	2 (1.25%)

Errors: negative (8m), 2 cases (1.25%); Chandran: 7 cases (4.07%); Only in relation to agreement (including all finite verbs in affirmative indicatives), using 3m for 3SN (3m/3m/3m); 3SN for 3m/3m, 3m for 3m; Functional/grammatical morphology perfect. Some slips of the tongue involving lexical categories; morpho-semantic interference: using the Tamil word for 'great' instead of 'year', the Tamil word for the verb 'stick' instead of 'stick etc.

Verb Forms and Case Forms: Some examples (Chandran and Ram).

- naan-Ø vandu ippoo muuṇu anju aaru viiṭṭile vela saiyarēē
I-NOM house-LOC work do-PRES-1s
'I am now working in three, five, six houses'
- kaartaale paal sappiḍuvom. kaappi tii ellaam sappiḍamattom
eat-FUT-1PL eat-INF-Neg.FUT-1PL
'In the morning, we drink milk. We don't drink coffee, tea and all that'
- Nepaleerindu Gujarat peyiṭṭu apram Tamil Naadikkku vandeen
Nepal-ABL go-VBP-LEAVE-VBP -DAT come-Past-1S
'From Nepal (I) went to Gujarat and after that (I) came to Tamil Nadu'
- ennakku teenga piḍikkum. romba piḍikkum
I-DAT. coconut like-FUT3SN lot like-FUT3SN
'I like coconut. (I) like (it) a lot'
- konjam konjam sollikuḍutaanga. South Indian samaiyal ellaam perfekt aayidicci
teach-VBP-give-Past-3PF(Hon) perfect become-LEAVE-3SN
'(She) taught me little by little. South Indian cooking became perfect (for me)'
- Class ellaam edukkale. peesi peesi taan vandudu
take-INF-NegDefaultAgr speak-VBP speak-VBP come-PAST3SN
'(I) didn't take any classes. By speaking speaking only (it=Tamizh) came (to me).'
- veera engum pohale
go-INF-NEG (ille)-DefAgr
'I didn't go anywhere else'
- Sila peerukku Hindi teriyaadu
Some people-DAT know-NEG.FUT-3SN
'Some people don't know Hindi'
- ivar vandu topi marattu kiizhe veccuṭṭu restiedukkiraaru
He-Hon cap tree-below keep-VBP-LEAVE-VBP rest take-PRES-3SHon
'He has kept the caps below the tree and is taking rest'

¹ Abrahamson & Hyltenstam 2009; DeKeyser et al 2010; Ellis & Sagarra, 2010; Flege 2019; Hartshorne et al 2018; Hawkins & Chan 1997; Johnson & Newport 1989; Lardiere 1998; Rob-Bley Vroman 1989; Schachter 1996; Schumann 1976, 1986; Selinker 1972.

² Meniado, 2019; Yilmaz & Schmid, 2015; Young-Scholten, 2013.

³ Author, 2000, 2006.

⁴ Jeyaranjan, 2017.

⁵ Acharya, 1990; Genetti, 1994; Lindemann, 2019; Shibatani, 1999; Simkhada, 2012

⁶ Amritavalli, 2019; Asher, 1982; Lehmann, 1989; Sarma, 1999; Shiffman, 2004.

L2 Acquisition of Parasitic Gaps inside Subject Islands by Japanese Learners of English

Background: This study investigates accessibility to Universal Grammar (UG) in second language (L2) acquisition by examining Japanese learners' (JLEs) sensitivity to parasitic gaps (PGs) inside subject islands. In PG constructions, an unacceptable gap inside an island becomes acceptable when it is associated with an acceptable gap (e.g., *Which articles did John file t without reading e?*; Engdahl (1983)). In English, PGs are licensed by the movement of a *wh*-phrase and null operator, a property assumed to be derived from UG principles (Chomsky (1986), Culicover (2001)). On the other hand, “apparent PGs” in Japanese are analyzed as null arguments involving ellipsis rather than operator movement (Takahashi (2006)). Given that PG constructions are argued to be marginally acceptable even for native speakers, it is likely that L2 learners have difficulty accessing those complicated constructions involving PGs. Nevertheless, Aldosari (2025) found that Arabic learners of English, whose native language (L1) exhibits overt *wh*-movement and different PGs, exhibited native-like sensitivity to PGs inside subject islands. This raises the question of whether JLEs, whose L1 lacks overt *wh*-movement and syntactic PGs, can acquire these constraints. If JLEs exhibit sensitivity to PGs, it would provide strong evidence for access to UG in L2 grammar. Or, a lack of sensitivity to PGs might suggest L1 influence or processing difficulties (e.g., Boxell & Felser (2017)).

Method: A total of 32 intermediate Japanese learners (CEFR: A2-B2) participated in two acceptability judgment tasks using *PCIBex Farm*. Task 1 tested sensitivity to island constraints (24 grammatical vs. 5 types of ungrammatical island violations; as in (1)), which provided a baseline for JLEs' ratings of subject island conditions. Building on Aldosari (2025), Task 2 employed a 3×2 factorial design: *gap type* (i.e., Good gap, Both gaps, Bad gap) and *verb finiteness* inside the subject island (i.e., finite vs. infinitival), as exemplified in (2). In each task, participants rated a total of 72 test sentences (24 targets and 48 fillers), using a 7-point Likert scale (1=completely unacceptable, 7=completely acceptable).

Results & Discussion: In Task 1 (Figure 1), JLEs showed significantly lower acceptability of subject island violations compared to grammatical controls (*emmeans*: $\beta=0.76$, $SE=0.19$, $t=4.06$, $p<.01^{**}$), confirming their sensitivity to island constraints, consistent with previous L2 studies (e.g., Aldosari et al. (2024), Goodall (2015), Martohardjono (1993), White & Juffs (1998)). However, results from Task 2 (Figure 2) indicated that JLEs rated the “Both gaps \times Infinitival” condition (i.e., grammatical PG constructions like (2d)) significantly lower than expected, patterning with ungrammatical “Bad gap” conditions (e.g., (2a,b)). This was confirmed by a significant main effect of the *gap type* factor only (*LME result*: $\beta=0.19$, $SE=0.54$, $t=3.57$, $p<.001^{***}$). These findings indicate that, unlike the Arabic learners in Aldosari (2025), the JLEs appeared insensitive to the licensing of PGs. Overall, it is suggested that different mechanisms for interpreting multiple “gaps” (i.e., operator movement in English vs. ellipsis in Japanese) can be operative in the L2 grammar. This leads JLEs to strictly obey island constraints without utilizing the specific rescue mechanism of PGs in their L2 English. Accordingly, we discuss whether the observed difference between Arabic learners and Japanese learners may arise from (i) L1 influence (e.g., the presence of *wh*-operator movement in L1 can affect L2 acquisition of complicated PG constructions) or (ii) the high processing burden associated with establishing multiple dependencies in L2 grammar.

(1) Examples of test stimuli in Task 1 (Island conditions)

- a. Adjunct Island
 - * They wanted to learn what we sent the email before he checked.
- b. Complex NP
 - * I struggled to know what the fisherman denied the fact that they caught.
- c. Relative Clause
 - * We wanted to see the flat that my mother told me when she will rent.
- d. Subject Island
 - * We tried to know what she thought the picture of frightened the boy.
- e. Whether Island
 - * She hoped to know what the teacher wondered whether he read.
- f. Grammatical
 - We knew how he had stolen the necklace./She repeated the story that he had written the letter.

(2) Examples of test stimuli in Task 2 under 3 x 2 factorial design

- a. Bad gap, Finite
 - * She tried to hear what [the plan that removed __] had destroyed the backyard.
- b. Bad gap, Infinitival
 - * She tried to hear what [the plan to remove __] had destroyed the backyard.
- c. Both gaps, Finite
 - * She tried to hear what [the plan that removed __] had destroyed __.
- d. Both gaps, Infinitival (grammatical PG constructions)
 - She tried to hear what [the plan to remove __] had destroyed __.
- e. Good gap, Finite
 - She tried to hear what [the plan that removed the tree] had destroyed __.
- f. Good gap, Infinitival
 - She tried to hear what [the plan to remove the tree] had destroyed __.

Figure 1: Mean Acceptability ratings in Task 1

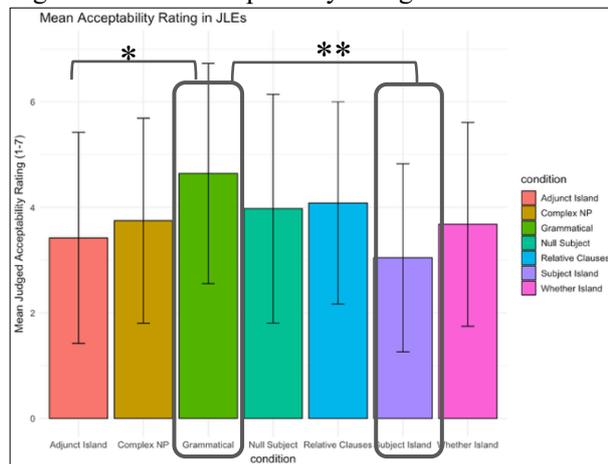
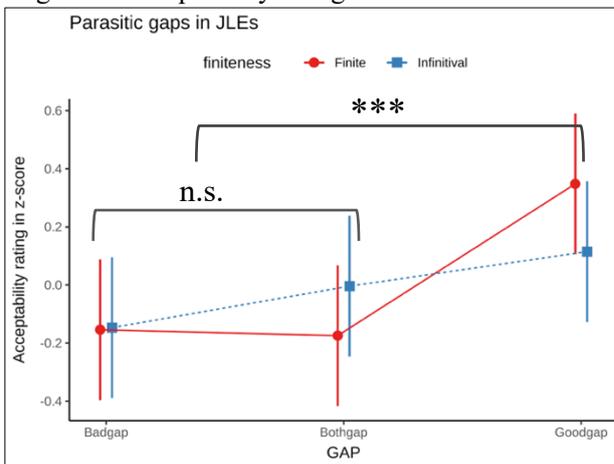


Figure 2: Acceptability ratings as z-scores in Task 2



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Generative Constraints and Domain-General Learning: AI Editing as a Test Case for Tense–Aspect Feature Reassembly

Recent neural-network studies show that certain structure-dependent patterns can emerge from domain-general learning alone (e.g., Linzen & Baroni, 2021; Wilcox et al., 2025), raising the question of which components of generative capacity genuinely require UG. Notably, large language models (LLMs) generate highly fluent, human-like sentences despite the absence of innate linguistic representations. This opens a new theoretical possibility: if LLMs can approximate human grammars through exposure-driven learning, to what extent might they also model areas of L2 acquisition difficulty that have traditionally been explained through Feature Reassembly (Lardiere, 2008, 2009)? While Generative SLA has long centered on the UG-access debate (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996; White, 2003), recent work increasingly examines whether learners' performance reflects domain-general learning pressures—particularly in areas such as tense–aspect mapping, where Feature Reassembly predicts systematic, cross-linguistic difficulty. Against this background, LLMs offer a novel empirical probe: if they succeed in revising L2 tense–aspect morphology in human-like ways, this may indicate that at least part of Feature Reassembly-based difficulty is learnable without UG; conversely, systematic failures may illuminate which aspects of L2 grammar truly require generative mechanisms.

This study extends that inquiry to LLM-based rewriting: we investigate how far an LLM—despite lacking UG—can revise learner texts in ways consistent with UG-linked constraints. Using Chinese and Japanese learner essays, this study tests **whether LLM editing (1) eliminates or preserves L1-specific structural fingerprints (Study 1); and (2) approximates the predicted tense–aspect reassembly patterns (Study 2).**

Procedures: Two studies were conducted to examine how far LLM-based rewriting can modify L2 morphosyntax in ways relevant to UG-linked constraints. **Study 1** examined the persistence of L1-specific structural patterns. A total of 1,600 ICNALE essays (800 Japanese, 800 Chinese) were revised by ChatGPT under three modes—*light*, *normal*, and *strong*. Character 3–5gram TF–IDF features were extracted from each revision stage, and binary logistic classifiers (CHN vs. JPN) were trained to quantify cross-linguistic separability. **Study 2** investigated whether LLM revisions approximate theoretically predicted tense–aspect reassembly patterns. Perfect, Progressive, and Past marking were automatically extracted, and logistic GLMMs were fit with L1 and revision mode as predictors to model aspectual distributions.

Results: **Study 1** showed extremely high separability across all revision modes ($AUC \geq .999$), indicating that L1-specific structural “fingerprints” remain robustly detectable even after extensive LLM rewriting (Figure 1 below). **Study 2** showed that LLM edits produce UG-consistent but L1-asymmetric changes: Perfect usage increased substantially for Chinese learners, while Japanese learners displayed reduced overuse of the Progressive, particularly with stative verbs. However, tense–aspect distributions never fully converged to native-speaker patterns, suggesting that deeper representational configurations—those requiring semantic restructuring—remain resistant to surface-level revision. Together, the findings show that LLMs improve fluency and local grammaticality but do not fully reassemble underlying feature bundles, revealing a dissociation between surface normalization and deeper morphosyntactic representation.

Discussion: The findings show that LLM rewriting improves surface accuracy but does not fully overwrite deeper L1-conditioned morphosyntactic tendencies. Even after substantial *strong* revision, learner-specific feature configurations remain detectable, suggesting that LLM regularizes expression without reconstructing the underlying feature bundles that pose persistent challenges in L2 acquisition. These results highlight a dissociation between surface normalization and representational reassembly in L2 morphosyntax. Overall, the results indicate that LLMs—despite lacking UG—approximate key properties of generative capacity: structural L1 features persist after revision, aspectual corrections follow UG-consistent constraints, and revision patterns remain L1-specific. These findings suggest that LLMs can serve as empirical probes for identifying which components of generative capacity require UG and which can emerge from probabilistic optimization over input. This reframes Generative SLA not only as a theory of UG access, but as a broader framework for evaluating generative capacity in both human and artificial systems.

Figure 1. Surface-level changes introduced by LLM editing.

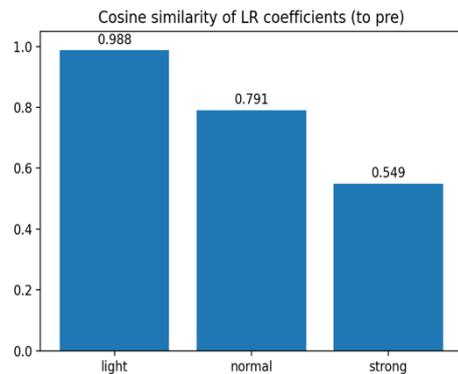
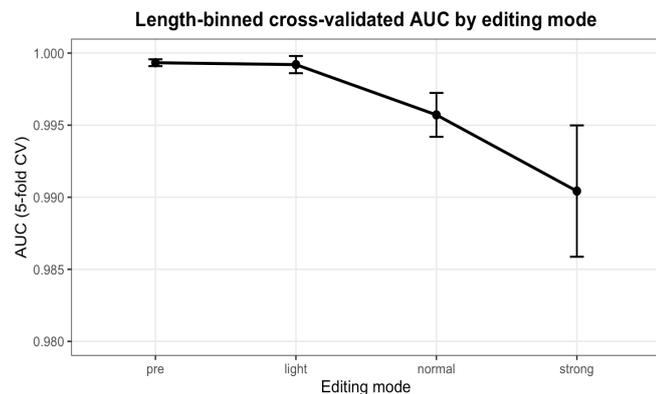
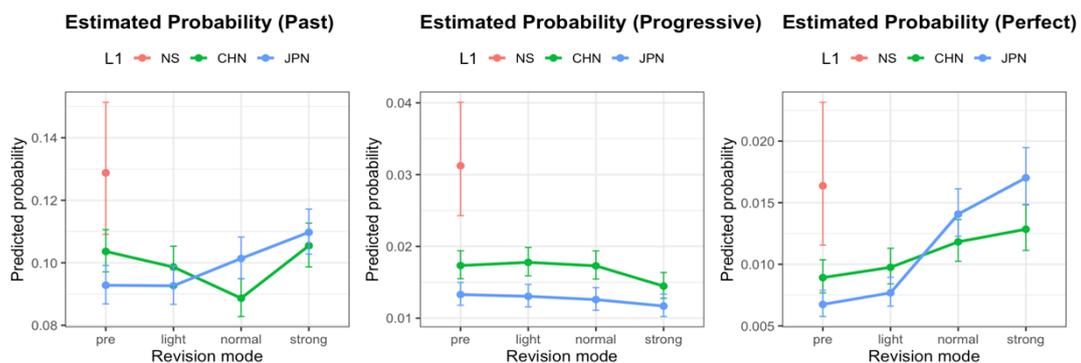


Figure 2. Classification accuracy checked separately for short, medium, and long texts.



Notes. **Figure 1** illustrates the substantial surface transformations produced by the light, normal, and strong editing modes (e.g., lexical substitutions, sentence rephrasing, and syntactic smoothing). **Figure 2** displays the AUC values for the original learner texts (*pre*) and for the three LLM-edited versions (*light*, *normal*, *strong*). *Pre* and *light* modes showed uniformly high AUCs (=0.999) with minimal variance across bins, although *normal* and *strong* modes exhibited slight reductions (AUC = 0.996 and 0.990, respectively). These results indicate that the L1 fingerprint persists across text lengths and remains strongly detectable even after substantial rewriting.

Figure 3. Estimated probabilities of Past, Progressive, and Perfect marking for NS, CHN, and JPN texts.



Notes. **Figure 3** shows that only Perfect marking moves noticeably toward the native distribution as revision strength increases. In contrast, Progressive exhibit minimal convergence: despite surface rewriting, both learner groups retain their original tense–aspect patterns, with little movement toward NS levels.

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Verbal Lexical Semantic Complexity and L2 Processing Difficulty: A Combined Acceptability Judgment and Eye-tracking Study

Previous Generative SLA research on verb meaning and tense-aspect acquisition has predominantly relied on Vendler's (1967) verb classification, based on temporal/event structure properties (e.g., Kim, 2016). However, the classification does not directly reflect the Lexical Semantic Complexity (LSC) of verb meanings (Beavers, 2008). To address these limitations, recent lexical semantic approaches propose a key distinction between *manner* and *result* verbs (Rappaport Hovav & Levin, 2010). Beavers (2008) further argues that result verbs involve *scalar* structures; *two-point* (binary change) and *multi-point* (gradual change) scales. Although their application to SLA research remains limited, the relevance of LCS to L2 acquisition is supported by the author's preliminary study, which used an acceptability judgment task with *atelic/telic* sentences and illustrations and revealed that both native speakers (NSs) and Japanese learners of English (JLEs) showed clear sensitivity to scalar structure. Notably, *multi-point result* verbs patterned more like *manner* verbs than *two-point result* verbs in NSs' and JLEs' telicity judgments. These findings suggest that learners are sensitive not only to aspectual properties but also to the LSC encoded in verbs. However, the nature of LSC in L1 Japanese and L2 English and the interpretive mechanism remains unclear. Building on these gaps, the present study directly investigates how L2 English learners compute and interpret the conceptual semantic complexity encoded in lexical verbs, and how this process is shaped by contrasts between L1 and L2 lexical semantic structures via online processing.

This study employed a forced-choice eye-tracking task in Japanese and English, in which participants read a verb and then viewed two illustrations: *durative* and *stative* depictions (Figure 1). After inspecting both pictures, they forced to continue fixating on the illustration that matched the meaning encoded by the verb. The verbs were set into three types—*manner*, *multi-point result*, and *two-point result*—with six tokens for each condition (Table 1). The materials were divided into two lists using a pseudo-Latin square design, and participants were assigned to two groups, each completing one of the lists to counterbalance the conditions. The data were collected by 15 JLEs, undergraduate or graduate students whose English proficiency levels within the B1-B2 range of the CEFR, indicated based on TOEIC L&R scores.

Across all three verb types in both Japanese and English, JLEs ultimately converged on the *durative* interpretation, although the time course varied. For *manner* verbs in both languages, JLEs exhibited unstable gaze allocation across Areas of Interest (AOIs), with gradual stabilization toward the *durative* interpretation at around 3,000ms. For *multi-result* verbs, the clearest cross-linguistic difference appeared at the first fixation: JLEs fixated on the *durative* AOIs in Japanese, whereas on the *stative* AOIs in English. Subsequent gaze allocation was unstable in both languages, converging at around 3,500ms. For *two-result* verbs, first fixations in both languages were at the *stative* AOIs, followed by an extended period of fluctuation, with convergence delayed until around 4,000ms (Figure 2).

Overall, the findings suggest that JLEs adopt a predominantly process-oriented construal when interpreting verb meanings even in English, regardless of the verb type. Importantly, however, the results demonstrated that such tendencies are not uniform across verb types. From the LSC perspective, *manner* verbs largely shared lexical semantics between Japanese and English. In contrast, *multi-point result* verbs showed both shared and non-shared components in their LSC representations: although both languages encode scalar changes, Japanese tends to focus on the process whereas English lexicalizes the result state more strongly (e.g., Shirai and Nishi, 2003), as evidenced by the first fixation asymmetry. Finally, *two-point result* verbs may largely share their lexical semantic structures between languages, but JLEs require additional time to process the relevant LSC information because of cross-linguistic differences in the cue that licenses resultative interpretations. Taken together, the results indicate that L2 lexical semantic processing in JLEs reflects verb-type-specific differences in how L1 and L2 lexical semantic structures are organized and weighted during online interpretation. These findings highlight the need for the future research on tense-aspect acquisition to move beyond grammaticalized aspectual morphology alone, incorporating the role of LSC, including their L1-L2 interface and how scalar changes are lexicalized.

Figure 1. Screenshot of the experimental screen

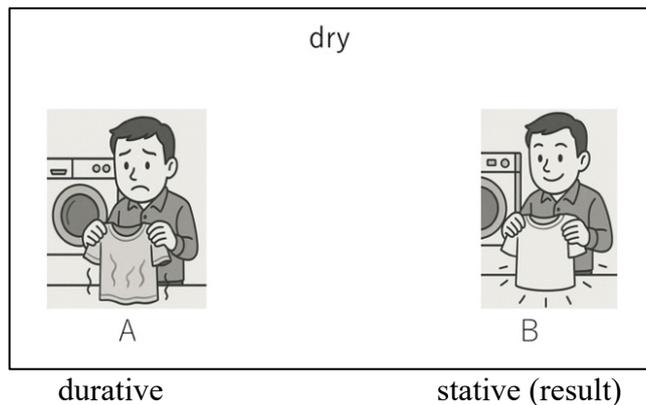


Figure 2. Time course of the gaze proportions

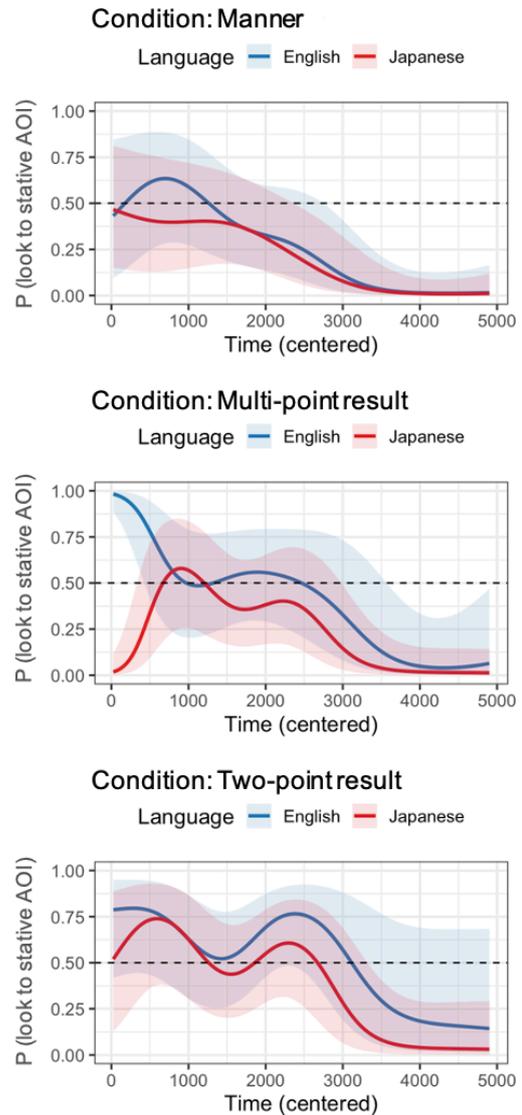


Table 1. List of the verbs

	Japanese / English
Manner verb	<i>yaku / cook, tsukuru / make, sakusei-suru / create, egaku / draw, kaku / write, kouchiku-suru / design</i>
Multi-point result verb	<i>ko-raseru / freeze, tokasu / melt, kawakasu / dry, moyasu / burn, mitasu / full, karani-suru / empty</i>
Two-point result verb	<i>akeru / open, shimeru / close, kowasu / break, waru / crack, kudaku / shatter, kiru / cut</i>

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Testing the Stability of the Internal Interface in L2 English *Have*-Constructions: A Case of Japanese Learners

This study investigates how the interpretation and acceptability of English sentences are determined by the internal interface (syntax–semantics) and the external interface (syntax–pragmatics) in L2 acquisition. According to the refined Interface Hypothesis (e.g., Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006; Sorace, 2011), L2 learners exhibit persistent optionality at the external interface, where syntactic representations interact with discourse or pragmatic information, while the internal interface is relatively stable. However, recent studies (e.g., White, 2011) argue that interface difficulty arises from the dynamic integration of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics rather than a strict internal/external dichotomy.

The present study tests competing accounts of whether internal interface representations remain stable when learners must simultaneously integrate syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information. To empirically evaluate these accounts, this study uses the English *have*-construction (have NP V-en) because its interpretation requires simultaneous coordination of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the construction is semantically ambiguous, allowing both causative and passive readings in certain contexts (e.g., *I had my wallet stolen*), while only the causative reading is possible when the subject is excluded from the subevent (e.g., *I had Tom's wallet stolen*). For clarity, we use the term *have*-passive to refer to the passive reading of the *have*-construction.

Japanese indirect passives structurally encode adversity, especially in *Exclusion* passives where the subject is not directly involved in the event (Washio, 1993; Washio & Mihara, 1997). Given this L1 property, JLEs may transfer an adversity interpretation from L1 Japanese when interpreting English *have*-passives, offering a unique test case for how L1 conceptual mappings interact with L2 interface representations. This study therefore examines how JLEs integrate syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information when interpreting and evaluating *have*-passives, and whether such integration reveals instability at the internal interface despite Sorace's (2011) prediction of its relative robustness. Two experiments were conducted with Japanese university and graduate students (CEFR B1–C1) (Exp. 1: $n = 28$; Exp. 2: $n = 21$), each targeting different interfaces.

Experiment 1 (Adversity Bias Test) examined the external interface by testing whether JLEs interpret *have*-constructions as conveying adversity in *Inclusion* (e.g., *I had my wallet stolen*) and *Exclusion* (e.g., *I had Tom's wallet stolen*) contexts. Participants made binary judgments (“adversity” or “non-adversity”), and responses were analyzed using a generalized linear mixed-effects model. As shown in Figure 1, *Inclusion* contexts elicited significantly higher adversity judgments, indicating that JLEs pragmatically associate *have*-constructions with adversity even when a neutral causative reading is also available.

Experiment 2 (Acceptability Judgment Test) targeted the internal interface, assessing how JLEs distinguish syntactic and semantic constraints across *Transitive-Inclusion* (TI), *Transitive-Exclusion* (TE), and *Unergative-Exclusion* (UE) sentences. Participants rated each sentence on a 5-point scale, and pairwise comparisons were adjusted using the Tukey method. Figure 2 shows a clear acceptability hierarchy (TI > TE > UE). However, UE sentences (e.g., **I had my child cried*) received unexpectedly high ratings ($M \cong 3.0$), suggesting that pragmatic plausibility led participants to accept the UE sentences, which are syntactically ungrammatical.

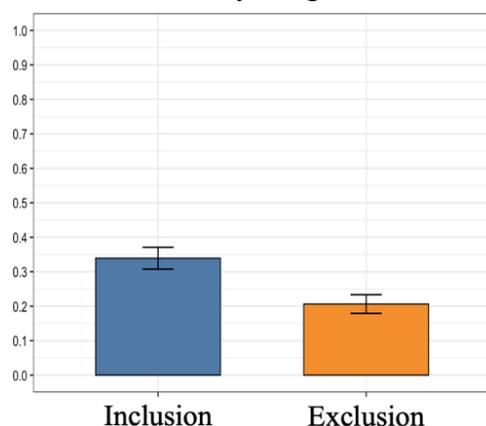
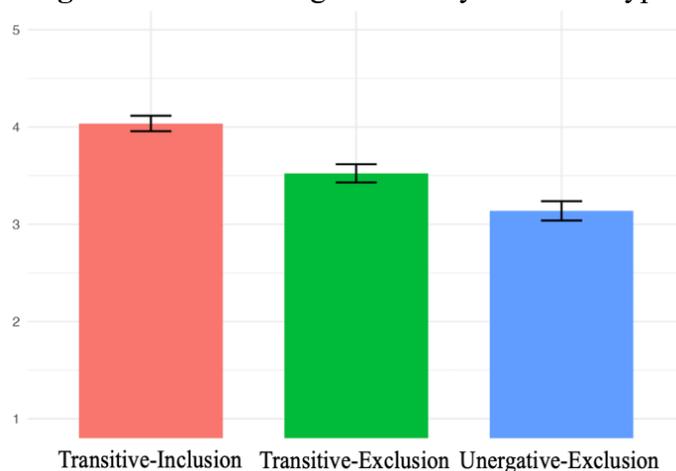
Overall, the results reveal instability not only at the external interface but also within the internal interface, challenging the prediction of internal interface robustness proposed in Tsimpli & Sorace (2006) and Sorace (2011). At the same time, the findings support White's (2011) view that interface difficulty arises from the dynamic integration of syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic information rather than from a strict interface dichotomy. This study thus provides empirical evidence for a gradient model of interface integration in L2 acquisition, replacing the assumption of a categorical internal–external division.

Table 1. Example Materials in Experiment 1

Context	Example of sentence	Interpretation
Inclusion	a. I had my wallet stolen on the street.	Both causative and passive
Exclusion	b. I had Tom’s wallet stolen on the street.	Only causative

Table 2. Example Materials in Experiment 2

Sentence Type	Example of sentence	Interpretation
Transitive-Inclusion	a. I had my wallet stolen on the street.	Both causative and passive
Transitive-Exclusion	b. I had Tom’s wallet stolen on the street.	Only causative
Unergative-Exclusion	c. *I had my child cried all night.	Unacceptable in English

Figure 1. Mean Percentage of Adversity Judgment**Figure 2.** Mean Ratings of AJT by Sentence Type**Table 3.** Result of Mixed-Effects Model (Experiment 1)

Fixed Effect	Estimates	SE	z-value	p-value
(Intercept)	-0.667	0.141	-4.723	<.001***
Exclusion (Causative)	-0.681	0.218	-3.131	.002**

Notes. $p < .05^*$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$

Formula: `glmer(response ~ sentence_type + (1 | participant) + (1 | item), family = binomial)`

Table 4. Pairwise Comparisons (Experiment 2)

Fixed Effect	Estimates	SE	df	t-ratio	p-value
(Intercept)	0.497	0.156	43.8	3.184	.007**
Transitive Exclusion	0.901	0.156	43.9	5.769	<.001***
Unergative Exclusion	0.404	0.156	43.6	2.591	.034*

Notes. $p < .05^*$, $p < .01^{**}$, $p < .001^{***}$

P value adjustment: Tukey method for comparing a family of 3 estimates.

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Acquiring the scope of disjunction and negation in L3 Japanese

This study investigates how native (L1) Korean and Mandarin speakers, whose second language (L2) is English, interpreted negated logical connectives in acquiring Japanese as a third language (L3). The interpretation of logical connectives—namely, the disjunction “or” and the conjunction “and”—exhibit cross-linguistic variations in negative sentences. Logical connectives take scope under negation (i.e., they are -PPIs) in English, German and Korean, whereas they take scope over negation (i.e., they are +PPIs) in Japanese and Mandarin (Goro and Akiba 2004, Goro 2007, Crain 2012, Chen, Mani, and Liu 2023, Lee and Schwartz 2024). Consequently, the negated disjunction (1) and negated conjunction (2) exhibit conjunctive and disjunctive interpretations, respectively, in English and Korean. Conversely, in Japanese and Mandarin, the negated disjunction (3) and negated conjunction (4) have opposing interpretations. The cross-linguistic variations in scope assignment result in superset/subset relations of interpretations, (5) and (6).

Previous studies have suggested that, in L2 acquisition, learners initially transfer the scope of logical connectives from L1 to L2. Grüter, Lieberman, and Gualmini (2010) found that L1 Japanese learners of L2 English with intermediate levels of proficiency misunderstood that the English disjunction *or* is +PPI, just like its Japanese counterpart *ka* (or). Yusa and Shwartz (2022) reported that L1 transfer disappeared as L2 learners’ proficiency improved and L1 Japanese learners of L2 English finally acquired the correct interpretations of the English disjunction *or* in pseudocleft sentences.

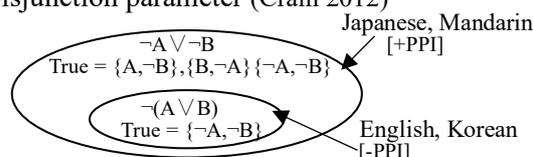
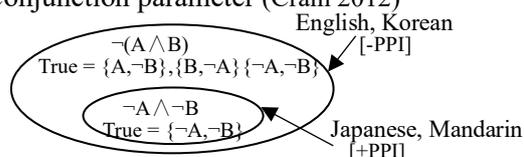
Extending these L2 studies, we investigated the L3 acquisition of negated logical connectives to determine the role of L1 and L2 on L3. We examined interpretations of Japanese disjunctions and conjunctions with negation by L1-Mandarin L2-English L3-Japanese learners with comparison to L1-Korean L2-English L3-Japanese learners. If the L1 holds a privileged role in L3 acquisition (the L1 Factor Hypothesis), and knowledge of the L2 is not relevant, L1 Mandarin learners will outperform L1 Korean learners. Alternatively, if the L2 plays a dominant role in L3 acquisition and blocks the L1 effects (the L2 Status Factor Hypothesis, Bardel & Falk 2007), L1 Mandarin learners will not differ from L1 Korean speakers. To the best of the author’s knowledge, no attempts have been made to investigate L3 acquisition of negated logical connectives.

Eighteen L1 Mandarin speakers were compared to six L1 Korean speakers in interpreting negated disjunctions and conjunctions in L3 Japanese. The task involved truth-value judgment, adapted from Grüter et al., with modifications, (7) and (8). All participants were university students in Japan who had learned English as their L2 before learning the L3. Twenty-seven native Japanese speakers served as the control group, (9). The results so far suggest that both advanced L3 groups were as accurate in interpreting negated disjunction and conjunction as was the control group, (10). This is compatible with previous L2 studies, revealing that correct interpretations of logical connectives are acquired by L3 learners. Nevertheless, the L1 Mandarin group responded more categorically than did the L1 Korean group, suggesting that the L1 plays a role in L3 acquisition. The details of individual results will be presented to discuss the extent to which L1 transfers on L3.

- (1) English-negated disjunctions
 - a. Mary did not eat the apple or the banana.
 - ✓ Mary did not eat the apple AND did not eat the banana. (Conjunctive “neither” interpretation)
- (2) English-negated conjunctions
 - a. Mary did not eat both the apple and the banana.
 - ✓ Mary did not eat the apple OR did not eat the banana. (Disjunctive “not-both” interpretation)
- (3) Japanese-negated disjunctions
 - a. Mary-wa ringo ka banana-o tabe-naka-tta.
 - ✓ Mary did not eat the apple OR did not eat the banana. (Disjunctive “not-both” interpretation)
- (4) Japanese-negated conjunctions
 - a. Mary-wa ringo to banana-o tabe-naka-tta.
 - ✓ Mary did not eat the apple AND did not eat the banana. (Conjunctive “neither” interpretation)

(5) Conjunction parameter (Crain 2012)

(6) Disjunction parameter (Crain 2012)



(7) Stimuli example (Dis-T/F) in the truth-value judgment task adapted from Grüter et al. (2010)

The participants read a short story about an eating contest in which animals received prizes for eating vegetables: a crown for eating both the carrot and pepper, a necklace for eating just one of them, and so on.

Kuma-wa keeki-o tabe-ta ga ninjin-ka piiman-o tabe-naka-tta.

Bear-Top cake-Acc eat-Pst but carrot-or pepper-Acc eat-Neg-Pst True False

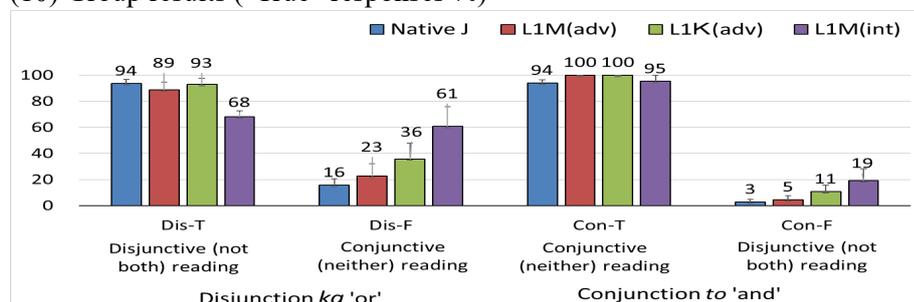
(8) Conditions

Conditions	Truth Value		Picture	Sentence
	in J/M	in E/K		
Dis-T (n=4)	True	False	One vegetable eaten	[Doubutsu]-wa ninjin-ka piiman-o tabenakatta.
Dis-F (n=4)	False	True	No vegetable eaten	‘The animal did not eat the carrot OR did not eat the pepper.’
Con-T (n=4)	True	False	No vegetable eaten	[Doubutsu]-wa ninjin-to piiman-o tabenakatta.
Con-F (n=4)	False	True	One vegetable eaten	‘The animal did not eat the carrot AND did not eat the pepper.’

(9) Participants

groups		Mean Age	L3 (Japanese)				L2 (English)		
			Proficiency (%)	Age of onset	Education (years)	Residence in Japan (years)	Proficiency (%)	Age of onset	Education (years)
L3ers	L1 Mandarin (adv) (n=11)	23	90 (88-97)	17	2.9	2.0	67 (40-97)	8.3	12
	L1 Korean (adv) (n=6)	22	90 (67-100)	16	4.6	1.2	65 (40-87)	10.7	10
	L1 Mandarin (int) (n=7)	23	69 (33-85)	18	2.7	1.7	74 (35-93)	6.8	14
Native Japanese controls (n=27)		19	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	61 (51-79)	8.7	7.7

(10) Group results (“True” responses %)



Selected references: Bardel, C. & Falk, Y. (2007) The role of the second language in third language acquisition: The case of Germanic syntax. *Second Language Research* 23, 459–484. Chen, Y., Mani, S. & Liu, C. (2023) L2 Acquisition of scope of negation and conjunction in Mandarin Chinese. In Proceedings of the 47th annual Boston University Conference on Language Development (pp. 118-131). Crain, S. (2012) *Emergence of Meaning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. Goro, T & Akiba, S. (2004) The acquisition of disjunction and positive polarity in Japanese. In Proceedings of the 23rd West Coast Conference on Formal Linguistics (pp. 251-264). Grüter, T., Lieberman, M. & Gualmini, A. (2010) Acquiring the Scope of Disjunction and Negation in L2: A Bidirectional Study of Japanese and English Learners. *Language Acquisition* 17(3), 127–154. Lee, Y. & Schwartz, B. (2024) The acquisition of negated disjunction in (native and) nonnative Korean. In Proceedings of the 48th annual Boston University Conference on Language Development (pp. 299-312). Yusa, M. & Schwartz, B. (2022) L2 reconstruction effects in negated disjunction under pseudoclefts. *Japanese/Korean Linguistics* 29, 291–305.

The L2 Acquisition of *Wh*-in-situ and *Wh*-ex-situ Reconsidered: Implications for the Role of UG in L2 Acquisition

A large body of research on L2 acquisition has investigated the acquisition of *wh*-syntax, contributing greatly to the development of L2 syntactic theory since the 1980s (e.g., Martohardjono, 1993; Schachter, 1989; White, 1988, 1992). These studies have provided important insights into whether UG remains operative in L2 acquisition. Subsequent work has increasingly focused on the (re)assembly of features, offering finer-grained analyses of the underlying mechanisms. The present study reviews recent empirical findings on L2 *wh*-syntax along this line of research and supports Kimura's (2025) proposal regarding the role of UG.

In English, *wh*-phrases contain uninterpretable operator ([*uOp*]) and variable ([*Var*]) features (1a), and *wh*-movement takes place to value [*uOp*] (1b; Cable, 2010; Chernova, 2014; Chomsky, 2000). In contrast, *wh*-phrases in Japanese only have a [*Var*] feature (2a), while the quantificational particle carries [*uOp*], leading to movement of Q alone and *wh*-in-situ configurations (2b) with optional scrambling. Chinese patterns similarly on the surface, though its quantificational particle lacks the [*uOp*] feature (3a), and a covert operator binds [*Var*] (3b).

Building on this theoretical background, the study reviews the results of Umeda (2006, 2008), Choi (2009), and Kimura (2022). As summarized in Table 1: (i) Japanese-speaking learners of English, (ii) Chinese-speaking learners of English, and (iii) English-speaking learners of Japanese successfully acquire their L2 *wh*-syntax; however, (iv) Chinese-speaking learners of Japanese fail to acquire Japanese *wh*-syntax. These findings do not only highlight the asymmetry in the accessibility of *wh*-features but also indicate that the mechanism of Feature Selection (Hawkins & Hattori, 2006; Tsimpli, 2003) and Feature Reassembly (Lardiere, 2008, 2009) do not satisfactorily explain the asymmetry (esp. (ii) vs. (iv) in Table 1).

In this presentation, we will consider Kimura's (2025) proposal on the role of UG as a potential explanation for the phenomenon. Kimura views UG as a *linguistic dissonance resolution device* (LDRD), where UG is triggered when UG-inconsistent grammars are generated: When such a UG-violating grammar is created, UG guides it back to conformity. In contrast, it is predicted that UG will not revise the interlanguage when the constructed (non-target-like) L2 rule is not UG-incompatible. This revision takes place in the form of Feature Selection or Feature Reassembly.

Concerning the findings (i) and (ii), as previous analyses suggest, learners construct a rule of *obligatory scrambling*, which is exempt from UG (Kimura, 2022; cf. Miyamoto & Iijima, 2003). This wild rule is corrected by UG-as-LDRD to conform to UG, resulting in the successful reassembly of the [*uOp*] feature. Regarding (iii), it was shown that English-speaking L2 learners were shown to incorrectly posit obligatory covert *wh*-movement (Choi, 2009). UG prohibits coexistence of obligatory covert movement and optional scrambling in the single grammar (Bobaljik & Wurmbrand, 2005), and the acquisition of the latter forces Feature Reassembly. In contrast to these cases, the case (iv) with the *wh*-in-situ-language pair should not involve a UG-violating derivation, and UG-as-LDRD would not be triggered. Detailed theoretical implications of this analysis will be discussed in the presentation.

Appendix i: Structures of *wh*-phrases and syntactic derivation

(1) English (Cable, 2010; Chernova, 2014; Chomsky, 2001, 2008)

a. [WH_[uOp] ^ [Var]] (e.g., *what/who*)

b. [CP [WH_[uOp] ^ [Var]] [C_[Op: val] did you buy *t* [[WH_[uOp] ^ [Var]]]]] ***wh*-movement**

(2) Japanese (Aoun & Li, 1993a; Cable, 2010; Chernova, 2014; Hagstrom, 1998, 2000)

a. [WH_[Var] ^ [Q *ka* _[uOp]]] (e.g., *nani/dare* ‘*what/who*’)

b. [CP [anata-wa [WH_[Var] ^ [Q *ka* _[uOp]]]-o kaimashita] C [Q_[Op: val] *ka* _[uOp]]]
 you-TOP -ACC bought Q-Prt

‘What did you buy?’

Q-movement (*wh* can be optionally scrambled)

(3) Chinese (Aoun & Li, 1993a, b; Cable, 2010; Chernova, 2014; Tsai, 1994, 1999)

a. [WH_[Var]] (e.g., *shenme/shei* ‘*what/who*’)

b. [CP *Op* _[iOp] [du mai-le shenme ne?]] ***wh*-binding**

you buy-PERF what Q

‘What did you buy?’

Table 1. Summary of previous studies

	acquisition of <i>wh</i> -syntax possible?	acquisition task
(i) L1: JPN - L2: ENG	Yes (Umeda, 2006; Kimura, 2022)	Feature Reassembly
(ii) L1: CHN - L2: ENG	Yes (Kimura, 2022)	Feature Selection
(iii) L1: ENG - L2: JPN	Yes (Umeda, 2008; Choi, 2009)	Feature Reassembly
(iv) L1: CHN - L2: JPN	No (Umeda, 2008)	Feature Selection

note. The results are based on those from post-intermediate and/or advanced L2 learners.

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Overpassivization in L2 English: Investigating L1 Influence with online and offline tasks

Overpassivization of unaccusative verbs (e.g., **The diamond was disappeared*) has been documented in L2 English speakers with a range of L1s, with evidence from written production (e.g., Zobl, 1989; Oshita, 1997) and offline judgement tasks (e.g., Hwang, 2006; No & Chung, 2006). No & Chung (2006) identified possible crosslinguistic influence in L1-Korean L2-English speakers, who accepted overpassivization more when the corresponding Korean unaccusatives contained the morpheme *-(e)ci*, which also serves as a passive morpheme in Korean. However, No & Chung did not include a comparison group with a different L1. The present study revisits the question of whether overpassivization is influenced by L1 morphology, by comparing L1-Korean and L1-Japanese speakers. In addition, we test whether evidence of overpassivization can be captured using an online method: the Maze task (Forster et al., 2009).

Korean unaccusative verbs include a subset that contain the morpheme *-(e)ci* (e.g., *saracita* “disappear”), which is also a productive Korean passive morpheme (e.g., *mantul-eciessta*: make-PASS-PAST “be made”). However, other unaccusatives do not include *-(e)ci* (e.g., *ilenata* “happen”). Japanese does not have a similarly overlapping passive–unaccusative morpheme. We predict that, if L1 morphology influences overpassivization, L1-Korean speakers will overpassivize English verbs more when the Korean equivalent contains *-(e)ci* than when it does not, whereas L1-Japanese speakers will overpassivize to the same degree across both verb types.

Participants were 40 L1-Korean and 30 L1-Japanese proficiency-matched L2-English speakers, and 15 L1-English speakers. In the Maze task, participants read sentences word-by-word, by selecting the word that makes sense from pairs of alternatives. For example, for a target sentence *The red car was popular two years ago*, participants saw sequences of word pairs as in (1a–b). The critical pair was [*popular / disappeared*], where *popular* is the target continuation word, while *disappeared* is a passive “foil”. If participants consider overpassivization (i.e., *was disappeared*) before selecting the correct word (*popular*), their response time for the correct word in the passive foil condition will be longer than in a comparison foil condition (i.e., *consider* in 1b). In the AJT, ungrammatical passivized unaccusatives were contrasted with grammatical actives. Participants rated acceptability on a scale of 0–6. In both tasks, the English verbs were categorised as *+ci* or *-ci*, based on their Korean equivalent morphology, as illustrated for the AJT in (2).

Tables 1–2 present the results. In the Maze, the L1-English group showed no difference among any of the conditions (all *p*-values > 0.1) whereas both L2 groups had notably slower response times for rejecting passive foils relative to comparison foils. A linear mixed-effects model on the L2 data showed a main effect of foil type ($\beta=0.867$, $p<.001$) but no effect or interaction involving $\pm ci$ or group ($p\geq.088$). In the AJT, all groups rated the grammatical conditions higher than the ungrammatical, though the difference was strikingly bigger in the L1 English group. Within the L2 data, there was an effect of grammaticality ($\beta=0.704$, $p<.001$) but no effect or interaction involving $\pm ci$ or group ($\geq .090$).

The Maze results suggest that, on encountering a potential passive participle, the L2 speakers momentarily consider overpassivization even though they then reject this in favour of the target word. This provides novel online evidence of overpassivization. The AJT and Maze data together suggest no influence of Korean $\pm ci$ morphology on overpassivization, in contrast to No & Chung (2006). We account for this in terms of task differences between the two studies and argue that our data support structure-based accounts of overpassivization.

Examples

- (1) Maze task example: *The red car was popular two years ago.*
- a. Passive foil (*disappeared*)
 [The / xxx] [red / that] [the / car] [was / nor] [**popular / disappeared**]
 [cook / two] [you / years] [ago. / sir.]
 - b. Comparison foil (*consider*)
 [The / xxx] [that / red] [the / car] [nor / was] [**popular / consider**] ...
- (2) AJT conditions
- a. The red car disappeared two years ago. [+ci, +grammatical]
 - b. *The red car was disappeared two years ago. [+ci, -grammatical]
 - c. The sudden accident happened on that safe street. [-ci, +grammatical]
 - d. *The sudden accident was happened on that safe street. [-ci, -grammatical]

Table 1. Mean Maze Task response times (SDs) in milliseconds by group and by condition for selection of the correct target word (i.e., rejection of the foil) in the critical word pair

Condition	L1 English	L1-Japanese L2-Eng	L1-Korean L2-Eng
+ci, passive	1350.32 (300.34)	2747.54 (1701.93)	2760.65 (2545.92)
+ci, comparison	1369.53 (633.36)	1936.60 (842.82)	1902.33 (1385.54)
-ci, passive	1275.33 (307.98)	2408.90 (1193.42)	2143.96 (1065.00)
-ci, comparison	1275.59 (387.27)	1773.99 (627.93)	1630.27 (899.89)

Table 2. Mean AJT ratings (SD) by group and by condition (rating scale = 0–6)

Condition	L1 English	L1-Japanese L2-Eng	L1-Korean L2-Eng
+ci, +grammatical	5.27 (0.10)	4.50 (1.03)	4.40 (1.48)
+ci, -grammatical	1.49 (1.13)	3.28 (1.94)	3.68 (2.01)
-ci, +grammatical	5.16 (0.73)	4.46 (1.16)	4.62 (1.16)
-ci, -grammatical	1.00 (1.25)	2.87 (1.90)	3.06 (2.00)

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1 The dative alternation: The English dative alternation exemplified in (1) has been discussed in terms of whether double object constructions (DOCs) and prepositional dative constructions (PDCs) share an underlying structure (uniform approaches) (Baker, 1997; Larson, 1988, 1990; den Dikken, 1995; Ormazabal & Romero, 2012; MacDonald, 2015) or have distinct structures (distinct approaches) (Marantz, 1993; Goldberg, 1995; Pesetsky, 1995; Bruening, 2010, 2018; Harley, 2002; Pykkänen, 2008). Building on Rappaport Hovav & Levin's (2008) proposal, I focus on a verb-sensitive approach in which *give*-type verbs obligatorily express caused possession in both DOCs and PDCs, whereas *throw*-type verbs allow either caused possession or caused motion readings. I refer to this entailed caused-possession meaning as Caused-Possession Entailment (CPE). CPE is shown in the contrast in (2a, b) and (2c, d). CPE expressed by *give*-type verbs cannot be cancelled, while caused-possession expressed by *throw*-type verbs is an implicature and thus it can be cancelled. Evidence from Japanese L1 learners of English will shed light on the property of dative alternation and whether the verb-class distinction reflects language-specific universal constraint (e.g. UG) or more general properties of human cognition and event conceptualisation. Japanese is a good example to investigate CPE based on verb-types, because it provides a comparable verb-class distinction in ditransitives: when the dative argument is an indirect object, it is obligatorily marked by the dative *-ni*, but when it is locative, it may instead appear with a locational postposition such as *-e*. In addition, *throw*-type verbs in Japanese exclusively denote change-of-location (Kishimoto, 2007).

2 Experiment: This study investigates whether Japanese L1 learners of English at an intermediate level show sensitivity to CPE in the English dative alternation. Ninety-eight university students (mean TOEIC \approx 550, CEFR lower B1) first completed a baseline task testing their knowledge of which “giving” verbs can appear in DOCs; over 90% correctly distinguished DOC-selecting verbs from non-DOC verbs. They then received two class sessions introducing the main claims of Rappaport Hovav & Levin (2008). In the following week, they rated English DOC and PDC sentences containing *give*-type and *throw*-type verbs, each followed by a but-clause that cancelled the CPE. Participants judged these sentences on a five-point acceptability scale, and a Bayesian analysis was used to estimate, for each item, whether ratings tended to favour acceptance or rejection. For all items, the posterior mean of θ (the probability of accepting the sentence) was greater than 0.7, indicating a strong bias towards accepting cancellation of CPE across verb types and constructions. The result of the experiment is summarised in Figure 1. In addition, learners did not reliably distinguish pairs such as (3), which have been argued to support a structural asymmetry between DOCs and PDCs, which was adopted to support distinct approaches. Taken together, the results suggest that these learners' interlanguage grammar currently treats DOCs and PDCs as structurally identical, in line with uniform approaches, and that verb-sensitive distinctions in the dative alternation, including those tied to Caused-Possession Entailment, may arise only at a later stage of acquisition.

3 Proposal: The present analysis favours uniform approaches, whereby both DOCs and PDCs share the underlying structures and thus the dative phrase headed by *to* is an argument selected by its main verb, because their judgement with respect to CPE is not different between DOCs and PDCs. The schematic structure would be [_{VoiceP} Sub Voice [_{ApplP} Appl [_{VP} DO V [_{PP} P IO]]]] (PDC) or [_{VoiceP} Sub Voice [_{ApplP} IO Appl [_{VP} DO V [_{PP} P-IO]]]] (DOC), where Sub(ject) is licensed by Voice, I(ndirect)O(bject) is licensed by Applicative and D(irect)O(bject) is by Verb, respectively and the movement of IO is involved in DOCs. I suggest that a dative-marked phrase in *throw*-type verbs is treated as locative, leading to the different behaviour based on different verb types. This will be possible in English, because *throw*-type verbs inherently specify two arguments, while *give*-type verbs need to take three arguments. Japanese L1 learners of English in this proficiency range appear to have acquired a uniform structural representation of the dative alternation, but not the verb-sensitive CPE.

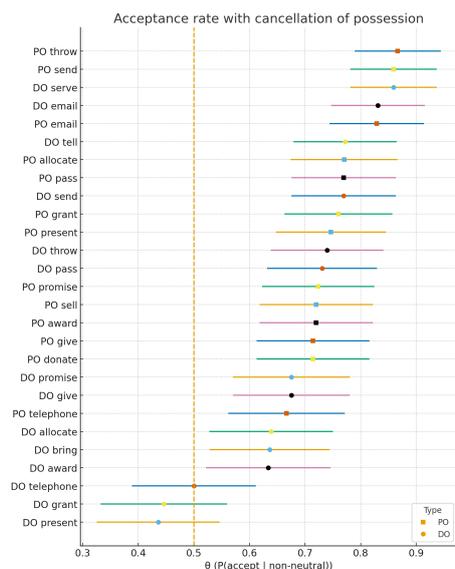


Figure 1: Result

- (1) a. John gave a ball to Mary. (PDC) ↔ John gave Mary a ball. (DOC)
 b. John threw a ball to Mary. (PDC) ↔ John threw Mary a ball. (DOC)
- (2) a. # My aunt gave/lent/loaned my brother some money for new skis, but he never got it.
 b. # My aunt gave/lent/loaned some money to my brother for new skis, but he never got it.
 c. I threw/kicked him the ball, but the wind blew it astray.
 d. I threw/kicked the ball to him, but the wind blew it astray.
- (3) a. The noise gave Terry a headache.
 b. # The noise gave a headache to Terry.

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Strength of *wh*-island effects in subject vs. object relatives for L1/L2 English adults

Background

Research on the relative clauses (RCs) of L1-English adults (e.g., Han et al., 2012; Keffala & Goodall, 2011) indicates that island effects are stronger in subject RCs (SRCs) than in object RCs (ORCs). For instance, Morgan and Wagers (2018) report that participants in an elicited production task (EPT) produced *resumptive RCs*—RCs with a pronoun, rather than a gap, at the foot of the dependency—more often in SRC islands, like (1b), than in ORC islands, like (1a). The higher incidence of resumptive RCs in SRC islands vs. ORC islands suggests that the former are *stronger islands*; this is because L1-English speakers tend to resort to resumptive RCs only in syntactic environments where gapped RCs are either difficult to produce or inadmissible (Ferreira & Swets, 2005). In a follow-up acceptability judgment task (AJT), Morgan and Wagers found that gapped RCs received lower ratings in SRC islands than in ORC islands, further supporting the ORC-SRC asymmetry in island strength. The present study investigates whether this asymmetry also holds for adult L1-Korean and L1-Mandarin L2 learners (L2ers) of English. Korean and Mandarin are alike in that they both lack *wh*-movement in *wh*-questions; they differ in that Mandarin permits resumption in a wider range of RC environments than Korean does.

Study

Participants—English native-speaker controls (ENSs), L1-Korean L2ers of English (KLEs), and L1-Mandarin L2ers of English (MLEs)—were distributed across two sub-studies: one on ORCs (90 ENSs; 69 KLEs; 76 MLEs), one on SRCs (61 ENSs; 66 KLEs; 73 MLEs). Both sub-studies involved an EPT and an AJT with conditions targeting two levels of *RC DEPENDENCY* (gapped RC; resumptive RC) and three levels of *ENVIRONMENT* (short-distance; long-distance; *wh*-island); only the *wh*-island environment (Tables 1–2) is relevant to the present investigation. Participants also completed an English C-test as a proficiency measure.

Results & Discussion

In the EPTs (Fig. 1), gapped RCs were rarer in SRC islands than in ORC islands. Resumption responses outnumbered gapping responses only in SRC islands, and our mixed-effects models—run separately for ORCs and SRCs—indeed found that resumption was significantly more common than gapping only in the SRC-island condition. Resumption rates were higher for ENSs than for L2ers, but L2 proficiency effects were observed in the SRC sub-study: L2ers with higher C-test scores used resumption more, bringing them more in line with ENSs.

In the AJTs (Fig. 2), it was only for SRC islands that gap-trial ratings fell consistently in the lower half of the acceptability scale. Moreover, the mixed-effects models found that resumption was rated significantly higher than gapping only in the SRC-island condition; this pattern characterized ENSs and L2ers alike, though L2ers had higher ratings overall than ENSs.

These results indicate that *wh*-island effects are stronger in SRCs than in ORCs not only for L1-English adults but also for L2ers whose L1 lacks overt *wh*-movement in *wh*-questions. This in turn suggests that KLEs and MLEs—like ENSs—can become sensitive to the ORC-SRC asymmetry in island strength. We explore two explanations for the asymmetry: a representational account positing that SRC *wh*-island effects are stronger because they involve an additional grammatical-constraint violation (Chomsky, 1981; Keffala & Goodall, 2011) and a processing account according to which SRC *wh*-island effects are stronger because they violate the push-down storage principle (Marcus, 1978; O’Grady, 2005).

- (1) *Whether*-island conditions with gapped RC vs. resumptive RC from Morgan and Wagers (2018)
- There's a prince that the ogre doesn't care if the troll slayed {*_/*him}. (ORC island)
 - There's a prince that the ogre doesn't care if {*_/*he} slayed the troll. (SRC island)
- Note.* Island-violating RCs are ungrammatical both without and with resumption; the other conditions in the Morgan and Wagers study probed adjunct islands, CNPC islands, and nonislands.

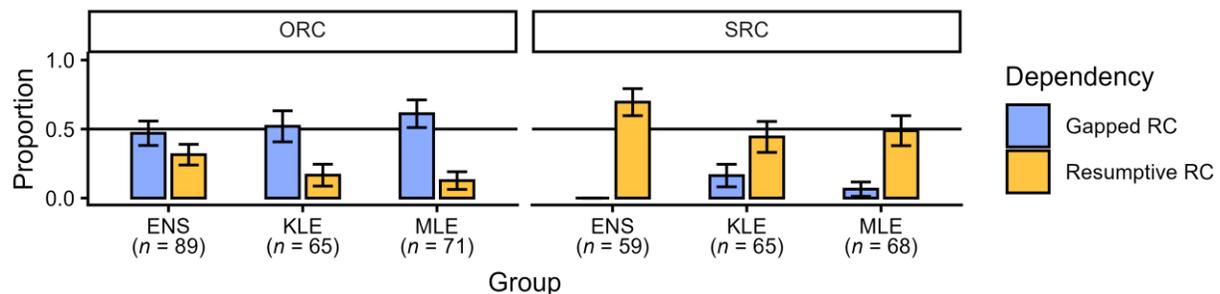
Table 1. *Wh*-island conditions in the ORC and SRC elicited production tasks ($k = 5$ per condition)

Sub-study	Targeted response with gapped RC vs. resumptive RC
ORC	the man that Mary wonders which officers arrested {*_/*him} last week
SRC	the man that Mary wonders which book {*_/*he} borrowed last month

Table 2. *Wh*-island conditions in the ORC and SRC acceptability judgment tasks ($k = 5$ per condition)

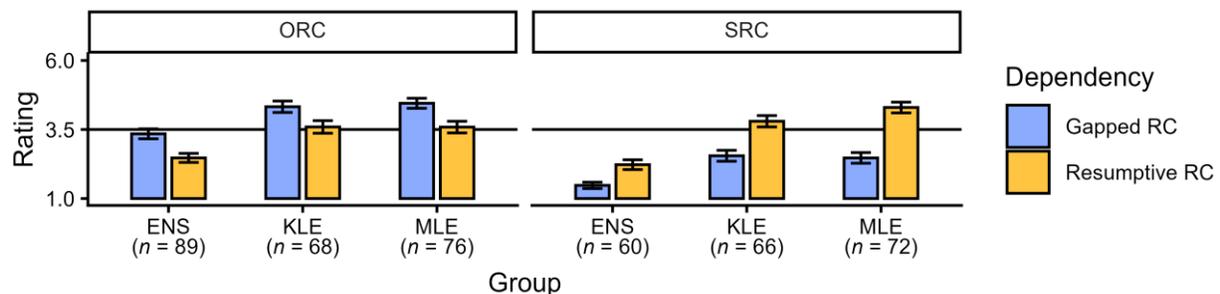
Sub-study	Example stimulus with gapped RC vs. resumptive RC
ORC	Mary knows the man that I wonder which detectives arrested {*_/*him} last week.
SRC	Mary knows the man that I wonder which book {*_/*he} borrowed last month.

Figure 1. Mean response rates for *wh*-island conditions in the elicited production tasks



Note. Error bars are 95% CIs; nontarget responses (e.g., those without RCs) are not shown here; ORC model formula: Resumption \sim Environment * Group + (1 | Participant) + (1 + Environment + Group | Item); SRC model formula: Resumption \sim Environment * Group + (1 + Environment | Participant) + (1 | Item).

Figure 2. Mean ratings for *wh*-island conditions on the 1–6 scale in the acceptability judgment tasks



Note. Error bars are 95% CIs; ORC/SRC model formula: Rating \sim Dependency * Environment * Pairing + (1 + Dependency + Environment | Participant) + (1 + Dependency + Environment + Pairing | Item).

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L1 Effects on Binding and Coreference: L2 learners' Interpretation of Swedish Reflexive and Non-Reflexive Possessives

For L2 learners of Swedish, the distinction between the reflexive possessive *sin* and non-reflexive possessives such as *hans* 'his' or *hennes* 'her', poses a well-documented challenge. This study aims to identify the underlying causes of this challenge by examining how L2 learners' interpretations of Swedish reflexive and non-reflexive pronouns are influenced by L1 transfer, and to what extent a reorganization of the internal grammar is possible for learners lacking reflexive possessives in their L1.

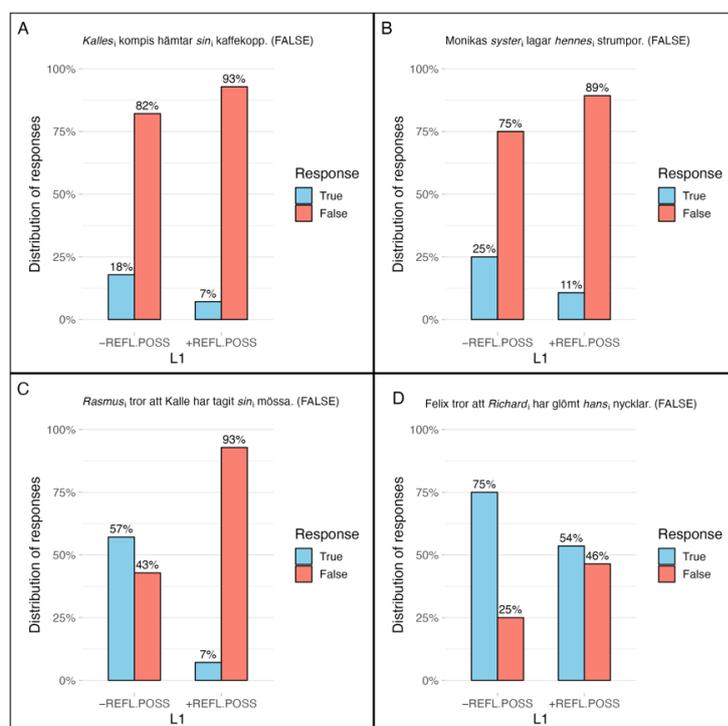
The underlying assumption of the present study is that the difficulty of separating reflexive and non-reflexive possessives stems from the fact that this distinction is not cross-linguistically universal. Despić (2015) explains the absence of reflexive possessives in many languages by assuming that binding domains correspond to phases and that the determiner phrase (DP) constitutes a phase that is not universal. This could explain why languages with prenominal definiteness marking (like English) consistently lack reflexive possessives, while languages without definiteness marking (like Ukrainian) allow reflexive possessives. Despić argues that Swedish and other languages with postnominal definiteness marking allow possessive reflexives, which is enabled by an uninterpretable edge feature in DP that triggers movement of possessives from the functional head Poss to the phase head D, an operation that is not possible in DP languages where D is reserved for the definite article. The Interpretability Hypothesis (Hawkins & Hattori, 2006) predicts that this uninterpretable feature hinders the acquisition of the Swedish reflexive possessives if they are not present in the L1 grammar. The Interface Hypothesis (Sorace, 2011), on the other hand, predicts that reflexive possessives are acquirable by all learners, since they involve a purely syntactic operation, while non-reflexive possessives are more difficult since the interpretation of them involves the syntax-discourse interface (see also Kim, 2024).

Data were collected through a truth-value judgment task (TVJT) containing sentences with both possessive and non-possessive reflexives and pronouns. Participants were adult L2 learners of Swedish, divided into two groups with 28 participants in each group. The first group (–REFL.POSS) had participants with L1s such as English, Italian and Spanish, who all lack reflexive possessives. The second group (+REFL.POSS) had participants with Ukrainian and/or Russian, languages with reflexive possessives. Example items from the TVJT for which the expected responses are *False* are presented in Table 1. Results indicate that *sin* and *hans/hennes* are generally more difficult to interpret than non-possessive reflexives and personal pronouns, with *hans/hennes* showing the greatest variability. Interpretation accuracy is also affected by syntactic context, as sentences where the possessives occur in biclausal sentences show greater variability than in monoclausal sentences. While the majority of the –REFL.POSS group makes target-like interpretations in monoclausal sentences (figure 1A–B), they struggle with *sin* and *hans/hennes* in biclausal sentences (figure 1C–D). The +REFL.POSS group demonstrates overall higher accuracy, particularly for *sin* in embedded contexts (figure 1C). However, variability remains high for *hans/hennes* across both groups (figure 1D).

The results do not support the Interpretability Hypothesis, since the –REFL.POSS group does target-like interpretations of *sin* in main clauses, which indicates they have been able to acquire the uninterpretable feature necessary to have access to reflexive possessives. The results do however align with the Interface Hypothesis, which predicts that binding of *sin* should be accessible since it does not involve the syntax-discourse interface. The Interface Hypothesis also explains the greater difficulty of *hans/hennes* compared to *sin*, since non-reflexive possessives involve the additional discourse-level operation of coreference, which is more cognitively demanding than purely syntactic binding.

Table 1 Examples of test items included in the truth-value judgement task

Item	Context	Test sentence	Expected
A	Kalle asks: “Can you fetch my coffee cup?” His friend fetches the coffee cup and gives it to Kalle.	<i>Kalles kompis hämtar sin kaffekopp.</i> Kalle-GEN friend fetch POSS.REFL coffee.cup ‘Kalle’s friend fetches his (own) coffee cup.’	False
B	Monika asks her sister: “What are you doing?” The sister responds: “I mend my socks.”	<i>Monikas syster lagar hennes strumpor.</i> Monika-GEN sister mend POSS socks ‘Monika’s sister is mending her (Monika’s) socks.’	False
C	Rasmus’s hat is gone. Rasmus thinks that Kalle has taken it.	<i>Rasmus tror att Kalle har tagit sin mössa.</i> Rasmus think that Kalle has taken POSS.REFL hat ‘Rasmus thinks that Kalle has taken his (own) hat.’	False
D	Richard asks: “Where are my keys?” Felix answers: “I think that you have forgotten them.”	<i>Felix tror att Richard har glömt hans nycklar.</i> Felix think that Richard has forgotten POSS keys ‘Felix thinks that Richard has forgotten his (Felix’s) keys.’	False

**Figure 1** Distribution of True/False responses by L1 group**References**

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The Benefits of Structured Input in a 6-week L2-English Article Intervention Study

It is well-documented that L2-English learners (L2ers) from article-less L1s (e.g., Chinese, Russian) exhibit great difficulty acquiring English articles (e.g., Huebner, 1983). Definiteness is a complex semantic concept related to speaker/hearer knowledge as well as uniqueness/maximality (Heim, 1991). Consequently, L2ers must learn that *the* can only occur with a singular count NP if (i) the referent is known to the hearer and (ii) the referent is unique. Problems arise when L2ers map definiteness onto just one but not both prerequisites. For example, L2ers have been found to overuse *the* when the speaker considers the referent to possess some noteworthy property without meeting the presupposition of hearer knowledge (i.e., *specificity*, Ionin et al., 2004). The Fluctuation Hypothesis (FH; Ionin et al., 2004) predicts that L2ers from article-less L1s fluctuate between using articles for definiteness vs. specificity. Thus, L2ers are expected to use the correct article more when definiteness and specificity match (1a/2b) than when they do not (1b/2a). Several intervention studies have attempted, unsuccessfully, to use explicit instruction to teach learners to use articles for definiteness and not specificity (e.g., Lopez, 2019; Snape & Yusa, 2013; Umeda et al., 2019). An overlooked limitation of these studies was the lack of a pedagogical method to reinforce accurate processing of articles. Structured Input (SI), a major component of Processing Instruction (VanPatten, 2004), uses input-based activities to force learners to process grammatical aspects of the input. By manipulating the type of practice learners receive, we show that explicit instruction about using articles for marking definiteness instead of specificity is possible and can achieve positive results.

67 L1-Chinese L2-English adult learners completed a 6-week asynchronous online tutorial about definiteness/specificity, where they received explicit instruction on the importance of hearer knowledge for using *the*. The treatment included one self-paced learning module and 96 practice items. 26 L2ers completed a structured input version of the practice items (answering questions directing them to disregard specificity), and 24 completing an output version of the same items (filling in the blank with the target article). A control group of 17 L2ers completed the same tutorial with all article content replaced with prepositions. A Forced Choice Task (FCT) was administered on PCIbex (Zehr & Schwarz, 2018) before and immediately after the intervention to measure explicit knowledge of article use in specific and non-specific (in)definite contexts. Each item consisted of a dialogue, adapted from Ionin et al. (2004) and prior FH studies, where participants clicked on *a* or *the* to complete a blank. Twenty-eight definite token sets (1a/b), 28 indefinite token sets (2a/b), and 56 fillers were distributed across two counter-balanced lists. Participants also completed part of the Oxford Placement Test (Allan, 1992) as a proficiency measure (Table1).

In the Pre-Test, L2ers were least accurate in the Specific Indefinite condition (Fig1) (Specific Definite accuracy was >90% and Non-Specific Indefinite and Non-Specific Definite accuracy was >85%). Two logistic mixed effects regression models (for definite and indefinite items separately) were run to assess the effectiveness of TestTime*Intervention*Proficiency on correct article choice. Model comparisons showed no differences in fit when Specificity (specific vs. non-specific) was included as a covariate vs. an interacting factor, so the simpler model was selected. For the definite items, there were no significant differences between any group's Pre- and Post-Test scores. For the indefinite items, there was significant improvement between the Pre- and Post-Test for the Input ($p < .001$) and Output ($p < .039$) groups, but not the Control group ($p = .495$) (Fig2). A significant three-way interaction with the Input group revealed that improvement in this group was proficiency-dependent ($p = .016$) (Fig3).

The results show that explicit instruction based on the FH can be used to help L1-Chinese L2-English learners disregard specificity when selecting articles in specific indefinite contexts. When there is an emphasis on metalinguistic explanation, as there was in our SI group and in previous intervention studies, it may be more effective with high-proficiency learners.

1: Example Definite Token Set

1a: [+definite, +specific] between two friends

Kathy: My daughter loves that new show called Super Mouse.
 Elise: Well, she's in luck! Tomorrow, I'm having dinner with _____ creator of Super Mouse. He's an old friend of mine, so I can get his autograph for Jeannie.

1b: [+definite, -specific] between two friends

Kathy: My daughter loves that new show called Super Mouse.
 Elise: Well, she's in luck! Tomorrow, I'm having dinner with _____ creator of Super Mouse. I don't know exactly who he is, but I was told that he would be at the dinner.

2: Example Indefinite Token Set

2a: [-definite, +specific] at an airport

Man: Excuse me, do you work here?
 Security Guard: Yes. Can I help you with something?
 Man: Yes, I am trying to find ___ girl. She has red hair and just arrived on a flight from Madrid.

2b: [-definite, -specific] at an airport

Man: Excuse me, do you work here?
 Security Guard: Yes. Can I help you with something?
 Man: Yes, I am trying to find ___ girl, but I don't know her or what she looks like.

Table 1: Biographical Data

Group	<i>n</i>	Age: mean (range, sd)	Proficiency (out of 47): mean (range, sd)
Control	17	26.06 (18-38, 5.07)	35.88 (27-45, 5.03)
Input	26	26.27 (18-40, 6.10)	36.85 (16-40, 5.79)
Output	24	23.00 (19-35, 3.89)	37.41 (31-43, 3.56)

Figure 1: Specific-Indefinite (2a) Accuracy by Test Time and Intervention Group

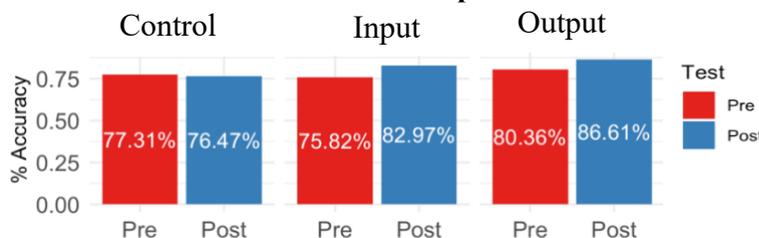


Figure 2: Pre-Post Test Differences on Log-Odds Scale

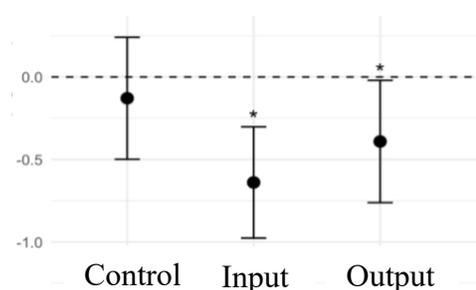
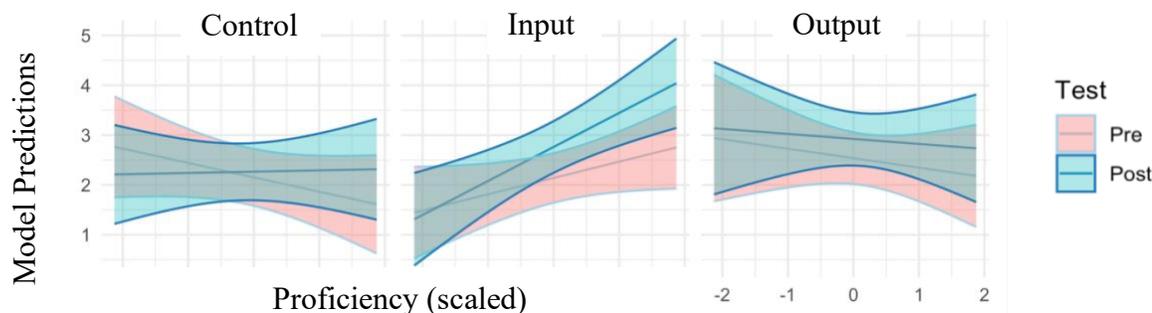


Figure 3: Indefinite FCT – Predicted Probability of Accuracy by Intervention, Proficiency, and Test



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The role of lexical processing for the full conversion of nouns into verbs by German learners of English

Learners of a foreign language can rely on their L1 to aid in acquiring L2. Within the lexicon, L1 cross-linguistic influence has been observed, e.g., in recognizing cognates (e.g., *bake* /beik/ vs. *backen* /bakŋ/), which share form-meaning overlap across languages and are processed faster than noncognates (Brenders et al., 2011). Within the grammar, Ecke (2015) proposed initial item-specific use of the L1 lemma for L2 words learners have encountered, resulting from attaching the L2 word form to its L1 translation equivalent, reminiscent of transfer. Thus, German learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) should also apply L1 item-specific word formation to the L2, including the conversion of nouns into verbs, provided the German translation equivalent can be converted as well. However, despite transferred word formation processes as part of the grammar being present in EFL interlanguages, divergences from the target language may still occur, which could be ascribed to processing factors that lie outside grammar. One such factor is lexical retrieval. Hopp (2018) introduced the Lexical Bottleneck Hypothesis (LBH), suggesting that lexical processing precedes grammatical processing and feeds into it. Thus, if lexical retrieval is costly, speakers produce fewer grammatical structures due to a lack of time and resources.

The present study examines whether early-stage German learners of English transfer noun-to-verb conversion from German to English, and whether transfer effects are amplified with cognate words compared to noncognates. Assuming item-specific transfer of L1 lemmas, we predict that early-stage German EFL learners convert nouns into verbs if the German translation equivalent allows for conversion. We further predict that transfer effects are amplified with cognates, which we explain by the effects of accelerated lexical retrieval of cognates compared to noncognates for grammatical processing LBH; Hopp, 2018).

To explore whether learners apply noun-to-verb conversion in their L2 and whether this is enhanced by cognates, we tested 54 German-speaking primary school students after ca. 1.5 years of English instruction. Noun-to-verb conversion was elicited through a sentence completion task (Figure 1). Participants listened to short stories about a family while viewing pictures depicting objects and actions (Figure 1). The task comprised 20 cognate and noncognate nouns ($n = 10$ each), with half of their translation equivalents in German allowing for the noun-to-verb-conversion, while the other half did not (Table 1 for examples). Additionally, the task contained distractors that required the use of a verb other than the result of conversion to provide a semantically valid response (see Table 1). The participants were asked to complete the stories (Figure 1 for details).

A generalized linear mixed effect model showed a significant effect of German convertibility ($\beta = 2.37$, $SE = 0.85$, $z = 2.79$, $p < 0.005$), but no significant effect of cognate word status, despite a visual tendency of cognates to positively affect conversion with nouns convertible in German compared to noncognates (Figure 2). In sum, the results are in line with the predictions by Ecke (2015), as item-specific transfer regarding word formation was found. Since only visual differences between cognates and noncognates could be found, processing effects predicted by the LBH (Hopp, 2018) are limited, suggesting that learners did not need support from lexical processing in the grammar to apply their L1 conversion knowledge to the L2.

Table 1. Overview of the conditions in the conversion sentence completion task and example nouns and verbs including their German translations for each condition

Word status	Convertible to verb in English	Convertible to verb in German	# sentences	Example
Cognate target	Yes	Yes	5	dream/Traum – to dream/träumen
		No	5	mill/Mühle – to mill/mahlen
Noncognate target	Yes	Yes	5	fight/Kampf – to fight/kämpfen
		No	5	bottle/Flasche – to bottle/abfüllen
Distractors	Yes	Yes	10	fish/Fisch – to read/lesen
		No	10	bus/Bus – to draw/malen

P1

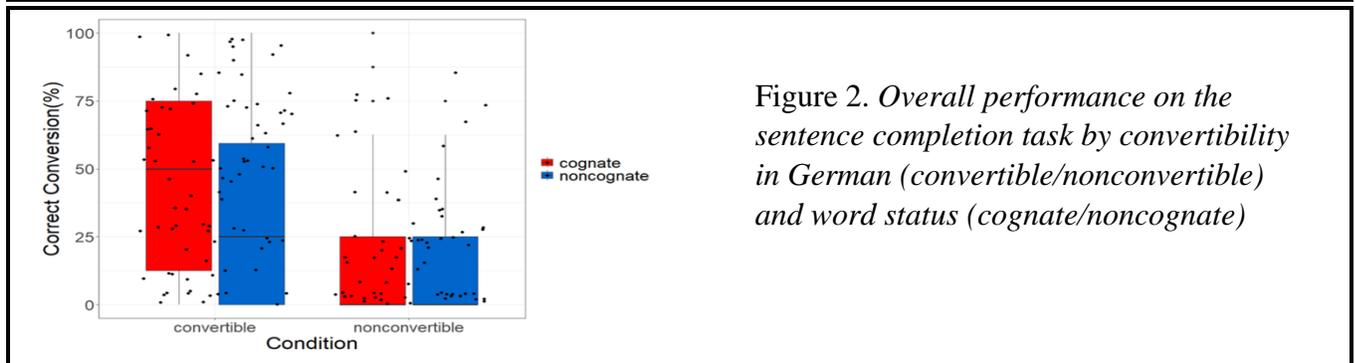


P2



“This is a swing. (S1) Look, the boy is (S2) *swinging*.”

Figure 1. Example of a short story presented to the participants. Example of a noncognate, German convertible item. Pictures (P) were shown separately (P1 preceding P2). The participants listened to the sentences (S1) and (S2) and were asked to add the part in italics.



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Can prosodic disambiguation be acquired in L2 Korean? Preliminary evidence from L1-Chinese and L1-English speakers

Research on prosodic disambiguation in L2 is relatively limited to date, with mixed findings. Some studies have found evidence of successful acquisition of prosodic disambiguation (O'Brien et al., 2014), but others have not (Ananth & Kamiya, 2015). Moreover, there has been little systematic investigation of L1 influence. We report on an experimental investigation of (i) whether L2 learners of Korean can use prosody to differentiate among distinct meanings of ambiguous sentences; and (ii) what role L1 transfer of prosody and/or morphosyntax plays in development of prosodic disambiguation.

Our study focuses on Korean *wh*-quantifiers, which have both *wh*-interrogative and existential interpretations, giving rise to three-way ambiguity as in (1). However, each interpretation has distinct prosody. In *wh*-questions, the *wh*-word receives a high pitch accent, followed by a sentence-final falling prosodic contour (Jun and Oh 1996; Yun 2019); polar questions tend to have a rising prosodic contour at the end of the sentence (Lee 1997); and declaratives have neither high pitch accent on the *wh*-word nor a rising contour at the end of the sentence (Yun 2019). Chinese and English are distinct from each other and from Korean in terms of the prosody and morphosyntax of comparable sentences. Chinese *wh*-quantifiers also yield potentially ambiguous questions (though not declaratives) (2), while English has distinct forms for *wh*-interrogatives and existentials (e.g., *what/anything*), but English question prosody is arguably more similar to Korean than Chinese is (e.g., Hu, 2002; Oh, 2005; Wells, 2006). If influence from similar L1 morphosyntax plays a bigger role in Korean *wh*-quantifier interpretation than similar L1 prosody, then disambiguation may be easier to acquire for L1-Chinese speakers than L1-English speakers, but if similar L1 prosody is more determinative, then L1-English speakers may be advantaged.

We investigate this using an auditory judgement task. Sentences such as (1) were recorded in three prosodic variations corresponding to the three interpretations. These recordings are randomly presented within a web-based experiment. Each trial includes an audio-recorded sentence, and three on-screen written response options, indicating the three potential interpretations (in random order) (see (3)). Participants select the option they feel makes sense as a response to what they have heard. Results from participants to date (29 L1 Korean, 28 L1-Chinese, 26 L1-English) are presented in Table 1 and Figure 1. The results show that all three groups had the highest target response proportions for *wh*-questions and the lowest for polar questions. Target selection is strikingly lower by the two L2 groups than the L1-Korean group for declaratives and polar questions. Figure 3 shows that, in all three groups, when the target response was not selected, the *wh*-question option was usually chosen. Logistic mixed-effects regression modelling on the binary accuracy data, yielded main effects of group and condition. This confirms higher accuracy across conditions in the L1-Korean group than the two L2 groups ($\beta = 1.38$, $p < .001$), and in the L1-Chinese than the L1-English group ($\beta = 0.54$, $p < .05$); and higher accuracy across groups for *wh*-questions than polar + declarative together ($\beta = 4.15$, $p < .001$), and for declaratives than polar-questions ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < .001$). There were no significant condition \times group interactions.

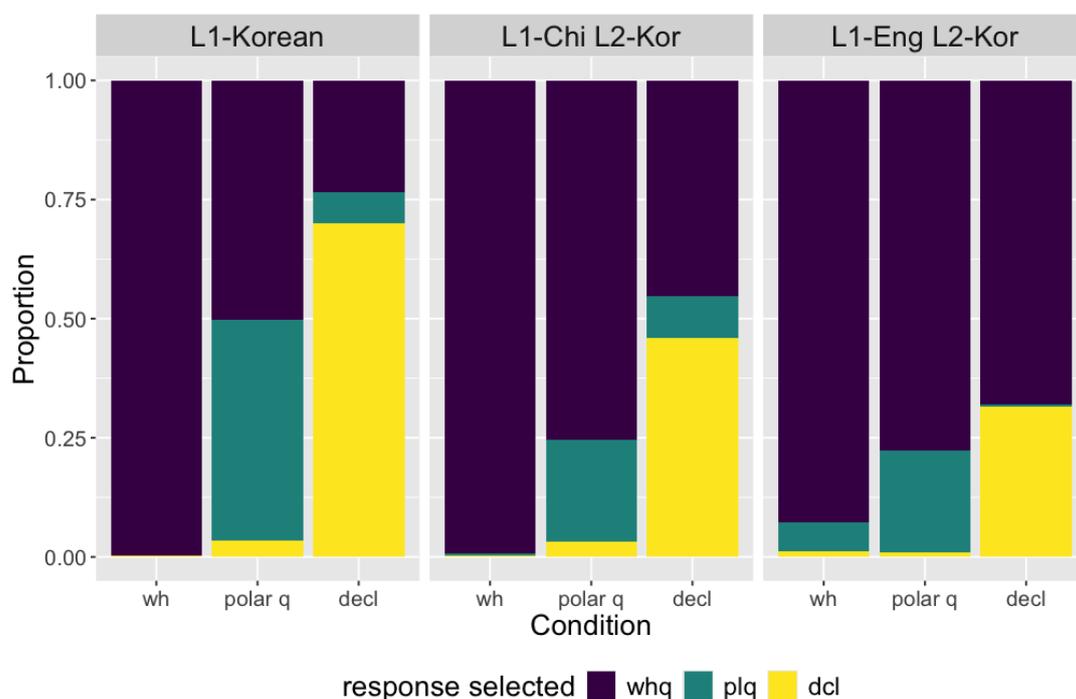
We argue that these findings show L2 sensitivity to prosodic cues to interpretation, albeit at low levels. The findings are consistent with facilitative influence from L1-Chinese morphosyntax. Data collection is ongoing. Further analysis will explore effects of individual differences in Korean immersion experience and proficiency. We discuss the findings in relation to theories of L1 influence and L2 prosody acquisition.

- (1) Myengswu-ka kake-yeyse mwues-ul sasse-yo (Korean)
 Myengsoo-TOP shop-at wh-ACC bought
 a. 'What did Myengsoo buy at the shop?' wh-question interpretation
 b. 'Did Myengsoo buy anything at the shop?' polar-question interpretation
 c. 'Myengsoo bought something at the shop.' declarative interpretation
- (2) Meiyong xihuan shei? (Chinese)
 Meiyong like who/anyone?
 a. 'Who does Meiyong like?' wh-question interpretation
 b. 'Does Meiyong link anyone?' polar-question interpretation
 (typically would include question marker *-ma*)
- (3) Auditory judgement task response options for (1)
 a. sakwa-yo ("Apples") response indicating wh-question interpretation
 b. aniyo ("No") response indicating polar-question interpretation
 c. cengmalyo? ("Really?") response indicating declarative interpretation

Table 1: Mean (SD) proportion selection of the target response by condition and group

Prosodic condition	L1 Korean	L1-Chinese L2-Korean	L1-English L2-Korean
wh_question	0.99 (0.06)	0.99 (0.89)	0.93 (0.26)
polar_question	0.46 (0.50)	0.21 (0.41)	0.21 (0.41)
declarative	0.70 (0.46)	0.44 (0.50)	0.31 (0.46)

Figure 1: Proportion selection of each response option by condition and group (*whq* is correct for wh condition, *plq* is correct for polar question, *dcl* is correct for declarative)



Italian L2 Spanish Learners' Acceptability of Spanish Psychological Passives

Introduction. Passives of Subject-Experiencer Psychological Verbs (SEPV) and Object-Experiencer Psychological Verbs (OEPV) represent an interesting case of auxiliary selection in both Spanish and Italian. In Spanish, participles of OEPV such as *preocupado* 'worried', considered adjectival (Gehrke & Marco, 2014; Luján, 1981), combine only with *estar* (1a), whereas participles of SEPV, typically regarded as verbal, combine only with *ser* (1b). In Italian, OEPV participles are compatible only with *essere* (2a), whereas SEPV participles can occur with both *venire* and *essere* (2b). Regarding aspectual properties, SEPV participles resemble Individual-Level adjectives, while OEPV participles resemble Stage-Level adjectives (Fábregas & Marín, 2015). This alternation may be relevant in mastery of Spanish psych-verbs. Research on the L2 acquisition of psych-verbs provides an insightful tool for testing theoretical descriptions of these elements (Chen, 2024). For instance, Gonzales (2022) showed that English-speaking learners' sensitivity to active Spanish OEPV decreases as semantic complexity increases. To our knowledge, no prior experimental studies have investigated how Italian L2 learners of Spanish process psychological passives. Exploring this language pairing could offer an insight into i) the syntactic description of psych-verbs and ii) potential cross-linguistic effects arising from differences in auxiliary distribution between Italian and Spanish. Based on the patterns observed in (1)-(2), we hypothesize that Italian learners of Spanish will face greater difficulty acquiring SEPV passives than OEPV passives.

Participants. Forty Italian adults with Spanish as an L2 (age range: 20-45 years, average: 24,4 years) participated in the study. A group of twelve Spanish-speaking adults (age range: 20-30 years) was also included in the study.

Materials. The task included 32 experimental sentences in Spanish (16 SEPV passives and 16 OEPV passives) and 16 active items. For each sentence, participants were asked to express a judgment of linguistic acceptability using a Likert scale from 1 (completely unacceptable) to 5 (completely acceptable). Responses were collected through an online questionnaire.

Results. Italian L2 Spanish learners successfully recognized *estar* with OEPV as grammatical (Mean=4,35; SD=0,68). However, they were not as sensitive to accept the correct derivation of SEPV with auxiliary *ser* (Mean=3,59; SD=1,04). The incorrect acceptance of SEPV with *estar* (Mean=2,99; SD=1,16) was, on average, higher than OEPV with *ser* (Mean=2,58; SD=1,06). When it came to rejecting the ungrammatical combinations of auxiliaries and passivized psych-verbs, L2 learners rejected with less confidence compared to the control group. Indeed, native speakers judged ungrammatical both SEPV with *estar* (Mean=1,69; SD=0,65) and OEPV with *ser* (Mean=1,98; SD=0,91). Spanish speakers positively valued OEPV with *estar* (Mean=4,55; SD=0,53), as expected. Nonetheless, the control group's acceptance rate for SEPV with *ser* might result lower than forecasted (Mean=3,99; SD=0,83).

Discussion. The present findings support the hypothesis that Italian learners of L2 Spanish experience greater difficulty with SEPV passives than with OEPV passives. Learners demonstrated more accuracy with OEPV, suggesting a full grasp of the stage-level interpretation of these participles. Performance with SEPV participles was less consistent, proving the challenge in mastering individual-level interpretation through auxiliary *ser*. From an acquisitional standpoint, this asymmetry can be justified by the fact that L2 learners are facilitated in mapping the Spanish OEPV pattern into their Italian system, since both languages allow only one auxiliary. On the other hand, Italian SEPV permits the alternation of two auxiliaries. The Spanish restriction potentially creates a one-to-many mapping that complicates acquisition for Italian learners. Ultimately, although native speakers' judgements confirm the expected contrast in auxiliary distribution, their slightly-lower than expected acceptance of *ser* with SEPV hint at the idea that these constructions may be less prototypical or subjected to aspectual coercion even in baseline grammar.

- (1) a. Juan está/*es preocupado. ‘Juan is worried.’
 b. Juan es/*está admirado. ‘Juan is admired.’
 (2) a. Gianni è/*viene preoccupato. ‘Gianni is worried.’
 b. Gianni viene/è ammirato. ‘Gianni is admired.’

SEPV	SER	ESTAR*
	Average (St.Dev.)	Average (St.Dev.)
Admirar	3,63 (1,00)	2,93 (1,19)
Apreciar	3,75 (1,08)	3,30 (1,14)
Detestar	3,20 (1,04)	2,80 (1,09)
Envidiar	3,40 (1,19)	3,10 (1,24)
Odiar	3,83 (0,96)	2,95 (1,15)
Querer	3,80 (0,91)	2,98 (1,25)
Respetar	3,63 (1,05)	3,05 (1,11)
Temer	3,48 (1,11)	2,80 (1,11)

Table 1. Average acceptability for SEPV in Italian L2 learners of Spanish.

OEPV	SER*	ESTAR
	Average (St.Dev.)	Average (St.Dev.)
Afligir	2,35 (0,95)	4,15 (0,77)
Apenar	2,38 (0,90)	3,90 (0,71)
Deprimir	2,65 (1,17)	4,60 (0,50)
Desesperar	2,95 (1,24)	4,48 (0,64)
Indignar	2,38 (0,95)	4,45 (0,64)
Fascinar	2,53 (0,96)	4,20 (0,85)
Obsesionar	2,95 (1,22)	4,40 (0,74)
Preocupar	2,45 (1,08)	4,60 (0,59)

Table 2. Average acceptability for OEPV in Italian L2 learners of Spanish.

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Feature Reassembly in the Acquisition of the Spanish Copular System by Portuguese L2 Learners

The acquisition of *ser* and *estar* remains a persistent challenge for learners of Spanish as a second language. However, most research has focused on English-speaking learners in classroom settings (see Geeslin, 2014; Perpiñán & Marín, 2024, for comprehensive reviews). The few studies examining learners with other native languages—such as German, French, or Portuguese—have reached similar conclusions: the selection rates of *estar* do not significantly vary based on learners' L1 (Bruhn de Garavito, 2009; Geeslin & Guijarro-Fuentes, 2005, 2006). However, the study on Portuguese learners was limited to a small sample of 11 advanced learners and assessed only one context: [copula + adjective]. Building on this research, the present study investigates the acquisition of the Spanish copulas by beginning and intermediate Portuguese learners in two categorical contexts of copula usage: (1) *ser* and *estar* with Individual-Level (IL, 1a) and Stage-Level (SL, 1b) adjectives, and (2) copula selection in locative constructions with non-eventive (2a) eventive subjects (2b). Non-eventive subjects further divide between mobile (2a) and non-mobile entities (2a').

The acquisition of the Spanish copulas in locative contexts has been identified as one of the most challenging stages for learners, particularly when eventive subjects are involved (2b, Perpiñán et al., 2020). This difficulty persists even among learners whose native language exhibits similar copula distribution in the location of events, such as Italian (Perpiñán & Marín, 2021). Given the structural similarity in the copula distribution systems of Portuguese and Spanish, except for the location of non-eventive, non-mobile objects (2a), we question whether Portuguese learners would encounter comparable challenges as other Spanish learners. Specifically, we aim to determine whether the developmental stages proposed for English-speaking and Italian-speaking learners (Perpiñán et al., 2020; Perpiñán & Marín, 2021), in which the location of events was the last stage to acquire, would also hold for Portuguese learners.

A total of 180 Portuguese learners of Spanish (A2 – B1 level) and 40 native Spanish speakers completed an Acceptability Judgement Task (AJT) and a Written Production Task (WPT), together with a short Spanish Proficiency Test. The AJT included contexts with Adjectives (IL and SL predicates), with *ser* and *estar* and Locatives (eventive and non-eventive mobile and non-mobile subjects), with *ser* and *estar*, so sentences were counterbalanced for grammaticality ($k = 4$ per condition, $2*2*3*4 = 48$ sentences in a total of 64-sentence AJT). The WPT included contexts with Adjectives (IL and SL), and Locatives (Eventive and Non-Eventive Mobile and non-Mobile), in which participants had to provide the appropriate verbal form or *ser* or *estar* (5 tokens per condition, 25 sentences in total).

The results revealed a clear distinction between the copulas in the Adjective condition, with *ser* being accepted in IL contexts and *estar* in SL contexts (ratings close to 100), while their ungrammatical counterparts were consistently rejected (ratings near 0). Significant differences were observed across all contrasts, except between the two grammatical conditions (Fig. 1, Left). A similar pattern emerged for Locative contexts, though higher acceptance rates were noted in the ungrammatical *Object* + *estar* condition (Fig. 1, Right). Further analysis showed that when *Mobility*—a relevant aspectual factor in Portuguese—is taken into account, it significantly influences the interlanguage grammar of Portuguese learners (Fig. 2). Comparable findings were obtained in the WPT. Overall, Portuguese learners did not exhibit specific difficulties with the location of events, unlike other L2 learners, but struggled with the location of non-mobile objects (e.g., "library"), accepting them interchangeably with *ser* and *estar*. We interpret these results as strong L1 transfer effects, which both facilitate and delay aspects of the acquisition process. In particular, Portuguese L2 learners are not able to unlearn the IL/SL distinction in locations in Spanish, whereas this semantic feature only applies in attributive contexts in Spanish. That is, the restructuring of semantic features that only partially overlap between Spanish and Portuguese presents difficulties in the acquisition process.

Examples:

Spanish

- (1) a. María **es** inteligente
b. María **está** descalza

Portuguese

- A Maria **é** inteligente.
A Maria **está** descalça.

English

- Maria is intelligent
Maria is barefoot

- (2) a. El libro **está** en la biblioteca. O livro **está** na biblioteca. The book is in the library.
a'. La biblioteca **está** en la calle. A biblioteca **é / fica** na rua. The library is on the street.
b. La reunión **es** en la biblioteca. A reunião **é** na biblioteca. The meeting is in the library.

Fig. 1: Acceptability ratings for Copulas *Ser/Estar* combined with Adjectives (L) and Locatives (R)

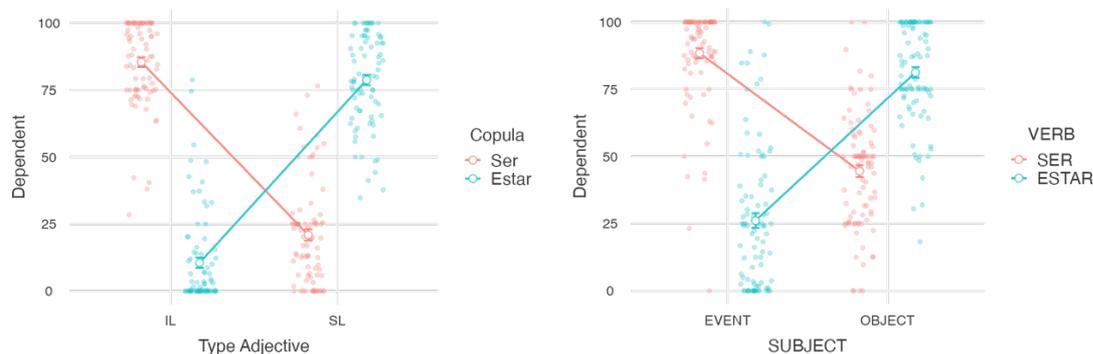
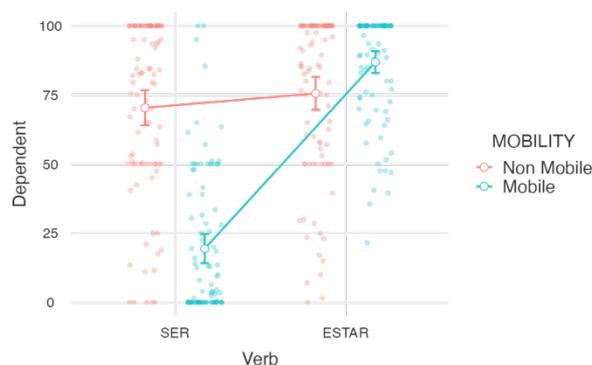


Fig. 2 Acceptability ratings of the Location of Objects split by Mobility



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The Interplay of Syntax, Semantics, and Prosody in Adult L2 Acquisition: A Reassessment of Chinese *Wh*-word Interpretation

L2 learners' ability to acquire structures involving internal (syntax-semantics) and external (semantics-prosody) domains is an ongoing debate among L2 acquisition researchers (White, 2011). Yuan (2010) argued that success of syntax-semantics mappings in L2 acquisition depends on the properties of each licensor-licensee pair and proposed a variable-dependency view, countering domain-wide claims (Dekydtspotter & Sprouse, 2001; Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006). Yuan's claim is based on advanced L1-English L2-Chinese learners' performance on an acceptability judgement task involving *wh*-words across seven syntactic contexts. L2 learners were found to exhibit L1-dependent indeterminacy in the existential (\exists) vs. interrogative use of Chinese *wh*-words (*wh*-Q). Yuan reported that lexical \exists -licensors, such as uncertainty adverbs, are acquirable, whereas functional-morpheme \exists -licensors, such as the yes/no question particle *-ma*, are not.

Crucially, Chinese *wh*-words can be existentially interpreted when c-commanded by \exists -licensors that make the truth-value of a structure non-fixed (Li, 1992). This existential interpretation can make a sentence ambiguous between a statement or a *wh*-question. Studies have shown that *wh*-words carry greater prosodic prominence in interrogative than in existential interpretations, which shows interactions between sentence types and sentential prosodic organization (Hsu & Xu, 2019; Wu & Yun, 2024). This prosodic effect on interpretation was not considered in Yuan's study, complicating the interpretation of its results. The present study revisits Yuan's interface variable-dependency claim, focusing on how intermediate English-speaking learners of Chinese interpret *wh*-words as existential polarity items in relation to licensors as well as prosodic stress (PS). Our experiment followed a 2x2 design, manipulating licensor presence/absence and stress placement on *wh*-element vs. verb (Table 1) across a range of 6 licensing structures. Here, we highlight two representative licensors echoing the total patterns: the question particle *-ma* and uncertainty adverbs, each of which belongs to two sets of predictions by Yuan. The *-ma* particle changes a declarative into a yes/no question. Therefore, in the task including *-ma*, the participants listened to questions and answered them by quickly identifying the most natural type of response to the question: a noun phrase vs. a "yes" or "no" answer, as a yes or no answer requires an existential interpretation of the *wh*-word. In the task including uncertainty adverbs, the participants listened to sentences and judged whether the aural sentences fit a context on the screen. This context either required a *wh*-question or a declarative interpretation. Each of the 22 subjects per group responded to 8 items per condition. A Chinese C-test was administered to evaluate proficiency. The L2 group (mean age = 25.5, 12 females) received on average 31.6 months (min = 19, max = 49) of Chinese instruction. The C-test results showed a group difference in proficiency ($m = 61.2$ for L2; $m = 96.5$ for L1).

Demonstrating performance comparable to the L1 group, the L2 group in both tasks distinguished and accepted Chinese *wh*-words as existential polarity items across licensors and prosodic contexts (Figure 1, 2). A two-way ANOVA (Table 2) unveiled: (i) the presence/absence of the *-ma* particle influenced the selection of noun-phrase vs. yes-no answers indicating interrogative (1a, b) and existential interpretations (1c, 1d,) respectively (see Figure 1); (ii) stress on *wh*-words or on the verb also strongly affected whether *wh*-words were interpreted as interrogative or existential elements across all conditions (see 1c vs 1d for *-ma*, and 2c vs 2d for uncertainty adverbs in Figures 1 and 2). This suggests that intermediate learners, like native speakers, relied on prosodic cues for disambiguation. The result of the MA task also strongly showed that learners' interpretation of Chinese *wh*-words followed the presence of the *-ma* particle, as a legitimate functional-morpheme \exists -licensor contradicting Yuan's claim. These results suggest that internal domain-wide computations enable the learning of \exists -licensor-licensee relations, with external semantics-prosody computations guiding ambiguity resolution. The presentation will show coherent findings across 6 licensors in the learning of specific \exists -licensor-licensee relations, strongly establishing the guidance of domain-wide interface relations challenging Yuan's strong variable-dependency claims.

Table 1. Licensors, examples and conditions

Licensor	Presence	Stress	Answer	Examples
Sentence final yes/no question particle <i>-ma</i> (MA)	No	<i>wh</i> -word	Noun	1a. Míngxìnpìàn shàng yǒu shénme ne postcard on have 'What is on the postcard?'
	No	verb	Noun	1b. Míngxìnpìàn shàng yǒu shénme ne 'What is on the postcard?'
	Yes	<i>wh</i> -word	y/n	1c. Míngxìnpìàn shàng yǒu shénme ma 'Is there something on the postcard?'
	Yes	verb	y/n	1d. Míngxìnpìàn shàng yǒu shénme ma 'Is there something on the postcard?'
Licensor	Presence	Stress	Context	Examples
Uncertainty adverbs (UA)	No	<i>wh</i> -word	<i>wh</i> -Q	2a. Wèile kǎoshì, Bǐlì tèbié liànxíle shénme for test Billy especially practice what 'For the test, what did Billy especially practice?'
	No	verb	∃	2b. Wèile kǎoshì, Bǐlì tèbié liànxíle shénme 'For the test, Billy especially practiced something.'
	Yes	<i>wh</i> -word	<i>wh</i> -Q	2c. Wèile kǎoshì, tóngxué kěnéng liànxíle shénme 'For the test, what did Billy probably practice?'
	Yes	verb	∃	2d. Wèile kǎoshì, tóngxué kěnéng liànxíle shénme 'For the test, Billy probably practiced something.'

Figure 1. Yes/No answers selected

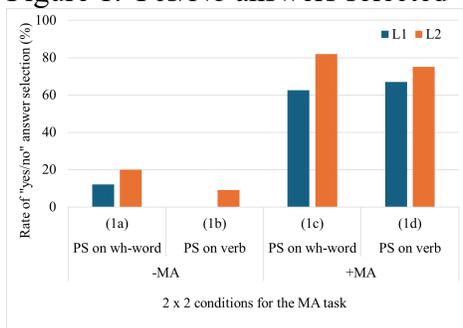


Figure 2. Existential contexts selected

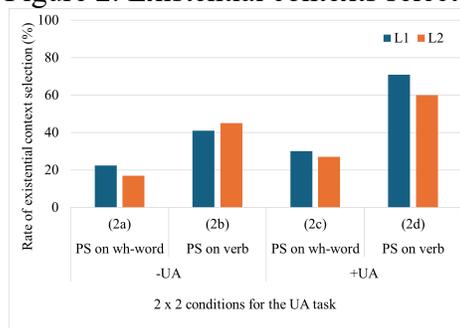


Table 2. Significance of ANOVA from the tasks

	L2 (n = 22)	L1 (n = 22)
Main effect of licensor across stress placement		
Task of MA	$F(1,21) = 20.591, p < .001^*$	$F(1,21) = 9.458, p = .013^*$
Main effect of Prosodic stress across licensor		
Task of UA	$F(1,21) = 8.74, p = .016^*$	$F(1,21) = 5.53, p = .043^*$
Task of MA	$F(1,21) = 36, p < .001^*$	$F(1,21) = 10.787, p = .009^*$

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What Makes Motion Events Hard to Learn?
Verbs, Argument Structure, and Perfectivity in L2 Chinese

Aspect is an interpretable feature, affecting argument structures, selectional restrictions and interface (Borer, 2003; Karpava & Grohmann, 2013; Tsimpli & Papadopoulou, 2008). In English, postverbal PPs are ambiguous between Goal (complement) and Location (adjunct) readings and co-occur with both telic (e.g., fall) and atelic (e.g., run) verbs in perfective contexts (e.g., *jumped on the stage* can mean either Goal ‘onto the stage’ or Location ‘being on the stage’). Chinese uses word order and verb type to distinguish these: preverbal *zai*-PPs indicate Location and select atelic verbs (PP-V: e.g., [*zai-wutaishang*] *pao* ‘run on top of the stage’), while postverbal *zai*-PPs denote Goals and select telic verbs (V-PP: e.g., *luo* [*zai-wutaishang*] ‘fall onto the stage’). The perfective marker *le* appears only with telic VP, namely [verb-Goal PP] in the motion domain. This study examines how English-speaking learners acquire the interactions among word order, verb telicity, and perfectivity in interpreting Chinese spatial PPs.

35 adult English-speaking learners of lower-intermediate to advanced Chinese proficiency judged Chinese sentences varying in PP position (PP-V vs. V-PP), verb telicity (telic vs. atelic), and perfective marking (with/without *le*) using an Acceptability Judgement Task and a Picture - Sentence Matching Task.

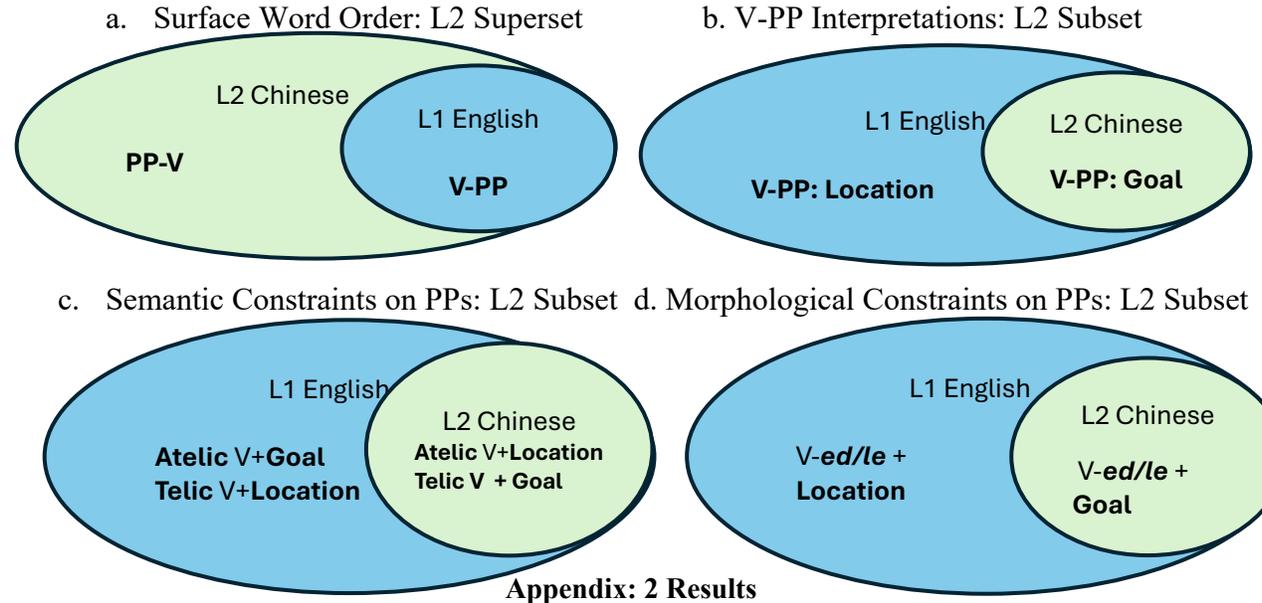
Results show that for **PP-V**, a novel form for English speakers (see Appendix 1a), early-stage learners misinterpreted it as Goal, but from intermediate proficiency onwards correctly assigned Location reading and preferred atelic verbs over telic verbs, suggesting successful restructuring of adjunct PPs and acquisition of their aspectual restrictions. For **V-PP**, although the surface structure is share with English, its function and usage are more restricted in L2 (Goal only, see Appendix 1b; co-occurs with telic verbs, Appendix 1c). Learners initially accept only location readings and later accept both Location and Goal interpretations from intermediate proficiency and continue to equally allow both verb types with high ratings, even at advanced proficiency. This reflects persistent difficulty constraining Goal complements to telic verbs and strong influence from English. See Figure 1 and 2 for acceptance and interpretation results in detail.

With respect to **perfective *le*** (see Appendix 1d), learners overaccepted *le*-marked verbs in locative contexts with preverbal PP and remained uncertain with postverbal Goal PPs, failing to link *le* to VP-level telicity. This pattern, most salient in advanced learners, highlights persistent difficulty in mastering the perfective morpheme and their interaction with telicity at the VP level, a feature and the corresponding aspectual constraint absent in L1 English.

The findings support the Interpretability Hypothesis (Tsimpli, 2003) and the UG and subset Principle Delinked Hypothesis (White, 1989). Though early-stage learners demonstrate patterns unlike either L1 or L2, they gradually approach native-like performance in learning word orders (superset: PP-V and V-PP), especially for the novel PP-V structure of location adjunct through positive evidence. It indicates access to UG for the interpretable feature of telicity, which is associated with semantics of VP, and successful acquisition at the syntax-semantics interface. However, adult learners struggle to fully restructure the subset V-PP complement and to acquire telicity-related syntactic and morphological constraints due to limited negative evidence, especially in the use of perfective morphology, leading to persistently L1 transfer.

Appendix 1

Superset and Subset Relations of English and Chinese Motion Expressions



Appendix: 2 Results

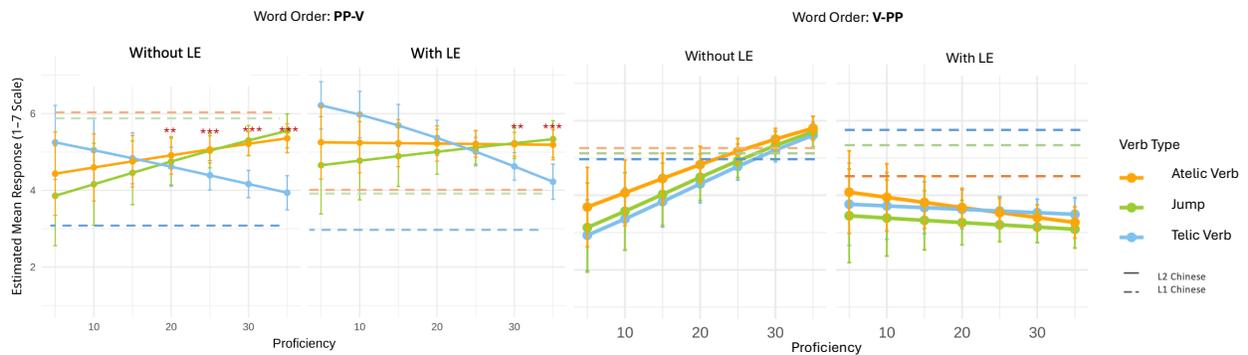


Figure 1. AJT Results for syntactic structures of Chinese Motion expressions: Interaction among verb type, word order, and aspectual marking (le) in L2 speakers. Proficiency is measured on a 40-point scale, with 20 marking intermediate proficiency; interpretation focuses on the empirically attested 15–40 range. Differences between atelic and telic verbs are compared within each condition. Asterisks indicate significant contrasts.

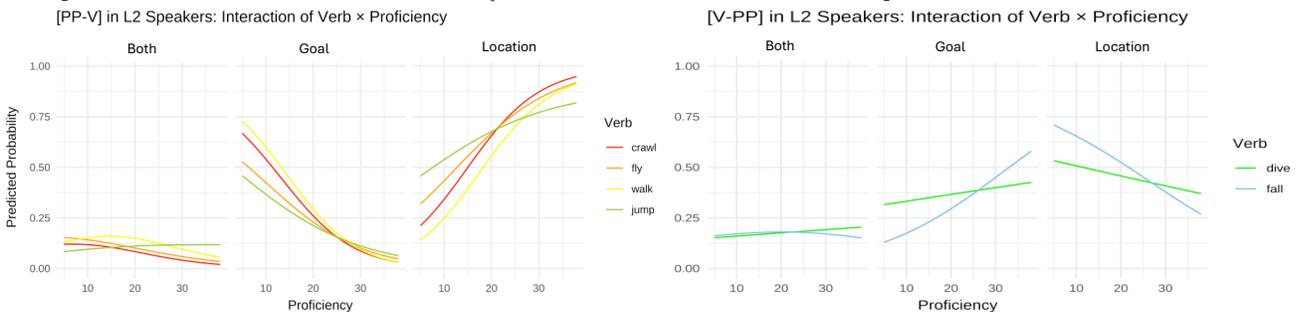


Figure 2. PSMT Results for Interpretations of Chinese Motion expressions. Interaction among verb type and word order in L2 speakers (Partial Results).

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Pronoun Interpretation and Use in Turkish Heritage Speakers

Theoretical work on Turkish proposes that null *pro* is the default form for maintaining reference, whereas overt *o* signals topic shift (Enç, 1986; Erguvanlı-Taylan, 1986; Göksel & Kerslake, 2004). Previous experimental research with heritage speakers and late bilinguals has examined how bilingualism affects pronominal interpretation and use in Turkish (Gürel & Yilmaz, 2011; Knospe, 2018; Koç, 2016), but these studies differ in population and methodology. Crucially, no work has directly compared U.S. and German heritage speakers alongside late bilinguals within a unified design, nor investigated whether historical and current language use may shape pronominal interpretation. This study aims to fill these gaps.

The U.S. and Germany represent distinct Turkish-speaking environments: Turkish Germans typically experience more sustained Turkish use across domains, whereas Turkish Americans often grow up in smaller and more dispersed communities with fewer opportunities for active use (Kaya, 2013). These contrasts allow us to test whether differences in pronoun interpretation reflect contact with English/German, heritage-specific trajectories, or interactions between historical and current active use.

Building on research showing that linguistic experience (particularly active use) modulates real-time processing (DeLuca et al., 2019; Martohardjono et al., 2023; Pliatsikas et al., 2020), the study addresses four questions: (i) Do Turkish Americans and Turkish Germans differ in historical and current active use? (ii) Do they differ in preferences for *pro*, *o*, and *kendisi* in topic-maintenance contexts? (iii) Do they systematically treat overt pronouns as topic-shift cues? (iv) Does active use predict interpretation patterns?

Data collection is currently in progress. The participant group consists of heritage speakers of Turkish residing in Germany and the United States. Turkish late bilinguals living in both countries are being tested as a comparison group to help distinguish contact-induced effects from heritage-specific restructuring. The following instruments are included in the study: a language history including active use questionnaire; an interpretation task targeting syntactically ambiguous structures; an acceptability judgment task and a C-test for proficiency. All tasks are presented in an auditory format to minimize potential confounding factors from literacy variation among heritage speakers. We use mixed-effects regression models to determine whether historical and current Turkish use independently predict variation in interpretation patterns and reaction times.

I predict that Turkish Germans will report higher historical and current active use than Turkish Americans, reflecting the sociolinguistic structure of their communities. In the acceptability-judgment task, I expect Turkish Germans and late bilinguals in both countries to show stronger preferences for *pro* in topic-maintenance contexts, whereas U.S. heritage speakers will show weaker or less consistent *pro* preferences, extending patterns previously observed in production. In the interpretation task, I predict that speakers with higher current active use (regardless of country) will more reliably distinguish between null (*pro*) and overt pronouns (*o*) as cues to topic maintenance vs. topic shift. For *kendisi*, two competing hypotheses arise: it may pattern with *o* as an overt shift marker, or display a distinct logophoric profile. Finally, if pronoun interpretation is modulated by active use, speakers with higher use should show faster and more consistent referent choices in the interpretation task, independent of proficiency as measured by the C-test.

Sample Stimuli

Interpretation Task

Ali ve Ayşe maçı televizyondan izliyorlardı.

Ali and Ayşe match-ACC television-ABL watch-PROG-3PL-PAST

Ali and Ayşe were watching a match on TV.

Ali ısrarla onun canlı maç izlemesi gerektiğini söyledi.

Ali insistently s/he-GEN live match watch-INF-POSS necessary-NOM-ACC say-PAST

Ali insistently said he had to go watch a live game.

Kimin canlı maç izlemesi gerektiği?

who-GEN live match watch-INF-POSS necessary-PAST

Q: Who had to go watch a live game?

Preference Task

Ayşe alarmını duymadı. O işe geç kaldı.

Ayşe alarm-POSS-ACC hear-NEG-PAST s/he work-DAT late remain-PAST

Ayşe did not hear her alarm. S/he was late to work.

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Network Dynamics in L1-L2 French *wh*-Dependencies Address the Biolinguistics of SLA

Using neural network dynamics, this study experimentally situates generative second language (L2) acquisition (SLA) within neurolinguistics and biolinguistics. L2 knowledge constitutes a neurofunctional subsystem with its own activation threshold (Paradis, 2004). It emerges when a computational mechanism—as Narrow- vs. Broad-sense Language Faculty (FLN vs. FLB) defining Universal Grammar (UG)—enables target input to recruit circuit modules in parsing (Dekydtspotter & Renaud, 2014). The neurobiology of generative SLA requires the L2-input-based recruitment of neuronal ensembles for new features and of micro-circuits for basic lexico-grammatical elements (Lardiere, 2009) to form novel L2 neurofunctional assemblies (Pulvermüller et al., 2014; Strijkers, 2016). Addressing FLN as UG in L2 processing, Dekydtspotter et al. (2025) reported clause-edge bi-hemispheric temporo-parietal power differences between *wh*-fillers (1-4) for Merge (Murphy, 2024; Uriagereka, 2025) in the gamma-range (>30Hz) as *wh*-fillers were recursively merged in bi-clausal dependencies. These effects align with lateralized hemispheres having complementary functions (Bookheimer, 2002). Indeed, to create tree a^b , Merge(a , b) mathematically requires simultaneous inverse composition and decomposition (Marcolli et al., 2025). Here we show that, in L1 vs. L2 French *wh*-movement, aperiodic network dynamics complementing periodic dynamics address the biolinguistics of SLA: FLN, L1 vs. L2 circuit modules, and SLA in human evolution.

Aperiodic activity—as the $1/f$ component of power spectrum density (PSD) with power diminishing as frequency increases—signals neuronal spiking (offset) and excitatory-inhibitory balance (exponent of $1/f$ slope; Gao et al., 2017, Fig.2a, b). We examine offsets and exponents across .5-40Hz during *wh*-filler-gap dependencies (1-4) in bilingual L1-French ($n=24$; C-test $\mu=48.7/50$) and L2-French speakers ($n=24$; C-test $\mu=45.5/50$). We examine L1-L2 aperiodic component differences across four regions of interest (ROIs; Fig1), considering hierarchical FLN (across temporo-parietal sites; ROIs 2&4) vs. phonology/externalization and prosody/discourse in FLB (including frontal sites; ROIs 1&3) (RQ1). We consider L1-transfer evidenced by neurofunctional circuit overlap in more (1,2) vs. less (3,4) English-like specifications (RQ2).

RQ1: Will between-ROI aperiodic activity differences in long-distance dependencies reflect temporo-parietal FLN sites (vs. broader FLB) in interaction with L1 vs. L2 activity levels?

RQ2: Will L1 transfer be reflected in aperiodic activity differences between more (1,2) and less (3,4) English-like stimuli across ROIs in L2 participants?

We extracted PSD files across continuous 5.2s epochs starting with the complementizer *est-ce que* in 100 items per participant and electrode with the Welch method (5.2s Hamming window, 50% overlap). Running FOOOF (Donoghue et al., 2020) over the PSD files, we extracted aperiodic offsets and exponents across ROIs, L1-L2, and conditions. General linear models (GLMs; fixed factors: ROI, L1-L2, Conditions; random factors: Subject, Electrodes) for offsets revealed main effects of ROI ($p < .001$) and ROI*L1-L2 ($p = .037$) and for exponents revealed main effects of ROI ($p < .001$) and ROI*L1-L2 ($p = .006$). Both groups showed similar distributions of aperiodic activity across ROIs (Table1, Fig4), with less spiking (offset) and regulation (exponent) in the L1 group (RQ1). Although GLMs revealed no interactions between condition and group or ROI (RQ2), descriptive between-group differences in asymmetries for more- (1,2) vs. less-English-like (3,4) traits as reported in Table 2 suggest somewhat less regulation in L1-recruited L2 circuits (Fig3). These patterns align with less-well-tuned L2 circuits, with mild modulation by L1-L2 circuit overlaps (Paradis, 2004). ROI 2-4 vs. 1-3 aperiodic patterns echo bi-hemispheric temporo-parietal periodic activity for recursive Merge requiring composition and decomposition. The parietal asymmetry that started in early archaic humans could thus have supported FLN and L2 capabilities on a timeline allowing for the interbreeding and cultural interactions observed between archaic and modern humans.

More English-like conditions with antecedent-gender specification (le/lui ‘him’):

- (1) *Quelle décision le concernant est-ce que Paul a dit que Lydie avait rejetée sans hésitation ?*
- (2) *Quelle décision à propos de lui est-ce que Paul a dit que Lydie avait rejetée sans hésitation ?*
 ‘Which decision regarding/about him did Paul say that Lydie had rejected without hesitation?’

Less English-like conditions with no specification for antecedent gender (son/sa ‘his/her’):

- (3) *Quelle décision à son sujet est-ce que Paul a dit que Lydie avait rejetée sans hésitation ?*
- (4) *Quelle décision à son sujet est-ce que Lydie a dit que Paul avait rejetée sans hésitation ?*
 ‘Which decision about him/her did Paul/Lydie say that Lydie/Paul had rejected without hesitation?’

Figure 1: Regions of interest (ROIs)

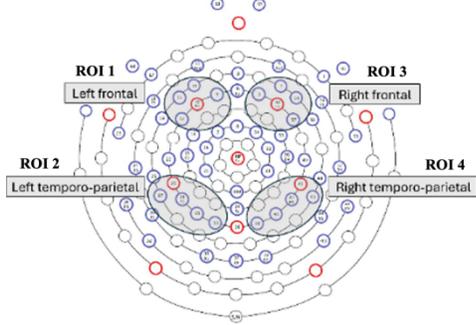


Figure 2a (Hill et al. 2022): Aperiodic component of Power Spectrum Density across frequencies

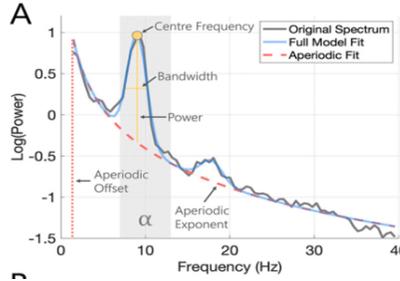


Figure 2b (Gao et al. 2017) The inhibitory/excitatory nature of the aperiodic slope:

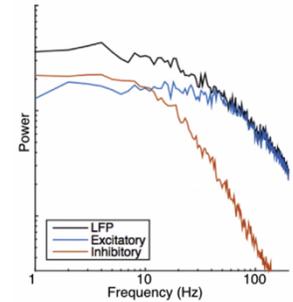


Table 1: Aperiodic components for ROIs across L1 and L2

Parameter	Estimate	Std. Error	df	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI
Offsets						
ROI 1	-.369	.138	51.627	-2.682	.010	[-.645, -.093]
ROI 2	.119	.115	1850.000	1.034	.301	[-.106, .344]
ROI 3	-.375	.138	51.627	-2.725	.009	[-.651, -.099]
ROI 4						
Exponents						
ROI 1	-.362	.080	47.210	-4.535	<.001	[-.522, -.201]
ROI 2	.057	.065	1849.445	.873	.383	[-.071, .185]
ROI 3	-.423	.080	47.210	-5.297	<.001	[-.583, -.262]
ROI 4						

Note. ROI 1 = left frontal; ROI 2 = left temporo-parietal; ROI 3 = right frontal; ROI 4 = right temporo-parietal. *p* values Bonferroni corrected.

Figure 3: L1-L2 exponent means for more vs. less English-like traits

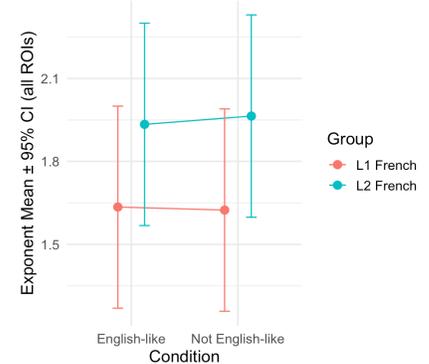


Figure 4: Mean offsets (left) and exponents (right) by ROI and L1-L2 group. * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001.

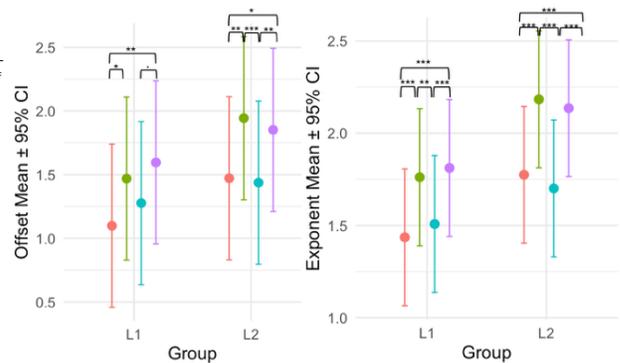
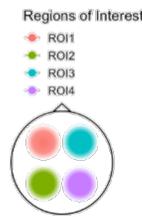


Table 2: Aperiodic component differences for more vs. less English-like traits between L1 and L2

[(1+2)-(3+4)] Difference	L1		L2		L1-L2 Difference			<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i> (one-sided)
	mean	<i>SD</i>	mean	<i>SD</i>	mean	Std. error	95% CI			
Offset	-.0003	.35894	-.0425	.36006	.04226	.02321	[-.00328, .08780]	1.821	957.991	.034
Exponent	.0104	.19923	-.0292	.21334	.03959	.01332	[.01344, .06574]	2.971	953.549	.002

An experimental investigation of agreement with collective nouns: Romanian L1 interference in English L2

We investigate agreement patterns with collective nouns in Romanian L1, British English L1, and Romanian L1-English L2 speakers, focusing on whether Romanian L1 speakers experience transfer effects when using English as a second language. Collective nouns such as *team* and *family* can take both singular and plural verb agreement in British English ([1], e.g., *The team is/are...*), while Romanian consistently requires singular agreement [2], except in rare cases involving lexically lighter collective nouns [3–4]. The study examines how these differing systems influence L2 English speakers and whether Romanian L1 interference affects their agreement patterns. This research is motivated by the lack of experimental studies on Romanian collective noun agreement and the limited exploration of L1 interference in Romanian speakers' L2 English. We address three research questions: (Q1) Do Romanian L1 speakers consistently use singular agreement with collective nouns? (Q2) Do British English L1 speakers show variability in agreement based on semantics or lexical factors? Do they use more plural when focusing on group members and more singular when focusing on the group as a whole [5–7], or are they guided more by lexicalization [6], i.e., specific lexical preferences (Fig. 1)? (Q3) Do Romanian L1-English L2 speakers overuse singular forms due to L1 transfer? These questions are informed by research on second language acquisition [8-9].

Current study To explore these questions, we tested 27 Romanian L1 adult speakers, 25 British English L1 adult speakers, and 25 Romanian L1-English L2 adult speakers with advanced English proficiency (C1–C2). Participants completed a speeded forced-choice task using PCIBex [10], choosing between singular and plural verb forms (*is/are* or *este/sunt*) in dialogue contexts involving 10 collective nouns (e.g., *team*, *staff*, *family* in English, and *echipă*, *personal*, *familie* in Romanian; see Table 1). Each noun appeared in two contexts (Table 2): favoring either singular (whole group) or plural (group members) uses, following semantic theories of variability [5]. The task included 20 test items and 60 fillers.

Results Romanian L1 speakers strongly preferred singular agreement (Fig. 2,6), with only 3% plural responses. This indicates that Romanian speakers consistently use singular verbs with collective nouns, regardless of contextual variation. British English L1 speakers showed variable agreement (Fig. 3,7), using singular in group-level contexts and plural when individual members were emphasized (as shown by a glmer with answer as a DV and Context as a fixed effect). Lexical factors also played a role (*police*, *staff* triggered more plural). Romanian L1-English L2 speakers favored singular (91%, Fig. 4,8), even in plural-favoring contexts, and responded more slowly when selecting plural.

Discussion Our study provides experimental evidence that agreement with collective nouns in British English is variable and context-sensitive, while Romanian displays a consistent preference for singular agreement. Romanian L1-English L2 speakers' preference for singular agreement may be explained through theories of L1 transfer [8], which suggest that L1 structures can affect L2 production, especially in complex agreement patterns. They also highlight the challenges of acquiring native-like agreement patterns in a second language, even at advanced proficiency levels.

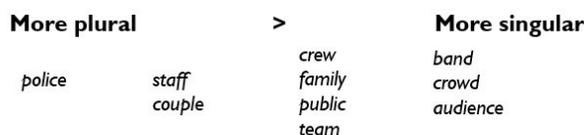


Fig.1: Lexicalization patterns with collectives in English (Levin 2001)

Table 1: List of collective nouns tested in English L1, L2 and Romanian L1

English	<i>police, staff, couple, crew, family, public, team, band, crowd, audience</i>
Romanian	<i>poliție, personal, cuplu, echipaj, familie, public, echipă, trupă, mulțime, auditoriu</i>

Table 2: Context types employed in the study in English L1, L2 and Romanian L1

Singular-favoring contexts, involving questions which contain the word <i>group/grup</i>	
A: Any group looking after the place? B: I quite like this German company. The staff <i>is/are</i> ...	A: Are grijă vreun grup de curățenia locului? B: Îmi place destul de mult această companie germană. Personalul <i>este/sunt</i> ...
Plural-favoring contexts, involving questions which contain the word <i>people/persoană</i> ‘person’?	
A: Any people leaving soon? B: I have given the employees a green light. The staff <i>is/are</i> ...	A: Pleacă vreo persoană în curând? B: Le-am dat angajaților undă verde. Personalul <i>este/sunt</i> ...

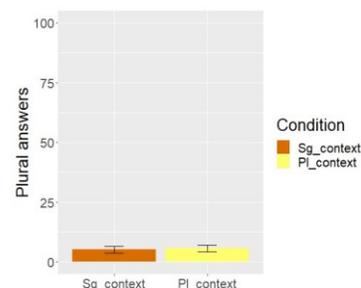
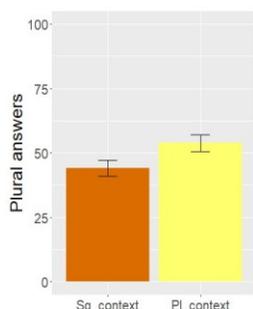
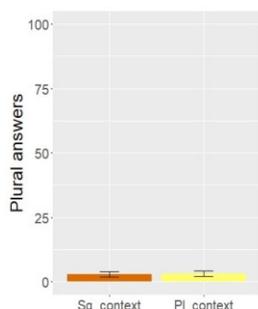


Fig.2 Plural per context in Romanian L1 Fig.3 Plural per context in English L1 Fig.4 Plural per context in English L2

Item	Percentage
<i>band</i>	0%
<i>police</i>	0%
<i>family</i>	1.78%
<i>public</i>	1.78%
<i>audience</i>	3.57%
<i>crew</i>	3.57%
<i>crowd</i>	3.57%
<i>staff</i>	3.57%
<i>couple</i>	5.35%
<i>team</i>	5.35%

Item	Percentage
<i>police</i>	89.7%
<i>staff</i>	84%
<i>couple</i>	72.9%
<i>public</i>	46.8%
<i>family</i>	46%
<i>crew</i>	38%
<i>audience</i>	34%
<i>team</i>	30%
<i>band</i>	24.4%
<i>crowd</i>	24.4%

Item	Percentage
<i>crowd</i>	0%
<i>team</i>	0%
<i>family</i>	2%
<i>public</i>	2.08%
<i>audience</i>	2.08%
<i>police</i>	2.6%
<i>band</i>	4%
<i>couple</i>	4%
<i>staff</i>	6.12%
<i>crew</i>	8.16%

Fig.6 Plural per item in Romanian L1 Fig.7 Plural per item in English L1 Fig.8 Plural per item in English L2

References [1] Corbett 2000 [2] Croitor & Dobrovie-Sorin 2011, [3] Tănase-Dogaru 2008, [4] Tănase-Dogaru 2022, [5] Langacker 1991, [6] Levin 2001, [7] de Vries 2018, [8] Gass & Selinker 2008, [9] Amaral & Roeper 2014 [10] Zehr & Schwarz 2018

Negation and TP acquisition in L2 adult learners of Italian - a corpus analysis

Studies on L2 negation show that “no+lexical verb” constructions and constituent negation errors (“food no good”) form the earliest developmental stage, independently of target language or learners’ L1 (Dimroth, 2010). While this might suggest an advantage for learners of L2s with preverbal negation - where sequences like *no+verb* appear superficially accurate (Bernini, 1996) - compared to learners of L2s with postverbal negation, we argue that preverbal placement alone is not a reliable indicator of target-like acquisition. Instead, following Zanuttini (1997) and Poletto (2008), we treat negation as part of the broader TP-domain and use verb-finiteness, agreement, and placement of clitics and low adverbs as indicators of its acquisition. This approach is based on the assumption that the acquisition of the syntax of negation must be evaluated in relation to the acquisition of other TP-related structures.

Based on two corpus analyses, we investigate the following research questions: **RQ1**) whether the full acquisition of the TP-domain in negative sentences – alongside the correct choice of the lexical form *non* and the avoidance of constituent negation errors - serves as a predictor of learners’ proficiency level; and **RQ2**) whether an effect of proficiency on the acquisition of the TP-domain can be observed, and whether this effect differs between affirmative and negative sentences.

We used two learner corpora of L2-Italian: the LIPS (Vedovelli, 2006), a corpus of oral productions from learners at levels A1 to B2, for which learners’ L1s are not specified; the LOCCLI (Spina, consulted in June 2025), a corpus of written productions from learners at levels A1 to B1, all of whom have Mandarin as their L1. We analysed all negative sentences (Table 1) and an equivalent number of randomly selected affirmative sentences across proficiency levels for accuracy in the TP-domain, using the indicators outlined above. Furthermore, we examined the negative sentences for accuracy in the choice of the negator and for (inaccurate) production of constituent negation (Table 2). To address **RQ1**, we ran a cumulative-link mixed model with the three proficiency levels as dependent variable and the three abovementioned features (lexical form, constituent negation and accurate TP) of negative sentences as predictors. To address **RQ2**, we fitted a glmer-model with accuracy in the production of the TP-domain as dependent variable and the interaction between proficiency and sentence polarity as predictors.

The cumulative-link analyses of both corpora show that accurate production of the TP-domain in negative sentences predicts learners’ proficiency levels. In LIPS, it is the only significant predictor, whereas in LOCCLI, it emerges alongside the correct lexical choice of the negator and a decreasing use of constituent negation. The glmer-analyses indicate that, in both corpora, the TP-domain structure is produced with increasing accuracy in both affirmative and negative sentences across proficiency levels, although accuracy is relatively high overall (Figure 1). In LOCCLI, we observe an additional effect of polarity, with TP-domain structures being produced less accurately in negative sentences.

The analyses indicate that accurate production of the TP-domain drives the development of negation across proficiency levels, suggesting an intriguing implicational pattern. The finding that L1-Mandarin-L2-Italian learners are less accurate in producing the TP-domain structure in negative sentences can be interpreted in light of cross-linguistic differences between Mandarin and Italian. These learners face difficulties in placing clitics in the appropriate position—given that clitics are absent in Mandarin (e.g., *mi non piace* ‘to me not likes’ instead of the target *non mi piace* ‘not to me likes’) - as well as challenges arising from differences in the positioning of low adverbs like never or always.

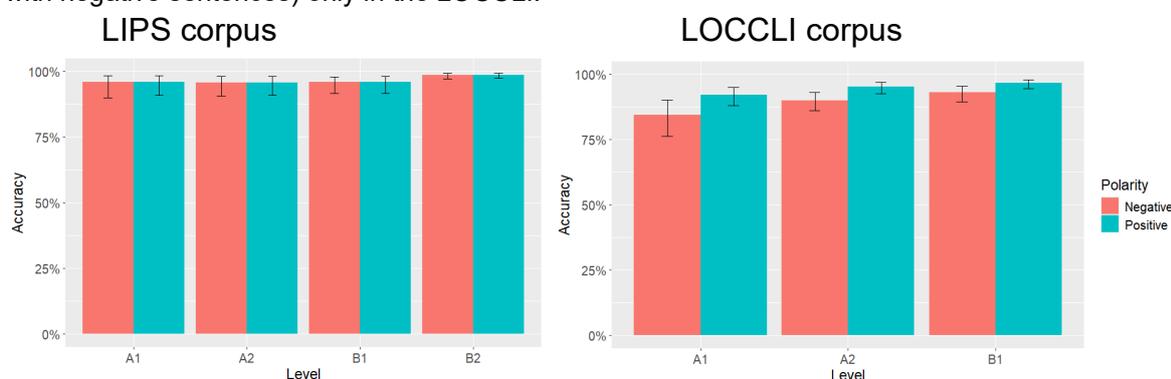
Table 1. Negative sentences per corpus

Level	LOCCLI corpus	LIPS corpus
A1	94	49
A2	314	84
B1	279	138
B2	0	324
TOT	687	595

Table 2. Annotation table

Sentence	lexical item	constituent negation	TP features	TP defective features
<i>Non ci sono molti macchine</i> There are not many cars	1	1	1	-
<i>Se i miei amici no sono occupati</i> If my friends are not busy	0	1	1	-
<i>Perché non mai autobus di domenica?</i> Why not never bus on Sundays?	1	0	1	-
<i>e alcune persone no si compra un biglietto</i> and some people no clit. buy.3sg a ticket	0	1	0	agreement
<i>non sempre mangiato pizze</i> I not always eaten pizzas	1	1	0	tense/aspectual feature
<i>non piace il cinese</i> (they) don't like the chinese	1	1	0	clitic
<i>non ho studiato la pittura straniera mai</i> I have studied foreign painting never	1	1	0	adverb

Fig. 1 - Predicted probability of producing an accurate TP-structure with affirmative and negative sentences across proficiency levels in the LIPS corpus (on the left) and the LOCCLI corpus (on the right). An effect of proficiency is visible in both corpora whereas an effect of polarity (lower probability with negative sentences) only in the LOCCLI.



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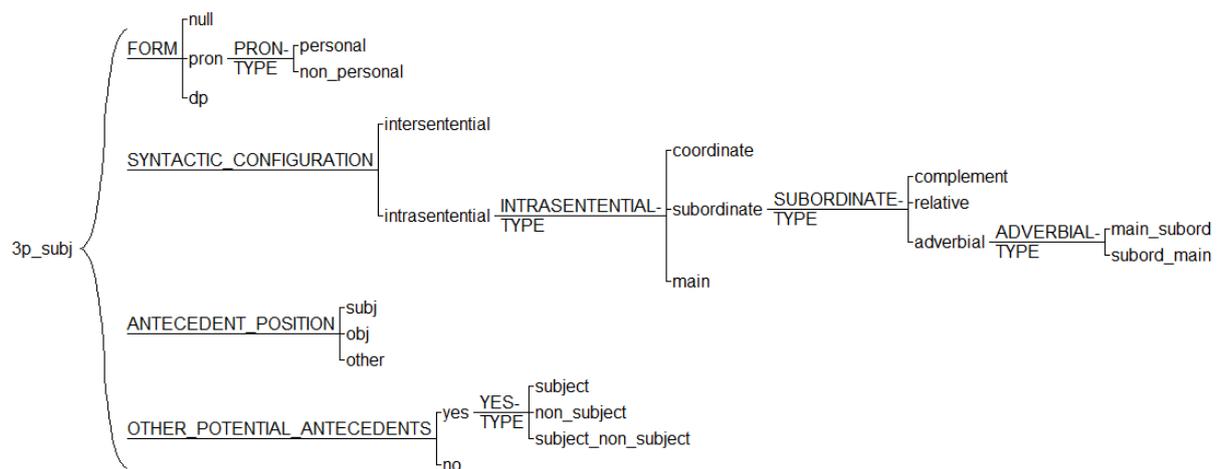
Microvariation in the production of subject pronouns: Insights from L1 European Portuguese – L2 Spanish

Recent studies indicate that there is microvariation in the interpretation of subject pronouns in null subject Romance languages (NSRL) (Contemori & Di Domenico, 2021; Fiéis et al., 2022; Filiaci et al., 2014). Research on Ibero-Romance (Fiéis et al., 2022) indicates that Spanish and European Portuguese (EP) pattern alike only when overt pronouns refer to animate antecedents, favouring the object. However, this preference is weaker in Spanish. With inanimate objects, Spanish displays a preference for the subject, while EP maintains its object bias. The languages also differ with respect to null subjects: EP strongly favours the subject antecedent, whereas Spanish shows no clear preference. In L2 acquisition, microvariation among NSRLs has often been overlooked. A recent study by Teixeira et al. (2025) on the interpretation of pronominal subjects shows that the performance of Spanish-speaking L2 learners of EP remains permanently unstable in areas where the L1 and the L2 differ. Whether similar difficulties arise in production remains unknown. Another open question is whether, as Romano (2019) proposes, transfer occurs mainly from the language with more flexible preferences (e.g., Spanish) to the language with more categorical preferences (e.g., EP) or whether it operates independently of specific L1–L2 properties.

To address these gaps, this study investigates the production of subject pronouns in the CEDEL2 corpus (Lozano, 2022). The participants were 30 L1 speakers of EP, 30 L1 speakers of Spanish, and 90 L1 EP – L2 Spanish learners (30 at the upper intermediate level, 30 at the lower advanced level, and 30 at the upper advanced level). All participants completed the same written production task, summarising a short clip from Chaplin's *The Kid* in at least 400 characters. The corpus was annotated with the UAM Corpus Tool 3.3x (O'Donnell, 2021) using the tagset in Figure 1. Given the marginal percentage of inanimate referents in each subcorpus (0% to 1.24%), only animate referents were considered. The statistical analysis was carried out using Chi-square tests generated by the UAM Corpus Tool.

The results show that L1 speakers of Spanish and EP perform alike regarding overt pronominal subjects: both display an asymmetry between personal pronouns, which preferentially recover subject antecedents (a pattern that differs from the one observed in the comprehension study by Fiéis et al., 2022), and demonstrative pronouns, which tend to recover object antecedents. However, the two languages differ with respect to null subjects. EP speakers display a significantly stronger bias towards assigning null subjects to subject antecedents than Spanish speakers, but only in contexts with one potential antecedent. Crucially, L1 EP–L2 Spanish learners display difficulties only in those domains where microvariation is attested in the production data. Even at the upper-advanced level, these learners resort to null subjects to refer back to subject antecedents significantly more than L1 Spanish speakers, thus maintaining their L1 preference. By contrast, in the use of overt subjects – an area that Sorace (2016) proposes to be persistently difficult in an L2, irrespective of the L1-L2 pairing – learners perform target-like. Overall, the findings suggest that microvariation generates persistent difficulties in the alternation between overt and null subjects, regardless of L1-L2 combinations (contra Romano, 2019), and challenge the idea that the L1 plays a minor role in the L2 production of subject pronouns (e.g., Sorace, 2016).

Figure 1. Tagset



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Revisiting verb movement in L2 English

Verb movement has been extensively investigated in L2 acquisition, particularly in L1 French (a language with verb movement) – L2 English (a language without verb movement) pairings (cf. White, 2024). However, it remains underexplored in language combinations where the L1, although permitting verb movement, does not display the categorical pattern found in French, as is the case with European Portuguese (EP). Adopting Pollock's (1989) split-IP hypothesis, Costa (2004) argues that in EP, unlike in French, the verb raises to T rather than to the highest head within the IP domain. Consequently, whereas French only allows the SVAO order (1), EP permits subject–verb adjacency to be disrupted by adverbs such as *frequentemente* 'often', which may adjoin to either VP or TP, yielding both SVAO and SAVO orders (2). By contrast, with low adverbs like *bem* 'well', which Costa (2004) takes to mark the left edge of VP in EP, only SVAO is grammatical (3). Hence, in L1 EP – L2 English pairings, the differences between the L1 and the L2 are less salient than in L1 French – L2 English, which may lead to long-term difficulties in grammar restructuring.

The present study investigates the acquisition of verb movement in L2 English by L1 speakers of EP. The participants were 50 L1 EP adult learners of L2 English (25 upper intermediate, 25 advanced) and 25 adult native speakers of English, who formed the control group. They were administered two timed acceptability judgement tasks testing two word order phenomena, both related to verb movement: adverb placement and *wh*-questions. The task on adverb placement had a 2x2 design, crossing the variables *adverb type* (low vs. high) and *adverb position* (pre vs. post-verbal). The task on *wh*-questions had a 2x3 design crossing the variables *type of wh-question* (direct vs. indirect) and *word order* (*whVS* vs. *whAuxSV* vs. *whSV*).

The results show that L2 learners do not perform native-like. As expected, the native controls accept the SAVO order and reject SVAO, regardless of adverb type. In addition, they judge only *whAuxSV* to be grammatical in direct questions and *whSV* in indirect questions, consistently rejecting verb movement. In contrast, the L2 learners allow this type of movement. Although they accept the target-like SAVO order, they fail to reject SVAO even at the advanced level. An effect of adverb type emerges: SVAO is judged more acceptable with low adverbs, which are only compatible with this word order in EP, than with high adverbs, which admit both SAVO and SVAO in their L1. In direct *wh*-questions, learners accept the grammatical English order *whAuxSV* and reject *whSV*, which is ungrammatical in both English and EP. However, they do not reject the order *whVS*, which involves verb movement, even at advanced levels of proficiency. A similar pattern arises in indirect *wh*-questions. Although learners appropriately accept *whSV*, they overgeneralise subject–auxiliary inversion to these contexts and accept *whVS*, a structure allowed in their L1.

These results indicate that learners transfer verb movement from their L1 into the L2 and struggle to eliminate this movement (and the resulting word orders) from their interlanguage, even after acquiring the grammatical word orders of English. Unlike what Ayoun (2005) reports for L1 French–L2 English learners, the availability of verb movement in L2 English persists in our data even at an advanced level. This suggests that core syntactic properties may remain a locus of long-term difficulty when the differences between the L1 and the L2 are not salient in the input.

- (1) a. Jean lit souvent ce livre.
John reads often this book
b. *Jean souvent lit ce livre.
John often reads this book
- (2) a. O João lê frequentemente este livro.
John reads often this book
b. O João frequentemente lê este livro.
John often reads this book
- (3) a. O João comeu bem a sopa.
John ate well the soup
b. *O João bem comeu a sopa.
John well ate the soup

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Improving bottom-up listening skills in school-aged English learners:

A linguistically informed intervention study

Second/foreign language (L2) learners may have a distinct accent not only in their spoken production but also in their perception of spoken language (Cutler, 2012), which means they may not perceive L2 speech of in the same way that native speakers do at all levels, including prosody, phonotactic patterns, and individual phonemic distinctions.

We focus on the more granular segmental level, looking at how learners struggle to perceive L2 phonemic contrasts that are absent or different from their L1, as in the well-known case of L1-Japanese learners not distinguishing the English /ɹ/ and /l/ phonemes. Such difficulties can result in pseudohomophony (e.g. “real” - “wheel” becoming homophones for an L1-Japanese learner), which has established effects on L2 processing (Cutler & Otake, 2004). This means learners more often face ambiguity, either at whole-word level or embedded in larger words (e.g. “pen” activating “pencil” but also “panda” in case of /e/-/æ/ confusion) (Cutler, 2005). In addition, the longer ambiguity can cause unnecessary activation at the conceptual level, whereas L1 listeners usually only activate the concept corresponding to the most suitable phonological candidate (Rueschemeyer, Nojack, & Limbach 2008).

The Perceptual Assimilation Model extended for L2 listeners (PAM-L2, Best & Tyler, 2007) predicts that phonemic discrimination difficulties depend on whether and how the two phonemes of an L2 phonemic pair are categorised with respect to the L1 phonological inventory. Notably, the most difficult type of distinction arises from a Single-Category Assimilation, when two L2 phonemes are perceived as equally good or poor fit for one L1 phoneme. This is likely the case for the L2 English /e/-/æ/ phonemic pair assimilating to L1-German /ɛ/, which is acoustically somewhat in-between (Soenning, 2020).

We present the design and the first results from an intervention study employing the High Variability Phonetic Training (HVPT) paradigm (Brekelmans et al., 2024) targeting the L2 English /e/-/æ/ contrast in L1-German learners, along with other, “easier” contrasts, as predicted by PAM-L2 for L1-German. HVPT includes discrimination (ABX, where A and B are, for example “pan” and “pen”, and X is either the same as A or B), identification (AX, where A might be “pan” and X needs to be identified as the same or different), and oddity tasks (where the odd one out must be identified out of three stimuli, e.g. “pan”, “pen”, “pen”). Although HVPT has shown consistent positive effects in adults, it may be more beneficial at earlier stages of language learning before a significant vocabulary is acquired and imprecise perception is “ingrained” (Best & Tyler, 2007). We have, thus, designed the intervention for 5th-grade children (the beginning of secondary school in Germany) and have created varied and gamified versions of the relatively monotonous and repetitive HVPT tasks.

In the study, we focus on the effects on discrimination accuracy, as well as reaction time. We expect that learners will start slowing down more when encountering mismatching stimuli (e.g. picture of “pan” and audio “pen”) after HVPT training, while controlling for known predictors, such as working memory, attention, auditory acuity, musical training (Saito et al., 2024), and L1. We hope the intervention can serve as a basis for personalised training of bottom-up listening skills that could complement the typically more communicative (and, thus, more top-down) classroom teaching (Field, 2004).

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Strengthening the interface between generative SLA research and language teaching: Insights from the UPSKILLS project

In recent years, SLA research has undergone what has been described as a “methodological turn“, characterized by improving methodological awareness and enhancing research quality, particularly with respect to study design, quantitative analysis and result reporting (Byrnes, 2013). Parallel to these developments, sustained efforts have been made to strengthen researcher training through workshops, summer schools and methodological publications (e.g. Plonsky, 2015, 2020). Despite this progress, higher education curricula in linguistics and language studies have not always kept pace with the evolving demands of SLA research or the requirements of the job market for graduates in these areas. This gap is particularly evident in areas requiring theoretically grounded task design, data collection and data-driven interpretation – core competencies for both SLA researchers and language teachers.

This paper presents results from the Erasmus+ project UPSKILLS (UPgrading the SKILLS of Linguistics and Language Students), a three-year partnership between universities in Austria, Croatia, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Serbia and Switzerland, completed in 2023. Drawing on the needs analysis that surveyed higher education language and linguistics curricula and job advertisements, and consulted stakeholders in the language-industry sector, the project identified significant gaps in the research-oriented, data-oriented, technical and organisational skills of students preparing for careers in language-related areas. These gaps span statistical analysis, text processing, corpus linguistics, programming, machine learning and project management – competences increasingly required both in generative SLA research and in the pedagogical applications derived from it.

To address these challenges, the project developed a collection of open-access teaching and learning materials designed for integration into existing BA- and MA-level programmes or for introduction as new curriculum components. Of particular relevance to generative SLA researchers is part of the learning block “Collecting language data from human participants” that contains materials aimed to teach students how to design theoretically-grounded experimental tasks in SLA, targeting learners’ comprehension, production and acceptability judgments (Author, 2023). These materials aim to strengthen students’ understanding of how theoretical assumptions translate into testable predictions, and how task design choices shape statistical analysis and results interpretation in SLA.

The paper will present (i) the pedagogical rationale behind these materials, (ii) examples of materials, and (iii) results from their piloting during the UPSKILLS Summer School in July 2023, in which participants designed and implemented a small-scale generative SLA study on L1 transfer in the acquisition of English articles by Italian- and Serbian-speaking L2 learners. By combining theoretical depth with hands-on methodological training, the UPSKILLS materials offer a model for integrating generative SLA insights into educational practice.

The talk argues that bridging the gap between theoretical SLA and language pedagogy requires explicit attention to the methodological literacy of future teachers and researchers. By equipping students with the skills to design and analyse theoretically informed tasks, UPSKILLS contributes not only to improving SLA research quality but also to strengthening the interface between generative SLA and language-teaching practice.

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This study examines how native (L1) speakers and English dominant L2 learners of Russian use case morphology in real-time sentence comprehension, focusing on the Accusative, Instrumental, and Dative cases. Prior research suggests that while L1 speakers use case predictively, L2 learners rely more on their L1 strategies, such as word order for speakers of languages without over case marking, such as English.

Forty native Russian speakers and ten L2 learners of Russian completed a Sentence Picture Matching task in the visual world paradigm using eye-tracking. Participants viewed two reversible action pictures while listening to sentences that varied by word order (canonical SVO versus non-canonical OVS) and case type (structural Accusative, lexical Dative, lexical Instrumental, inherent Dative). After each sentence, participants clicked on the picture that matched the sentence they heard. Predictive processing was defined as increased fixations toward the target in the prediction window, defined as the interval from Word 2 (the verb) to Word 5 (the last noun) with a 200 ms offset to account for auditory processing latency.

Accuracy was near ceiling for L1 speakers in all conditions (canonical 98 percent; non-canonical: 96 percent). L2 learners performed above chance in canonical SVO sentences (76 percent) but at chance (54 percent) in non-canonical OVS sentences with no differences across case types. To investigate this further, L2 accuracy was analyzed with a generalized linear mixed-effects model. The model confirmed a main effect of word order, with higher accuracy in canonical than non-canonical sentences ($p = 0.096$). Case type and proficiency from a Cloze test did not contribute, and all interactions were non-significant.

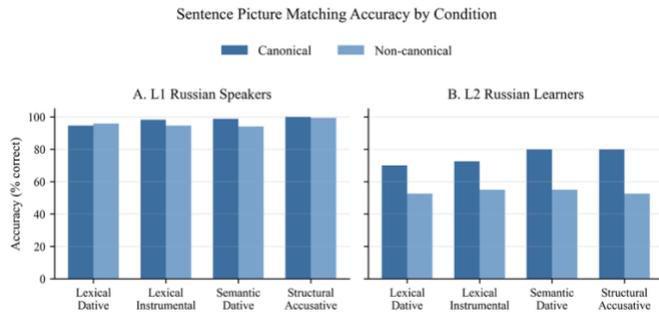
Target preference scores were computed per trial as the average proportion of target fixations minus competitor fixations within the prediction window. Mixed effects models revealed that L1 speakers showed significant target preference in both SVO and OVS sentences for all case types, with structural Accusative showing the strongest preference and lexical Dative showing the weakest, though differences across case were not significant. These findings indicate that L1 speakers use case morphology to guide sentence interpretation, regardless of the word order or the case type.

In contrast, L2 learners showed no systematic use of case morphology during the prediction window. Only inherent Dative yielded a significant target preference in both word orders (canonical: $p = 0.0048$, non-canonical: $p = 0.0039$), and structural Accusative was significant only in the canonical condition ($p=0.021$) when all trials were included in the model. Both lexical Dative and lexical Instrumental did not differ from zero in either word order. Crucially, none of these effects interacted with word order or proficiency, and the inherent Dative and structural Accusative effects disappeared when accuracy was included in the model. Thus, L2 learners did not appear to use case morphology to guide incremental interpretation.

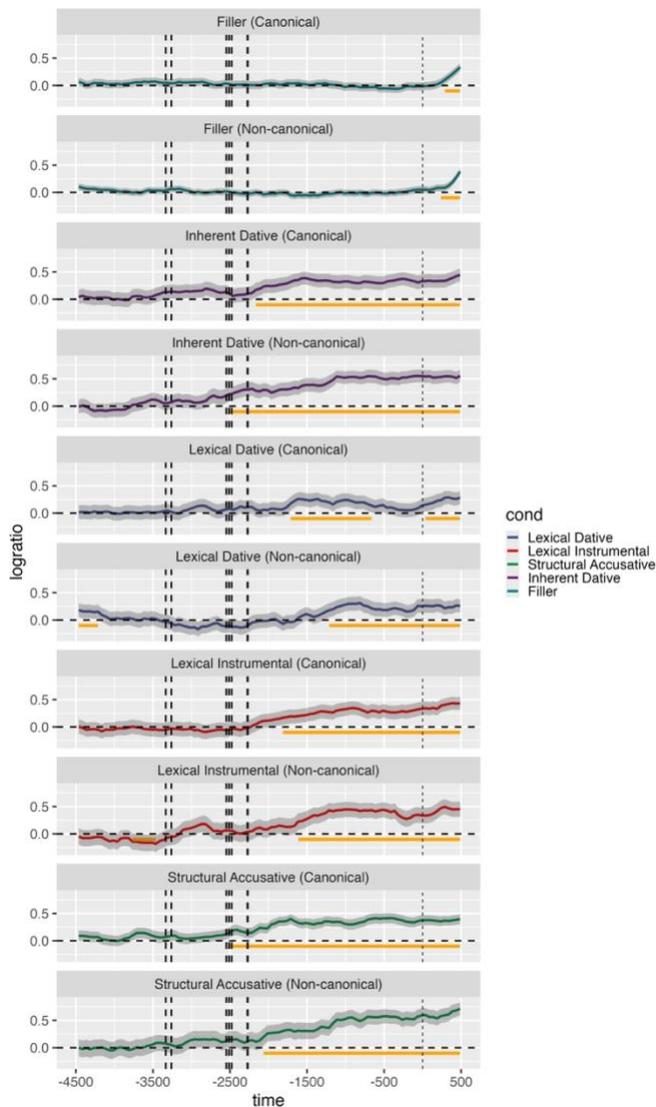
A complementary cluster-based permutation analysis on the data was conducted to identify significant time windows of predictive processing across each case type and word order. For L1 speakers, significant clusters emerged within the predictive window for all conditions, aligning with the mixed-effect model results. The L2 data did not converge.

Taken together, these findings suggest that while L1 speakers use case morphology quickly, reliably, and predictively in Russian, L2 learners rely on other cues, like word order. Data collection is ongoing to increase the L2 sample for stronger statistical power.

L1 and L2 Accuracy by Case Type and Word Order



L1 Cluster Permutation results, which demonstrates significant clusters in yellow. The dotted line on the right represents the onset of the last noun.



Investigating Null Prepositions in Wh-Questions: A Comparison of Prepositional Verbs and Adjectives by Japanese Learners of English

Introduction: The present study investigates preposition omission errors known as *Null prepositions* (Klein 1993), which frequently occur in L2 extraction constructions such as *wh*-questions, relative clauses, and passives (e.g., Hokari 2015; Klein 1993). These errors arise in sentences as *Who did the boy relied* { $\ast\varnothing$ / *on*}, even though learners correctly supply the same prepositions in declaratives such as *The boy relied on the man*.

Previous studies: Although most studies attribute *Null-Prep* to incomplete acquisition of *wh*-movement or related syntactic operations (e.g., Dekydtspotter et al. 1998; Klein 2001), treating the missing preposition as a null-spellout at PF, there is little empirical evidence that head P is actually projected in the syntax in L2 grammars. More recently, Nagashima (2023) reported that in relative clauses, *Null-Prep* occurs more often with prepositional verbs (e.g. ...*the man who the boy relied* { $\ast\varnothing$ / *on*}) than with prepositional adjectives (e.g. ...*the man who the boy was angry* { $\ast\varnothing$ / *at*}), a pattern which has been interpreted as indicating that learners may store two lexical representations of the same verb—a transitive form that can directly assign Case to its DP complement, and an intransitive form—and that the transitive representation may surface in extraction constructions for reasons that remain unclear, particularly when the subcategorization knowledge visible in declaratives does not straightforwardly carry over to extraction constructions. Similar patterns are reported in Katooka (2024). If Nagashima’s analysis is correct, learners’ *Null-Prep* may arise from the absence of a projected P head in the derivation. However, these findings come from relative clauses, where structure-specific factors—such as those stated in Katooka & Hokari (2023)—may interact with predicate type. It is therefore necessary to test whether the same predicate asymmetry holds beyond RC-specific influences and generalizes to other extraction constructions.

The present study: To examine whether the predicate asymmetry reported in relative clauses extends to *wh*-questions, two acceptability-judgment tasks were administered to 48 Japanese learners of English and 21 native speakers of English. In a preliminary screening task, participants judged both prepositional and non-prepositional sentences for each predicate (Table 1–2) on a five-point scale (+*X.No intuition*), and were considered to possess the relevant subcategorization knowledge if they correctly identified grammatical items as acceptable and ungrammatical items as unacceptable as in Table 3. Only participants who met this criterion and supplied the appropriate preposition in more than half of the screening items (22 JLEs and 19 NSEs) were included in the analysis. In the main experiment, participants were asked to judge *wh*-questions containing prepositional verbs and prepositional adjectives without their prepositions (Table 4) on the same five-point scale.

Results: A linear mixed-effects analysis revealed a significant main effect of Group, with JLEs rating all items higher than NSEs ($\beta = 1.34$, $p < .001$). In contrast, there was no main effect of Predicate Type ($\beta \approx 0$, $p = .98$) and no interaction between Group and Predicate Type ($\beta = 0.06$, $p = .86$). Thus, no predicate-specific modulation of *Null-Prep* was observed in *wh*-questions.

Interpretation & Implications: The present study found no difference in preposition omission between the two predicate types when distinguished by whether the predicate can assign Case in *wh*-questions. This discrepancy from previous findings may partly reflect differences in screening rigor. Importantly, however, our results do not imply that predicate type is irrelevant to *Null-Prep*; rather, they highlight the need to reconsider which predicates permit omission and under what conditions. As in earlier work (e.g., Klein 2001; Perpiñán & Cardinaletti 2022), substantial within-speaker variability emerged: the same learners produced both omission and non-omission within the same construction. Such variability is difficult to reconcile with syntactic accounts that posit a single derivation obligatorily yielding *Null-Prep* (e.g., Klein 2001; Dekydtspotter et al. 1996; Botwinik 2011). Instead, the findings suggest a more flexible syntactic architecture—one that allows both P-present and P-absent derivations and locates the source of omission in predicate-level properties. Potential predicate factors include lexical semantic class (e.g., eventive vs. stative in Kageyama, 2001) or transitivity (e.g., Hopper & Thompson 1980). These factors may converge on the unresolved notion of recoverability—whether the semantic contribution of the omitted preposition remains inferable. Although frequently mentioned (e.g., Botwinik, 2011), recoverability has not been theoretically defined or experimentally operationalized. Future work should therefore manipulate predicate-level semantic and argument-structural properties to model recoverability as an independent predictor of *Null-Prep*.

depend on	disagree with	laugh at	listen to
rely on	speak to	talk about	wait for

Table1: Prepositional Verbs Used in the Experiment

anxious about	busy with	crazy about	curious about
famous for	good at	responsible for	sensitive to

Table2: Prepositional Adjectives Used in the Experiment

Type	P	Example	token
V + P	○	Do you always rely on your friend for the exam?	8
V + P	×	*The local government sometimes relies the event coordinator for advice.	8
A + P	○	Were you curious about the video game as a child?	8
A + P	×	*One of my children is curious animals at the zoo.	8

Table 3. Test Sentences Used in the screening task

Note. All 64 sentences (32 fillers and 32 target items) were presented in a randomized order. Although the order was randomized, the screening task was structurally divided into two sections: for each predicate pair, the ungrammatical sentence (with the preposition omitted) was presented first, and all ungrammatical items were shown before their corresponding grammatical counterparts (with the preposition included).

Type	Example	token
V + P	*What did the famous politician talk at the campaign event?	8
A + P	*What was the new employee anxious for a while?	7

Table 4. Test Sentences Used in the Main Experiment

Note. For A+P predicates, good at was excluded based on the native speakers' screening results indicating insufficient subcategorization knowledge. In addition, sixteen filler sentences were included to create a pseudo-randomized presentation order.

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Curriculum design in language revitalization contexts: a case study of M̃ky, a polysynthetic Amazonian isolate language

GASLA 18 Themed Session II: Language Learning and Teaching

In a global context of accelerated language loss, the languages spoken by traditional Indigenous communities worldwide are extremely vulnerable. M̃ky is an isolate language spoken in Brazilian Amazonia by two noncontiguous communities, the Manoki and the M̃ky. While M̃ky is still spoken by most of the 100 members of this community, it is in an advanced stage of obsolescence in the Manoki community, with only 3 elderly speakers of the more conservative Manoki dialect in a population of 450 Manoki (Bardagil 2023, 2025).

This talk discusses an ongoing project to create language-learning materials targeted at L1 speakers of Portuguese, a language which presents a much different typological profile from M̃ky. Still largely underdescribed, M̃ky presents highly synthetic verbal morphosyntax (1) with some exceptional features within Indigenous languages spoken in South America.

Based on some evidence in the field of SLA, it has been proposed that L2 learners cannot acquire morphemes that do not have a corresponding morpheme in their L1 (the Morphological Congruency Hypothesis (MCH), cf. Jiang & al. 2011), even though this has been challenged (Cho 2022; Ionin & al. 2021). In the case of M̃ky, the language presents multiple morphemes that are absent in the grammars of the L1 Portuguese learners in the Manoki community, not only in the evidential domain, with direct/indirect evidentiality, reportative or speculative (2-4), but also verbal agreement with adjuncts, serial verbs, morphological causatives, iteratives, directionals, and morphology indicating the sex of interlocutors (2-4), among others (Montserrat 2010; Bardagil 2023).

The polysynthetic morphosyntax of M̃ky does pose a serious challenge for the young Manoki involved in the process to reclaim their language and cultural heritage. In this talk, the authors discuss the elaboration of a progressive curriculum to introduce Manoki learners to the verbal morphology on the Manoki dialect of M̃ky, with a special focus on the planning and elaboration of communicative-oriented materials with focus on form strategies (Long, 1991) for the acquisition of syncretic evidentiality and subject agreement morphology.

The learning outcomes resulting from this approach to curriculum and language learning materials will be informative on the success of this type of approaches to SLA in revitalization situations with advanced obsolescence and a large typological distance between L1 and L2.

Examples

- (1) *Takawapapjuretjanĩ.*
T-aka-wapa-pju-re-tja-nĩ.
ITER-go.PLAC-wait-OBJ.PL-1PL-IMP-SM
'Let us go wait for them.'
- (2) To-kare-**xuu**-sãnãtã.
leave-PST-2SG.V-REAL.NSM
"You left (I saw it; spoken between different-gender interlocutors)."
- (3) To-kare-**hmjuu**-sãnãtã.
leave-PST-2SG.NV-REAL.NSM
"You left (I didn't see it; spoken between different-gender interlocutors)."
- (4) Mu manã-lera-**aka**-ø-nãtã.
rain to.rain-NEG-RPRT-3SG-REAL.SM
"It didn't rain, it is said (spoken between same-gender interlocutors)."

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Cross-linguistic influence or universal semantics: Which plays the primary role in acquiring temporal–aspectual interactions in initial-stage L2/L3 Chinese grammars?

Tense and aspect are sometimes conflated in languages (cf. Smith, 1997) and the acquisition of temporality/aspect constitutes a major difficulty for L2/Ln learners from different linguistic backgrounds (see Li & Shirai, 2000; Slabakova, 2002, for reviews). In empirical studies on L2/Ln acquisition of temporality and aspect, main focuses are on how specific morphophonological realisations of tense/aspect in previously learnt languages (e.g., Domínguez et al., 2017; Eibensteiner, 2023; Guo, 2022) influence the acquisition of tense–aspect morphology, and whether the acquisition trajectory follows a universal developmental pattern (e.g., Andersen and Shirai’s (1996) Aspect Hypothesis). Smith and Erbaugh (2005) propose a deictic pattern, which argues that bounded (perfective-marked) events are typically interpreted as past, whereas unbounded events are interpreted as present. This pattern is argued to be part of the universal temporal calculation mechanism, which is activated when tense is absent or ambiguous, as in Mandarin Chinese. This empirical study aims to shed light on how previously learnt grammars and the universal deictic pattern influence English-speaking and English-Irish bilingual learners’ temporal/aspectual interpretation in their L2/L3 Chinese at the initial stage.

In Chinese, a language that is rich in aspect marking but has no morphologically realised tense, temporal interpretations are mainly dependent on two devices: aspect markers and temporal adverbials (cf. Lin, 2003). Chinese has a rich viewpoint component with perfectives: the perfective *le* and the experiential *guo* (cf. Li & Thompson, 1989; Smith, 1997). *Guo* is closer to a past-tense operator than *le* is, in terms of the overall temporal reference (Pan & Lee, 2004). Both *le* and *guo* are compatible with past tense adverbials, as illustrated in (1) and (2), but *guo*, unlike *le*, cannot occur in a present-tense sentence due to semantic conflicts (cf. Lin, 2007), as in (3) and (4). English and Irish, however, are two tensed languages. In English, there is no dedicated perfectives morpheme, but perfective meanings are normally expressed either in a past-tense sentence or in a present perfect form (cf. Giorgi & Pianesi, 1997; Smith, 1997), and therefore, perfectives can be expressed in both present and past contexts. Irish, on the other hand, normally resorts to past tense for perfective meanings and lacks morphological instantiation of experiential (Greene, 1979).

This empirical study investigates the acquisition of semantic interactions between the two Chinese perfective markers (*le* and *guo*) and past/present temporal adverbials among L1 English-L2 Chinese and L1 English-L2 Irish (advanced)-L3 Chinese learners. A self-paced reading task and an untimed acceptability judgement task were administered to 105 participants (32 L2 beginners, and 34 L3 beginners and 39 Chinese native speakers). As shown in Figure 1, the Chinese native group correctly judged Type 4 (present-*guo*) as significantly less acceptable than the other three types in the AJT and spent significantly longer RTs ($p < .001$) at the end of the sentence (R6) in Type 4 in Figure 4, indicating their sensitivity to the temporal–aspectual interactions. The L2 and L3 learner groups showed divergent patterns in the offline AJT but behaved similarly in the online processing task. In the AJT (Figure 2), the L2 group accepted all the four types without any significant effect of Type ($\beta = .11, z = .41, p = .68$), reflecting L1 English influence. The L3 group, however, rated past sentences with *le/guo* (Types 1 & 2) significantly more acceptable than their present tense counterparts (Types 3 & 4), which is in line with either the universal deictic pattern or their L2 Irish grammar. The SPR results indicate that both L2 and L3 learners’ online processing is primarily shaped by universal semantic calculation mechanisms and by word frequency, with *le* processed faster than *guo* because *le* is more frequent in use.

(1) Type 1: PAST-LE

Lili zuotian mai le xin shubao.
 R1 R2 R3 R4 R5 R6
 Lili yesterday buy PERF new bag
 “Lily bought a new bag yesterday.”

(2) Type 2: PAST-GUO

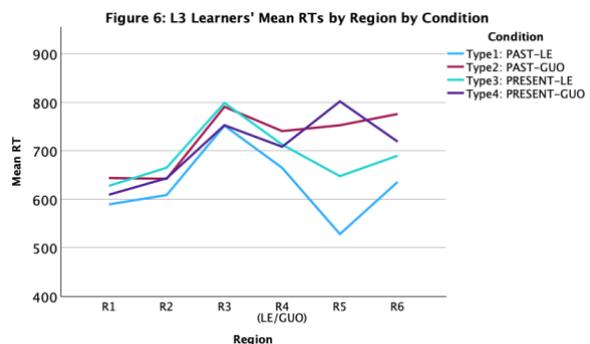
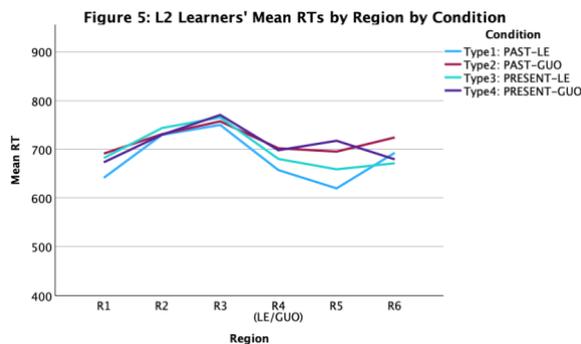
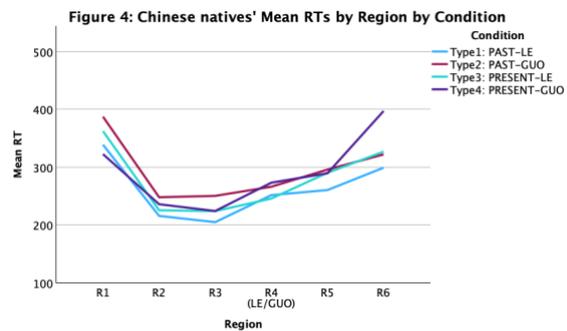
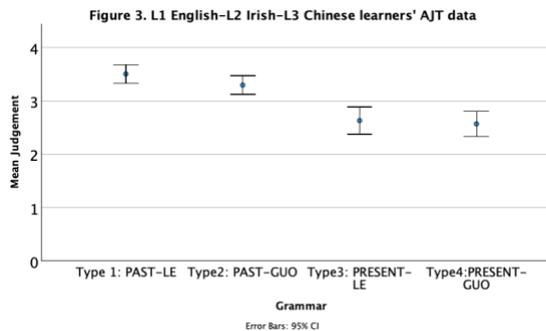
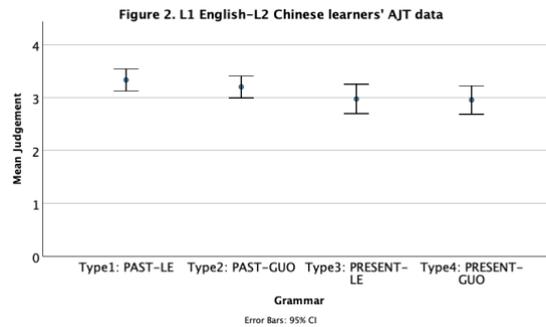
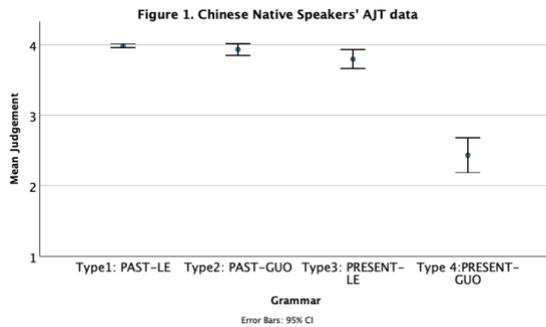
Lili yiqian qu guo da chengshi.
 R1 R2 R3 R4 R5 R6
 Lili before go PERF big city
 “Lily has been to big cities before.”

(3) Type 3: PRESENT-LE

Lili xianzai mai le xin shubao.
 R1 R2 R3 R4 R5 R6
 Lili now buy PERF new bag
 “Lily has now bought a new bag.”

(4) *Type 4: PRESENT-GUO

Lili xianzai qu guo da chengshi.
 R1 R2 R3 R4 R5 R6
 Lili now go PERF big city
 “Lily has now been to big cities.”



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L2 acquisition of NPI 'any' and PPI 'some' by Indonesian speaking learners of English

BACKGROUND/AIMS This paper investigates L2 acquisition of negative polarity item (NPI) 'any' and positive polarity item (PPI) 'some' by Indonesian-speaking learners of English. Recent studies have investigated L2 knowledge of 'any' (Marsden et al., 2018; Gil et al., 2019; Kuniwarnati, 2001; Rankin and Wagner, 2025). One of their findings suggests that there is evidence for the 'acquired' knowledge of 'any': despite the poverty-of-stimulus problem, a small number of learners consistently discerned the grammaticality of 'any' in licensing vs. non-licensing conditions (1-2). This paper presents novel data that extend these findings by examining the *interpretation* of 'any', specifically its scope relation to negation. It also compares the interpretation of PPI 'some' whose scope relation to negation contrasts with that of 'any': while 'any' (3) must take narrow scope under negation, 'some' (4) must take wide scope over negation (Szabolcsi's (2004) *anti-licensing constraint*). However, this interpretation of 'some' is marked without appropriate discourse context (Szabolcsi, 2004; Larrivée, 2012). Within this framework, we aim to test whether learners can interpret 'any' under the scope of negation, observing how it differs from 'some' in the same condition. By examining their interpretation of 'some', we also compare how they respond to its grammaticality.

METHODOLOGY A total of 148 Indonesian-speaking learners of English participated in a Truth-Value Judgment Task (TVJT) including sentence types with 'any' (3) and 'some' (4), using pictures as shown in Fig. 1. In addition, an Acceptability Judgment Task (AJT) was used to test whether learners accept 'some' in the conditions (1-2) in which 'any' was tested in previous studies. Unlike 'any', 'some' is grammatical across all conditions. The participants were all undergraduate students at a university in Indonesia, and they were grouped into three proficiency levels (low, medium, high) using a cloze test (Slabakova, 2000). Testing of the control group is still ongoing: thus far, 11 English speakers have participated.

RESULTS/FINDINGS The results show that the learners responded differently in the interpretation between 'any' vs. 'some' (Fig. 2). The learners tend to interpret 'any' with narrow scope (correctly choosing 'False' for (3) in the context of Fig. 1). A generalised linear mixed-effects model (GLMM) showed that the rate is initially low in the low proficiency group and gradually increases in the medium ($\beta = 0.65, p = .001$) and high groups ($\beta = 0.77, p < .001$). In contrast, a separate GLMM fitted to the data for 'some' showed that learners' interpretation of 'some' with wide scope (choosing 'True' for (4) in the context of Fig. 1) remains very low across all proficiency levels (all $p > .1$). This pattern, in fact, mirrors the pattern in the English control group: 98% for 'any' and 40% for 'some'. From this, we propose that learners can differentiate the scope of 'any' and 'some', particularly with the latter, they tend to disallow the wide scope reading by recognising the marked interpretation of 'some' without discourse context. The AJT results (Fig. 3) show that learners tend to correctly accept 'some' across all conditions and proficiency levels. This suggests that the learners can distinguish grammatical well-formedness from interpretation. The combined results from the TVJT and the AJT also support the previous findings on the acquired knowledge of 'any'.

- (1) 'any' in licensing conditions
- a. Do you have any homework today? [Questions]
 - b. The teacher did not set any homework [Neg_ 'any']
 - c. I'm sorry I said anything about your driving test [Negative Factive]
 - d. James hardly ate anything at the party [Negative Adverb]
- (2) 'any' in non-licensing conditions
- a. *I've already had anything to eat [Positive declarative]
 - b. *Anyone has not finished their homework ['any'_Neg]
 - c. *I guess you know anything about my visit [Non-factive]
 - d. *Lucy probably bought anything last week [Uncertainly adverb]
- (3) 'Any' in negation [narrow scope, $\neg > \exists$]
 Mary did not catch any balloons
 (= Mary caught no balloons)
- (4) 'Some' in negation [wide scope, $\exists > \neg$]
 Mary did not catch some balloons
 (= #There are some balloons that Mary did not catch).

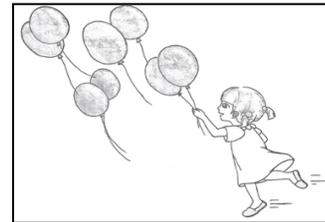


Fig. 1. Picture for TVJT

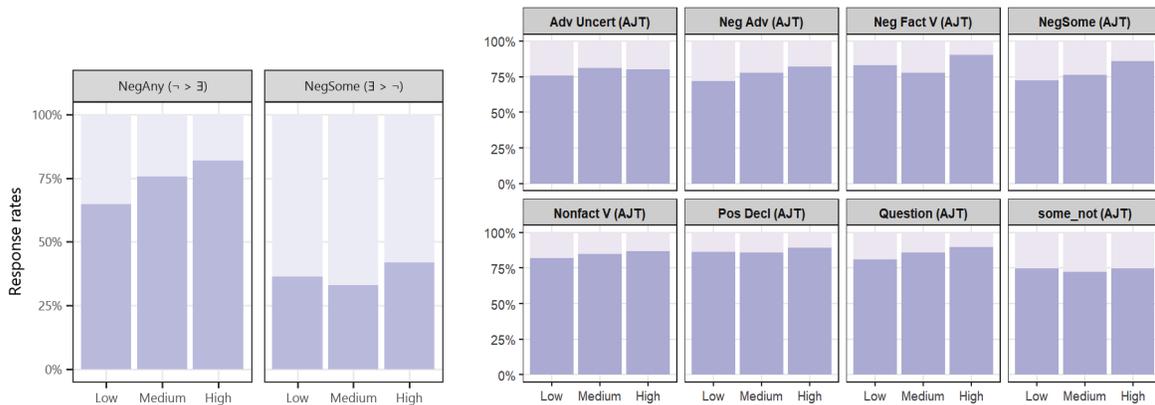


Fig. 2. Interpretation rates in TVJT

Fig. 3. Acceptance rates of 'some' in AJT

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Why They Might Still Get It Wrong: Polyfunctionality and the Interface Burden in L2 Spanish Modals

This study examines how L1=English learners acquire Spanish past-tense modal verbs, a domain that exhibits substantial cross-linguistic asymmetries between English and Spanish. Unlike English modals, which are tense-defective and lexically specialised, Spanish modals use the same modal verb in combination with tense, aspect morphology (TAM) and infinitival aspect to yield a range of meanings: root, epistemic, counterfactual... (1, 2), arising from the interaction of TAM with contextually guided scoping and anchoring operations (Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria 2008; Laca 2014; Condoravdi 2002). Although the division between meanings is not rigid (Narrog 2012), they are generally associated with different syntactic heights: root modality is anchored in the event domain, whereas epistemic and counterfactual readings scope high in the left periphery, and are anchored to the speaker's stance instead (Hacquard 2010, Krifka, 2020). Crucially, in these high-scope readings, surface morphology does not transparently encode the intended scope interpretation (2), so learners must reconstruct the configuration—that is, they must understand that the modal outscopes tense/aspect and that it is the event complement which is past-shifted—by relying on discourse cues. Thirty English L2 learners (intermediate, advanced) and a native control group completed two context-matching tasks and a semantic interpretation task targeting learners' ability to map TAM morphology onto modal meaning. A robust statistical analysis using a suite of techniques—Chi-square, ANOVAs Kruskal–Wallis and GEE models—shows that the highest polyfunctional and opaque TAM configurations yield the largest learner-native gaps and lowest accuracy across groups (Fig.). Crucially, results point to a hierarchy of acquisition difficulty: high-scope, pragmatically demanding readings involving speaker anchoring and left-peripheral reconstruction (epistemic and counterfactual) are consistently the hardest across tasks; future-oriented root readings, associated with event-level anchoring, are comparatively easier, though some residual instability remains; and implicative root readings—syntactically low yet pragmatically demanding—occupy a mid-range position, being more challenging than root interpretations but less unstable than epistemic or counterfactual (Fig. 1&2). Persistent divergence among advanced learners supports both Feature Reassembly (Lardiere, 2009) and interface-based approaches (Sorace, 2006), as learners struggle to reorganise modal, aspectual, and discourse-related features into new form–meaning pairings. Yet the continued instability in root interpretations—where pragmatic demands are lower—also points to a morphological bottleneck (Salabakova, 2009), particularly regarding aspectual marking. Given the tendency of textbooks to present the Spanish modal system through simplified form–function pairings (Durán, Alonso & Sánchez 2007), the results call for interpretation-driven, context-rich instruction that makes scope and anchoring transparent and foster cross-linguistic awareness of TAM–interpretation contrasts, facilitating feature reassembly (Ammar & Lightbown, 2005).

- (1) Juan debía estudiar para su proximo examen.
 Juan must-PST.IMPF INF.study for his next exam
 'Juan had to study for his next exam'. ROOT
- (2) a. El ladrón podía/pudo haber entrado por la ventana.
 The thief canIMPERF/PRET.3ps HAVE break-inPTPL through the window
 Possible interpretations: (i) & (ii)
- b. El ladrón pudo entrar por la ventana.
 The thief canPRET.3ps break-in through the window
 Possible interpretations: (i), (ii) & (iii)
- (i) The thief could have broken in through the window. EPISTEMIC
 (ii) The thief might/could have broken in though the window, [but he forced the basement door instead]. COUNTERFACTUAL
 (iii) The thief managed to break in through the window. IMPLICATIVE

Fig. 1. Polyfunctional/Non-Polyfunctional and TAM-form-Modal-context pairs (CMT1)

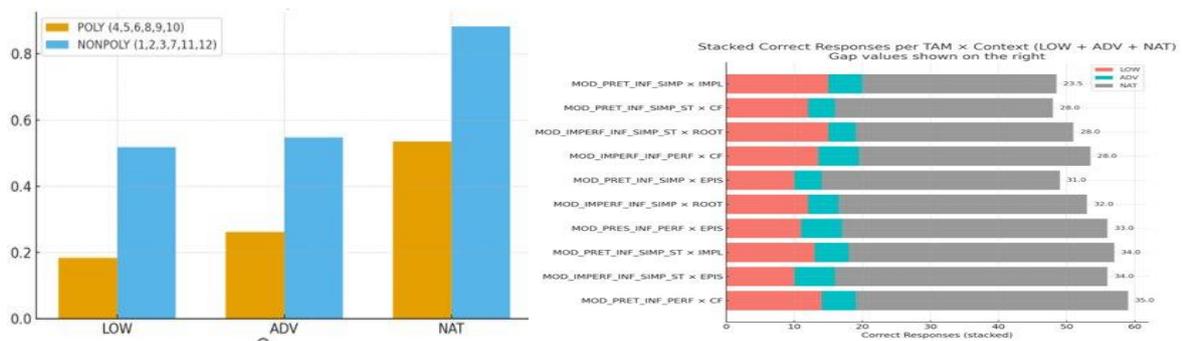


Fig.2: Hardest modal contexts (CMT2):

