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TAML2 Tense, Aspect and Modality in L2



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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

PLENARY SPEAKERS.....	3
CONTRIBUTED PAPERS.....	3
A cognitive linguistic and SLA-based approach to teaching tense-aspect in L2 Modern Greek	3
A Germanic L1 is not any Germanic L1: Evidence of L1 Dutch and L1 German learners acquiring tense-aspect in Spanish as foreign language	4
A replication approach: Does interlanguage sensitive teaching favor the development of TAM acquisition in Spanish?	5
Are <i>da un paseo</i> and <i>daba un paseo</i> forms of the same collocation or different collocations? Morphological variation and collocation processing.....	6
Beyond the <i>progressive aspect</i> : Exploring learners’ expression of <i>progressive aspectuality</i> in English.....	7
Challenges of tense and aspect in the L1 Russian L2 Spanish combination.....	8
Copular variation in Southern Italo-Romance and Catalan: Diverging paths of grammaticalization	9
Cross-linguistic influence in the expression of “ongoing aspect”: A study of French- and German-speaking advanced learners of Spanish L3/Ln	10
Explicit instruction in raising evidentiality awareness: A classroom experience	11
Evidential strategies related to tense and aspect: Perspectives for the study of SLA.....	12
Evidentiality in Urdu: A Corpus-Based Analysis of TAM Categories	14
Evolving grammatical beliefs in teacher training: The role of cognitive grammar in the conceptualization of past tenses among Spanish native speaker trainees	15
From aspect to tense: Tracing conceptual transfer in L2 cognition	16
Grammaticalization of modality in L2 acquisition: An Italian learner corpus analysis	17
How VR can enrich and brighten up our TAM L2 elicitation methods.....	18
Interlinguistic influence and typological proximity in the acquisition of aspect in Spanish as an L3.....	19
Lexical aspect features and information structure in the acquisition of tense- aspect morphology in Spanish L2.....	20
Multilingual acquisition and use of modal expressions in South Africa.....	22

Multilingualism research on tense and aspect in Romance languages: Exploring promising avenues for future studies.....	23
Navigating tense and aspect: Insights into teaching Spanish Preterit and Imperfect in the Republic of Cyprus.....	24
On some evidential uses of <i>resultar</i> from L2 teaching and learning perspective	26
Perfecting past expression among Spanish heritage speakers: Avoiding ambiguity when there is variation in the baseline	27
Perfective and imperfective aspect comprehension among primary school pupils: an eye tracking study on L2 Italian.....	28
Practitioner insights as hypothesis generators: Teachers' observations and the role of instructional sequencing in L2 Spanish aspect	29
Processing periphrastic and non-periphrastic tense forms in L2 Catalan: The role of morphosyntactic transparency and lexical cues	30
Revisiting the acquisition of modal readings of the Imperfect tense in Spanish: A close replication of Mañas, Rosado, Mujcinovic and Fullana (2024) in L1 Chinese learners of Spanish	31
TAME in the academic writing of Estonian-speaking students in L3+ Spanish: A corpus-driven analysis of undergraduate dissertations	32
Telicity inferences and event conceptualisation in L2 English by L1 Slovak vs. L1 Spanish speakers: The effects of L1 and task type on linguistic and conceptual transfer.....	34
Testing the L2 acquisition of grammatical aspect using complex sentences with embedded clauses	36
The expression of evidentiality in adult German-Spanish bilinguals living in Germany	37
The influence of (non-)prototypicality on transfer in multilingual acquisition of aspect.....	38
Unraveling polyfunctionality: tense, aspect, and pragmatic challenges in Spanish modal acquisition.....	39
Verbs in context: Learner awareness of sociolinguistic variation in Spanish and Italian	40

PLENARY SPEAKERS

Dalila Ayoun (University of Arizona). *"Shoulda, coulda, woulda"...but didn't? The SLA of English modality by instructed Francophone learners*

Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig (Indiana University). *Title to be announced*

Victoria Escandell-Vidal (Complutense University of Madrid). *Mapping tense across languages. A 3D model*

Elisa Rosado (University of Barcelona) and **Iban Mañas** (University of the Balearic Islands). *"Yo que tú no iba". A research-based approach to the teaching of modal imperfects in L2 Spanish*

CONTRIBUTED PAPERS

A cognitive linguistic and SLA-based approach to teaching tense-aspect in L2 Modern Greek

Anka Rađenović (University of Belgrade)

This article examines the relationship between second language acquisition (SLA) and language teaching, focusing on the design of a teaching sequence for past tenses in L2 Modern Greek. The sequence integrates findings from research on tense and aspect in second language learning, specifically the Aspect and Discourse Hypotheses and principles of Input Processing Instruction. By applying Cognitive Linguistics, the study develops activities aimed at teaching the meanings of perfective, imperfective, and perfect morphology. These activities introduce key notions such as the "space of action," "verbal action," and the "speaker's point of view." The concepts and activities are designed for implementation in a Modern Greek classroom with A1 and A2 level learners at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philology, illustrating the potential of this approach to facilitate understanding and acquisition of past tense morphology.

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A Germanic L1 is not any Germanic L1: Evidence of L1 Dutch and L1 German learners acquiring tense-aspect in Spanish as foreign language

Tim Diaubalick (University of Wuppertal)
Paz González (Leiden University)

It is widely acknowledged (Domínguez et al. 2013, Salaberry & Ayoun 2005 and others) that the perfectivity contrast characteristic for the Romance past tenses does not have an equal counterpart in Germanic grammars, and most empirical research in SLA studies focusses on English as L1 (see Comajoan 2014 for an overview). However, typologically, English contains many elements qualifying it as an outlier within the Germanic family (McWorther 2002). Unsurprisingly, many results shown in empirical studies are not replicable among students with other Germanic L1s (see e.g., McManus 2015 for German-French, Cadierno 2000 for Danish-Spanish, González 2003 for Dutch-Spanish). In a previous study (González & Diaubalick 2020), we compared existing data from the literature to reveal differences between learner groups.

This talk aims to corroborate the papers' conclusions by (re)analyzing old and new data among 70 L2 learners of Spanish with Dutch or German as L1. The goal is to confirm the importance of the L1 grammars: German and Dutch, just as English, do not have the grammaticalized perfectivity contrast essential for a successful communication in Spanish, yet there are also differences between German and Dutch regarding (non-)interchangeability of forms.

Our results from Grammaticality Judgments and a Completion Task show that although both learner groups show difficulties in mastering the challenges and produce target-deviate forms in many contexts, there is a crucial difference in the nature of those deviations. While the Dutch learners, are often guided by inherent aspect (confirming González 2003 and

following studies), German learners are not equally influenced. In change, they pay more attention to lexical cues like adverbs. These different learning strategies crucially also show fundamental differences between the learners connectable to their L1 grammars. The results will not only help to sharpen acquisition hypotheses but also have an implication for language teaching.

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A replication approach: Does interlanguage sensitive teaching favor the development of TAM acquisition in Spanish?

Barbara Hinger (Graz University, Austria)

Astrid Daucher (Innsbruck University, Austria)

The paper presents data from two longitudinal studies focusing on the acquisition of TAM in Spanish as a second foreign language by German L1-speakers. The studies were carried out in a third year of learning Spanish in the same upper secondary school context with the same teacher. The studies compare findings of spontaneous speech production data to the instructional input learners were provided with. To analyse this relationship in each of the two studies two different data sets were collected: Naturalistic settings in the Spanish classrooms were observed over the period of one semester; learners' spontaneous oral production was elicited at three points in time – at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the semester. In the baseline study, the classroom observation was carried out without specifying its goal to the participants in order to avoid any kind of bias. Hence, neither the teacher nor the learners were aware of the aim of the study. In the follow-up study, the teacher took into account the results of the baseline study and adapted the teaching to the TAM order reported in the baseline study.

While the research interest of the baseline study focused on the question whether there is a relationship between the instruction received on TAM and the interlanguage development of the learners (Hinger 2016), the follow-up study asked whether teaching TAM structures

according to the learners' interlanguage development favors the acquisition of TAM. The results of the two studies are interpreted according to Pienemann's teachability hypothesis (1989,1998) which postulates that teaching cannot alter acquisitional sequences but interlanguage sensitive teaching can support the acquisitional path. Furthermore, the paper will take up the (non)-interface debate as spelled out, f.i., in Norris/Ortega (2000) and Kang et al. (2019). The path of TAM-acquisition will be explored in the framework of *Processability Theory* (Kawaguchi/Lu 2021) and compared to well-established TAM-perspectives (Bardovi-Harlig/Comajoan 2022). On the whole, the paper will offer insights into replicationally designed studies (McManus 2024).

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Are *da un paseo* and *daba un paseo* forms of the same collocation or different collocations? Morphological variation and collocation processing

Mercedes Pérez-Serrano (Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Matías Hidalgo-Gallardo (Escuela Oficial de Idiomas Madrid-Embajadores)

It is known that lexical collocations (*take a picture*) are processed faster than free word combinations (*put a picture*). From usage-based approaches (Ellis 2002), this processing advantage is explained by the fact that language users have been exposed to these expressions a greater number of times and this frequency of encounters favors an anchoring that ultimately lowers the cost of processing. In languages with a rich inflection, as is the case of Spanish, questions arise as to whether a lemma of the collocation is stored or whether, on the contrary, each form of the paradigm is stored individually. The present study addresses this research question. This contribution reports a lexical decision experiment with 22 A1-level “verb + noun” lexical collocations (e.g., *give a kiss*) in three different forms (infinitive, present indicative, and imperfect indicative) and 22 other distractors with undocumented

word combinations (e.g., *make a kiss*). The task was administered to a group of learners of Spanish as an additional language, all speakers of a language typologically distant from Spanish, Mandarin. The results indicate that collocations, in all their morphological forms, show a processing advantage over their undocumented counterparts. On the other hand, it seems that the form that is processed most slowly is the imperfect, although this is not due to its frequency of occurrence in corpora. The findings point to the conclusion that, from a psycholinguistic point of view, the different morphological forms constitute variants of the same collocation.

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Beyond the *progressive aspect*: Exploring learners' expression of *progressive aspectuality* in English

Olga Lopopolo (Eurac Research. Bolzano, Italy)

All natural languages, whether or not they have a designated grammatical category conventionally referred to as *progressive*, can convey the idea that an event is progressing dynamically over a time frame opened up by an utterance (Mair 2012: 803). However, it is important to distinguish between a semantic-cognitive notion of *progressive aspectuality*, which is transportable across languages and can be packaged differently in the linguistic material, both grammatically or lexically (Dessi-Schmid 2019), and the corresponding formal expression for this notion, i.e. the *progressive aspect*, found in various languages, which can be obligatory or optionally marked on lexical verbs or verb phrases.

Previous studies in Cognitive Grammar and Construction Grammar (De Wit & Brisard 2014; Michaelis 2004) have examined the various linguistic realisations of progressive aspectuality and highlighted its polysemy, showing that it conveys additional meanings beyond the purely aspectual. However, these studies have primarily focused on native language varieties and have not considered whether learners of English can convey similar linguistic variation and meanings.

The present study relies on English learner corpus data (Leonide corpus, Glaznieks et al. 2022) produced by lower-secondary school students writing two different text types (opinion texts and picture stories). The data have been collected in South Tyrol (Italy), a multilingual region where German and Italian are official languages, and English is a school subject. Corpus data have been analysed onomasiologically, starting from the semantics of students' productions and identifying different usage types of progressive constructions. In line with Paulasto (2014) and De Wit & Brisard (2014), students mostly use progressive constructions to convey the core meaning of *ongoingness*, emphasizing an action or state as in progress at a particular point in time. However, additional meaning subtypes emerge in lower-frequency productions, where aspecto-temporal meanings extend to emotional connotations. The role of adverbials is crucial in expressing nuanced meanings when they co-occur with other elements, thus supporting the idea that aspectuality is a multi-level content category realized across different linguistic elements.

Regarding the linguistic realization of progressive aspectuality, findings reveal that learners employ different constructions, ranging from a) morphologically aspectual-marked constructions expressed by verbal periphrases having a high degree of grammaticalization, such as the English [to be + Ving] verbal periphrasis; b) constructions formally realized as

verbal periphrases, but with a lower degree of grammaticalization, such as [continue + Ving]; c) other constructions in which progressive aspectuality is expressed mainly by lexical means. The findings support the idea that progressive aspectuality should be understood as a semantic notion in its whole semantic-functional space, which extends across different types of constructions, independently of their degree of grammaticalization.

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Challenges of tense and aspect in the L1 Russian L2 Spanish combination

Inés de los Ángeles González Hidalgo (University of Granada)

The problems presented by the preterite-imperfect opposition for learners of Spanish as a foreign language are well known. Although the acquisition of these past tenses by Russian L1 learners has not been widely explored, its study is convenient due to the particularities of the Russian verbal system, which distinguishes between perfective and imperfective verbs. In this study, we analyse the errors in the use of the preterite-imperfective opposition present in 68 written productions of Russian L1 learners who have already reached B1 level of proficiency in Spanish as a foreign language, extracted from the Chaplin task of the CEDEL2 corpus (Lozano, 2022); with the aim of approaching the difficulties that these learners may present in the acquisition of this verbal opposition and exploring the possible influence of the L1 in this process. Following the methodology of Error Analysis, the errors found in the productions were manually labelled using UAM Tools according to a classification of our own elaboration based on the confusion of verb tenses similar to that of Mañas Navarrete (2011). Subsequently, some of the motivations that could have caused the appearance of linguistic deviations were presented using Alexopoulou's (2006) aetiological criteria. The results reveal that the choice of verb tense is the variable which causes the greatest difficulties, especially in the preterite-imperfect opposition. Some of the causes that may lead to deviations in the choice of verb tense are the neglect of typical values of this opposition, the transfer of notions from L1 to L2 or the lack of temporal correspondence in subordinate clauses in L1. Finally, errors in the verbal paradigm seem to stem from carelessness and lack of automaticity in the conjugations of irregular verbs.

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Copular variation in Southern Italo-Romance and Catalan: Diverging paths of grammaticalization

Marzia Bencivenga, University of Alcalá

The presence of a copulative system in Ibero-Romance languages has been described as a hypercharacteristic phenomenon of Ibero-Romance languages (Posner 1996); in contrast, Italo-Romance languages are predominantly monocopular, although an extension of the use of *stare* in adjectival predication is observed in the southern-central varieties of Italian.

The aim of this paper is twofold: on the one hand, to describe and formalize the existence of a copular system in these varieties, whose microparametric distribution is different from the normative variant (Rainer 1986; Ledgeway 2009) and shows a high rate of variation, and, on the other hand, to verify the vitality of the phenomenon in a bilingual context where standard Italian has a wider social reach.

A comparative-contrastive methodology between Catalan and Neapolitan was used to describe the phenomenon. The starting hypothesis is based on the work of Pérez-Jiménez et al. (2018) who propose that the syntactic status of the verb *stare* in the different varieties of Catalan varies between a bicopular system, characteristic of Central Catalan and Valencian, and a system where *stare* is a pseudo-copula with resultative value. The innovative tendencies observed in the southern Italo-Romance dialects correspond to this second pattern. Even so, the distribution of the phenomenon is weakening due to the interference induced by normative Italian, contrary to Catalan where a widening of the contexts of use of *stare* with adjectival attributes is observed.

Based on this description and considering the sociolinguistic status of the dialects, we have designed a synchronic experimental study to corroborate our hypotheses. For this purpose, a grammaticality judgment task was given to two groups of university students with different linguistic varieties, Venetian and Neapolitan, the latter with the distinction above.

The results show that the phenomenon is still vital and that there is a preferential use of *stare* with non-perfective adjectives indicating emotional stages, weight, aesthetic values and most participles. On the other hand, much variation has been recorded with perfective adjectives and a total rejection with adjectives of age and intellectual properties.

Consequently, we conclude that the Neapolitan copular system is advancing in its grammaticalization stage. However, the normative pressure of Italian does not allow its complete process, contrary to Catalan where interference with Spanish has widened the uses of *estar* with non-perfective adjectives.

As a result of this research, a survey will be carried out to check whether Italian speakers with a bicopular system in one of their implicit grammars have access to it in learning [*stare*+adjective] in Spanish as an L2.

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Cross-linguistic influence in the expression of “ongoing aspect”: A study of French- and German-speaking advanced learners of Spanish L3/Ln

Luisa Caicedo Beltrán (Laboratory of NeuroPsychoLinguistics, University of Toulouse)

Research on linguistic relativity and cross-linguistic influence has shown that the way languages encode aspect can shape how speakers describe ongoing events (Bylund, 2008; von Stutterheim et al., 2012). However, less is known about how speakers of French and German—two languages with different degrees of grammaticalization of the progressive aspect—acquire and express 'ongoing aspect' when learning Spanish as an L3/Ln. While progressive aspect is highly grammaticalized in Spanish (Torres Cacoullós, 2008), and primarily encoded through periphrastic constructions such as ‘estar + V-ndo’, it is less grammaticalized in French, and expressed via the periphrastic construction ‘être en train de’, closely associated with the expression of simultaneity (Leclercq, 2007). In German, ongoingness can be expressed through periphrastic forms like ‘am Ven’, although these are less frequently used; temporal adverbials such as ‘jetzt’ or ‘gerade’ also play a role in conveying ongoingness (Ebert, 2000; Pöll, 2012). This exploratory study focuses on how these cross-linguistic differences influence the acquisition and expression of ‘ongoing aspect’ in Spanish L3/Ln, with particular attention to situational constraints such as temporal simultaneity, homogeneity, and motion, as well as the grammatical and lexical means employed.

For this purpose, we partly replicated Leclercq’s study (2007) selecting 16 short videos featuring simultaneous situations, typically encoded through the progressive construction ‘être en train de’ in French, and non-simultaneous situations, including homogeneous situations and motion situations. We asked 54 participants to describe the scenes: 42 in their L1 (18 Spanish, 12 French, and 12 German) and 12 advanced learners in Spanish L3/Ln (6 French-speaking and 6 German-speaking). The corpus of 831 descriptions was transcribed and analyzed for the frequency and distribution of progressive forms and lexical means (temporal adverbials, introductory constructions, and predicate). Descriptions were compared across L1 groups and between L3/Ln learners according to their L1, French vs. German.

The comparative analysis of L1 groups revealed that the progressive form was dominant in L1 Spanish, particularly for simultaneous situations, and encoded with predicates without a final boundary. In contrast, L1 French and German descriptions were more frequently expressed in the present tense and with predicates that either lacked a final boundary or expressed a durative aspect. These findings support the highly grammaticalized nature of the progressive form in Spanish. In L3/Ln, learners’ patterns largely mirrored those of L1 Spanish speakers, with some differences. French-speaking learners used progressive forms almost systematically, whereas German-speaking learners used it less frequently. Additionally, both groups, especially the German speakers, often employed introductory constructions referring to the perception of the scene, such as ‘veo’ and ‘se puede ver’, reflecting patterns

observed in their L1. This differs from the preference of L1 Spanish speakers, who tended to refer to the situation itself using presentative constructions like ‘hay’ or ‘es’, focusing on the existence or nature of the event, rather than evidential markers. To sum up, our findings show that while the degree of grammaticalization of the progressive aspect in L1 has a minimal impact on its use in Spanish L3/Ln at an advanced stage, L1 influences learners’ choice of presentative constructions. These results confirm Leclercq’s findings (2007), observed here for both L1 French and L1 German speakers learning Spanish L3/Ln, as Leclercq found for L1 French speakers learning English L2.

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Explicit instruction in raising evidentiality awareness: A classroom experience

Jasmina Đorđević (Centre for Foreign Languages, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš, Serbia)

This classroom-based research investigates the role of explicit instruction in raising L2 learners’ awareness of evidentiality, specifically focusing on using short, purpose-designed cartoons to teach the meaning of modal verbs. Evidentiality, the grammatical marking of information source, is often intertwined with modality, expressing various meanings of certainty, probability or possibility. L2 learners frequently struggle with these nuanced meanings, highlighting the need for effective pedagogical approaches. This study explores whether visually engaging cartoons can improve learners’ comprehension and use of modal verbs that function as evidential markers. The research focuses on the English modal verbs *may*, *might*, *could*, *must* and *can’t* targeting native speakers of Serbian in a higher-education EFL context. Short cartoons were created, each illustrating a clear context where the target modal verb conveys a specific evidential meaning (deduction, inference, sensory evidence

and direct evidence). The cartoons were incorporated into a series of classroom activities, including (1) identification of the modal verb's function within the cartoon's narrative; (2) comparative analysis of different modal verbs expressing different meanings; (3) grammar exercises requiring the use of target modal verbs in different contexts and (4) short creative production tasks encouraging learners to employ the modal verbs actively. A quasi-experimental design was employed, comparing the learning outcomes of the cartoon-based approach to the traditional one based on textbook activities. Data collection involved pre- and post-tests assessing learners' comprehension and production of the target modal verbs. An additional qualitative analysis of learner feedback on the cartoon-based activities provided insights into the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach. The study demonstrates the potential of cartoons as a valuable tool for making abstract grammatical concepts like evidentiality and modality more accessible and engaging for L2 learners, ultimately improving their pragmatic competence. The findings will contribute to the ongoing discussion of effective pedagogical strategies for teaching evidentiality and offer practical suggestions for classroom implementation.

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Evidential strategies related to tense and aspect: Perspectives for the study of SLA

Aoife Ahern (Complutense University of Madrid)
José Amenós-Pons (Complutense University of Madrid)
Pedro Guijarro-Fuentes (University of the Balearic Islands)

All languages possess linguistic resources for expressing the source or mode of access to information on which speakers base their utterances, known as evidentials (Chafe & Nichols, 1986; Aikhenvald, 2018). In some languages, assertions are only grammatical if they include a morphological mark encoding evidentiality. In others, including Romance languages, if an information source is indicated it is often expressed lexically; however, these languages can

avail of a range of non-lexical resources, such as verb forms which, in certain sentential contexts, can convey evidentiality.

We address the lack of research on the acquisition of grammatical combinations that convey evidentiality in L2 Spanish, a typologically non-evidential language. We report on a set of experimental studies probing L2 Spanish acquisition, by L1 speakers of French, Italian and Portuguese and L1 Spanish controls, of three of such resources – (1) quotative uses of imperfect indicative, (2) the copula *estar* in combination with individual-level predicates and (3) conjectural uses of future tense – and consider the challenges they pose for learners.

- 1) Tú jugabas al fútbol, ¿verdad?
You played football, right?
- 2) ¡La paella está muy rica!
The paella is very tasty!
- 3) Llaman a la puerta; será el repartidor.
They're knocking at the door; it'll be the delivery person.

We contend that these challenges relate to the evidential interpretations arising not directly from semantically encoded indications of information source, but derived from lexical and morphosyntactic cues and inferential pragmatic processing mechanisms. In definitive, these means of expressing evidentiality consist of interface phenomena (Chomsky 1995; Jackendoff 2002).

Our empirical studies explore the interpretations and grammatical preference choices of L2 Spanish of learner groups, and of monolingual Spanish speakers, through written tasks. Study (1) included L1 French learners of Spanish (N=70, CEFR levels A2-C1) and monolingual Peninsular Spanish L1 controls (N=25); study (2) participants were CEFR-level B2 and C1 Spanish learners with L1 French (N=46) and L1 Portuguese speakers (N=33), L1 controls (N=48); and in study (3), the participants were Spanish learners at B2 and C1 levels of Spanish with L1 French (N=33) and L1 Italian (N=28), and L1 controls (N=36). The findings, overall, suggest that despite similarities across the languages of the participants with the target language, substantial challenges arise in the acquisition process, considered here in light of the Feature Reassembly hypothesis (Lardiere, 2009). These challenges are indicative of the cognitive complexity of internal and external interface processing (Sorace, 2011) in interpreting evidential meaning; and point towards the need for explicit instruction and assessment of the grammatical resources analysed herein.

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Evidentiality in Urdu: A Corpus-Based Analysis of TAM Categories

Humaira Jehangir (Information Technology University, Lahore, Pakistan)
Ghulam Abbas (Southeast University, China)
Zhanhao Jiang (Southeast University, China)

Evidentiality, a linguistic category marking the source of information, was first identified by Boas (1911) as a grammatical system in some languages. It interacts closely with Tense, Aspect, and Modality (TAM), influencing how information is reported, inferred, or assumed. This study aims to analyse how Urdu evidentiality is expressed through TAM markers, focusing on their roles in conveying direct and indirect sources, syntactic functions, and challenges for L2 learners. It also examines how these markers reflect epistemic stance and modality. Key markers include *kahtē haim* ('they/people say,' reportative), *śāyad* ('perhaps', conjectural), *zarūr hōgā* ('it must be so', inferential necessity), and *lagtā hai* ('it appears so', seeming/inference). Grounded in Aikhenvald's (2004) typological framework, the research explores evidential markers in Urdu's grammatical and lexical systems and considers their implications for second language acquisition (SLA).

Existing research shows that languages employ a variety of mechanisms to mark evidentiality. For example, Quechua uses grammaticalized suffixes like *runa-mi* ('I saw it') and *runa-si* ('I heard it') (Aikhenvald, 2004; Faller, 2002), while English relies on lexical phrases such as *it seems* or *apparently* (Chafe & Nichols, 1986). Urdu employs a flexible system of lexical items and auxiliary constructions, unlike these languages. This study builds on this typological contrast, using the Lancaster Urdu Web Corpus (Jehangir & Hardie, 2024) to analyse the frequency, syntactic environments, and collocational patterns of evidential markers in Urdu texts.

The analysis examines whether evidentiality in Urdu predominantly expresses direct inference (e.g., *mujhē lagtā hai* 'I think/it seems to me') or indirect reportative information (e.g., *kahtē haim* 'they/people say'). Functional syntax maps how these markers occur within constructions, while functional semantics examines their role in conveying the source of information, degrees of certainty, and epistemic stance. Inferential evidentiality is exemplified by markers like *zarūr hōgā*, which reflects certainty through the subjunctive auxiliary *hōgā*, with *zarūr* adding epistemic necessity and *hōgā* functioning as a modal auxiliary for deduction. Similarly, *śāyad* conveys conjectural evidentiality as a modal adverb, illustrating interactions between evidentiality, mood, and modality in expressing the speaker's low certainty about the source or likelihood of an event. Reportative markers like *kahtē haim* embed evidentiality within speech constructions, explicitly marking information obtained from another source, while inferential markers like *lagtā hai* convey conclusions drawn from observable evidence, implying inference rather than direct knowledge.

This study enriches our understanding of Urdu's TAM-evidential systems and contributes to SLA research by addressing how evidential markers in Urdu pose interpretive challenges for L2 learners and inform second language teaching.

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Evolving grammatical beliefs in teacher training: The role of cognitive grammar in the conceptualization of past tenses among Spanish native speaker trainees

Alfredo J. Hernández Abella, University of Magdalena

This pilot study explores the evolution of grammatical beliefs regarding the aspectual distinction between the simple perfect and imperfect past tenses among 35 Spanish native speaker trainees. Through explicit instruction based on the pedagogical principles of operational Cognitive Grammar (Llopis-García et al., 2012; Llopis-García, 2024), the research investigates how participants' verbalizations evolve across the roles of 'user,' 'analyst,' and 'teacher.' This progression offers new insights into Teacher Language Awareness, particularly at the intersection with Cognitive Linguistics (Giessler, 2012; Hernández-Abella, 2024). These roles help illuminate the development of Declarative Metalinguistic Knowledge as participants' grammatical beliefs shift (Negueruela-Azarola, 2011).

Data were collected through an open-ended questionnaire administered after instruction and analyzed qualitatively using a categorization scheme that dissects participants' verbalizations across the three roles. Findings reveal a conceptual shift from the implicit knowledge typical of a native speaker to the explicit, analytical awareness of an emerging 'analyst'—a transformation supported by pedagogical activities informed by the prototypical model, with visual aids from Alonso-Raya et al. (2021). The study also identifies potential pedagogical strategies for teaching the past tenses (indefinite/imperfect) from the teacher's perspective.

Participant verbalizations indicate a significant refinement of grammatical beliefs, facilitated by the cognitive-based instructional framework aligned with Concept-Based Instruction principles. This conceptual evolution mirrors recent findings in foreign language contexts and opens new avenues for research in Spanish as a first language, particularly in teacher training (García, 2019).

The study underscores the value of continued research into the role of Cognitive Grammar in the development of metalinguistic knowledge in teacher education, suggesting that cognitive frameworks can play a pivotal role in enhancing teachers' language awareness and pedagogical practices.

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From aspect to tense: Tracing conceptual transfer in L2 cognition

Feixue Zhao (Institut of German Language and Literature, University of Münster, Germany)

Each language has various yet often preferred strategies for encoding temporality, such as grammatical aspect or tense (Klein, 2009). These preferred strategies are mostly grammaticalized, obligatory, and automatized during online conceptualization in the first language (L1) (Pavlenko, 2011; von Stutterheim & Nüse, 2003; von Stutterheim et al., 2012; Slobin, 1996). For late bi- or multilinguals whose L1 either lacks or disfavors the preferred temporal encoding strategies of their second language (L2), abstract concepts like grammatical aspect are notably “resistant to restructuring” (Slobin, 1996:89). This study investigates potential conceptual transfer in the acquisition of temporality in L2 and its broader implications for L2 cognition.

German and Mandarin Chinese provide an ideal testing ground for this investigation as their contrasting temporal systems remain unexplored in this specific context. While Mandarin employs grammaticalized aspect markers to encode aspectual properties of events, German, a tense-prominent language, tends to adopt a more holistic temporal perspective (von Stutterheim et al., 2012; Klein et al., 2000; Li & Thompson, 1989). This study hypothesizes that Mandarin L1 speakers show greater sensitivity to aspectual distinctions, and that conceptual transfer from aspect in L1 may influence their encoding of temporality in L2 German.

The study involved three groups of 25 participants each: (I) adults with Mandarin L1, (II) adults with German L1, and (III) adults with Mandarin L1 and advanced proficiency in German L2. All participants completed a threefold experiment comprising (a) oral descriptions of everyday causation events, (b) a memory task testing the accuracy of aspectual features, and (c) a similarity-judgment task involving event sequences differing only in aspectual features. The analysis of the elicited descriptions revealed L1 influence among Mandarin L1 speakers, including deviations in tense usage and frequent use of aspectual adverbials and alternative constructions. However, results of the memory and similarity-judgment tasks showed no significant differences across groups. These findings suggest limited evidence for conceptual transfer from an aspect-prominent L1 to a tense-prominent L2 in the domain of cognition.

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Grammaticalization of modality in L2 acquisition: An Italian learner corpus analysis

Borbala Samu (University for Foreigners of Perugia)

Grammaticalization of linguistic modality in diachrony - in particular, the diachronic development of modal verbs - has received considerable attention in the literature, while grammaticalization of modality in second language acquisition (Giacalone Ramat 1999) remains a domain relatively less studied by scholars. The paper proposes to fill this gap, illustrating the acquisition process of modal verbs in L2 Italian by English-speaking learners. The theoretical framework is Hengeveld and Mackenzie (2008)'s *Functional Discourse Grammar*, integrated by van der Auwera's studies on modality (Auwera 1996, Auwera & Plungian 1998).

The corpus consists of sixteen conversations recorded and transcribed and of twenty short written documents, realized by sixteen learners, whose proficiency levels range from A1 to C1. The same oral and written texts were also realized by two Italian native speakers who formed the control group. The data fully confirmed the predictions of *Functional Discourse Grammar* on the order of acquisition of modal expressions in L2 Italian. Thus, the order proceeds from participant-oriented modality to event-oriented modality and finally to epistemic modality. The learners' productions allow us to provide a detailed description of how this sequence is accompanied by an extension of the scope of the modal expressions (Samu 2017).

Finally, the study demonstrates how the mechanisms of calquing and grammaticalisation phenomena alternate in learners' interlanguage, showing some connections of the grammaticalisation processes observed in diachrony and those observed in L2 acquisition. From a semantic point of view, learners' data show how the shift of meaning from the deontic to the epistemic is triggered by metonymic and metaphoric processes under some contextual conditions (Traugott 1989, Bybee, Sweetser 1990, Goossens 1999, 2003).

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How VR can enrich and brighten up our TAML2 elicitation methods

Elba Benito Fernández (Utrecht University)
 Helena van Zelm (Leiden University)
 Paz González (Leiden University)

Slabakova (2002) claimed that data elicited through carefully designed experiments are necessary to achieve a full understanding of L2 speakers' competence in temporal domains. Domínguez et al. (2013) stated that SLA of aspect has not been satisfactorily studied because of methodological issues affecting the design of the tasks employed (Comajoan 2006; Salaberry 2008).

VR-technology may be an effective elicitation data method for SLA research. In González 2023, VR scenarios are presented to study which verb form L2 learners use. This method was designed taking into consideration factors extensively studied in TAML2 literature (González & Diaubalick 2019, among others). The use of VR in linguistic research allows learners to put themselves in imaginary contexts. Because of the immersion, the elicited data is expected to closely approximate language as it is used in everyday life (González et al 2024).

In this talk we will present two empirical studies. Our research questions are: can VR-technology help us collect TAML2 data? And how do data collected with VR technology differ from data collected with a more traditional approach? These studies do not shed new light on how aspect and tense seem to be learnt in an L2, as they reinforce the results of previous studies (González 2003; González & Quintana Hernández 2018); however, these studies approach the data collection in our field from a very innovative methodological approach: the use of VR-technology in SLA. The first study shows that VR technology is an appropriate method to collect TAML2 data. Moreover, in order to discover whether this is more efficient

than more traditional methodologies, in the second study, we compare data collected in two different conditions, 3D videos (VR-technology) and 2D videos (a more traditional approach). Data is still being collected, however, we aim to show that the elicited data in the 3D condition will give us more insight as to how TA(M) is being used by L2 learners.

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Interlinguistic influence and typological proximity in the acquisition of aspect in Spanish as an L3

Alejandra María Rodríguez Torres (University of Barcelona)
Iban Mañas Navarrete (University of the Balearic Islands)

In the acquisition of tense and aspect in a third language (L3) interlinguistic influence (CLI) and typological proximity play a key role. In this study we examine how multilingual learners process and interpret aspectual contrasts in Spanish, focusing on the verb forms. Prior research indicates that transfer in L3 acquisition is influenced by the relative similarity of previously acquired languages (Puig-Mayenco, González Alonso & Rothman, 2020), but few studies have explored this in the domain of aspect in Spanish. Eibensteiner (2019) notable findings' suggest that structural similarities between English and Spanish guide German learners' transfer, supporting the idea that typological closeness facilitates transfer in L3 acquisition. It confirms that learners struggle to distinguish between Preterite and Imperfect in continuous and progressive contexts, which suggests an overgeneralization of progressive structures due to English influence.

This study involves 30 multilingual learners of Spanish (L3) with English as L2 and other typologically distant languages (Malay and Thai) as L1, recruited from Southeast Asian universities with an intermediate level of proficiency in Spanish, as well as a control group of native Spanish speakers. The study employs a quasi-experimental cross-sectional design with two main experimental tasks: an Acceptability Judgment Task (AJT) to assess sensitivity to different aspectual meaning constraints and a Truth-Value Judgment Task (TVJT) to measure interpretation. Both tasks were implemented using PCIBex (Zehr & Schwarz, 2018).

Results indicate difficulty in distinguishing perfective and imperfective forms, with participants overgeneralizing progressive structures influenced by English (Rastelli, 2019), where progressive aspect does not always entail event completion. Reading time data suggests a cognitive cost associated with processing imperfective aspect, likely because their L2 English does not mark imperfective aspect morphologically (Salaberry & Shirai, 2002). This aligns with the Lexical Aspect Hypothesis (Andersen & Shirai, 1994), which states that learners initially associate grammatical aspect with inherent verb semantics.

This research has implications for models of L3 acquisition, particularly supporting Rothman's Primacy Model (Rothman, 2015), which predicts that transfer selection in L3 acquisition is systematic and influenced by factors such as typological proximity and structural similarity. The results highlight the role of English as a dominant source of transfer in the acquisition of Spanish aspect for Malay and Thai speakers, reinforcing the idea that prior linguistic knowledge constrains interlanguage development.

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Lexical aspect features and information structure in the acquisition of tense-aspect morphology in Spanish L2

Lucía Quintana Hernández (University of Huelva)
Ángel Jiménez Fernández (University of Seville)

Research on the acquisition of Spanish L2 tense-aspect morphology has shown that several factors affect the use of perfective and imperfective tenses. The Lexical Aspect Hypothesis claims that telicity biases the use of grammatical aspect at initial stages (Andersen 1991; Andersen and Shirai 1996; Slabakova 2001). Recent studies show that dynamicity and punctuality (Quintana Hernández 2019; Domínguez *et al.* 2013) affect the use of Spanish past tenses at all stages, which indicates that the Lexical Aspect Hypothesis should be

reformulated. The Discourse Hypothesis argues that discourse structure biases the use of past tenses (Bardovi-Harlig 1994). Other studies show that L1 transfer and L2 input also affect the use of past verbal morphology. Data from learners of all levels should be analysed taking into account several factors (Bardovi-Harlig & Comajoan-Colomé 2020; Salaberry 2021). No analysis of the effect of the information structure in the use of grammatical aspect has been made so far. The present study explores both the effect of lexical aspect features and the effect of information structure, specifically the effect of the focus function and the syntactic position of internal arguments with transitive and intransitive verbs in the use of Preterit and Imperfect at several proficiency levels (A2, B1, B2, C1).

This study replicates a previous analysis which focused on the effects of lexical aspect features on the use of grammatical aspect (Quintana Hernández 2019). The author found that dynamicity and punctuality bias the use of Preterit at all stages of acquisition, whereas telicity bias the use of Preterit in intermediate levels. The present study analyses the effect of (in)transitivity patterns in the use of Spanish L2 grammatical aspect (Montrul 2000). Regarding the advanced learners' use of postverbal subjects with intransitive verbs, we study whether the interaction of telicity and narrow focus might have some effect in the use of past verbal morphology. We expect learners to command these postverbal subjects and their focus role very late in their acquisition (Domínguez & Arche 2014; Lozano 2006).

A semi-controlled written production task based on a short mute movie entitled *Paroles en l'air* (Vincendeau 1995) is used to find out whether lexical aspectual features and information structure affect the use of Spanish past verbal morphology in different levels, and therefore also show that the effect of all these factors explain the diverse stages of development of the acquisition of past verbal morphology.

Data from 64 English speaking learners of different proficiency levels (22 A2, 17 B1, 15 B2, and 10 C1), and a control group of 16 native speakers of the University of Huelva is analysed to answer the following research questions: 1. Does (in)transitivity affect the use of verbal morphology? 2. Do post-verbal subjects have an effect on verbal morphology? 3. Do aspectual features interact with information structure?

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Multilingual acquisition and use of modal expressions in South Africa

Thera Marie Crane (University of Helsinki & University of Pretoria)

A confluence of factors makes South Africa interesting for case studies in L2 acquisition: speakers tend to be extravagantly multilingual; most non-English L2 acquisition occurs outside classroom environments; and the nine official (and relatively standardized) Bantu languages, while related, also show signs of neighbour differentiation, with significant differences in their modal systems.

In this talk, I will outline some of these differences and discuss quantitative and qualitative results of a pilot experimental study conducted in 2024. Twenty speakers with L1s¹ in either the Nguni or Sotho-Tswana subgroup told Targeted Construction Storyboard stories (see Burton & Matthewson 2015) in both their L1 and in an L2 from the other subgroup, resulting in a largely parallel, naturalistic, multilingual corpus of L1 and L2 speech.

Major distinctions between Nguni and Sotho-Tswana modal systems are found both in (i) differential uses of cognate lexical items, and in (ii) different modal semantics of nearest translational equivalents. (Subgroup-internal differences exist, as well.)

For example, in terms of (i), the possibility verb /**kx^hon**/ is found across Sotho-Tswana and has been borrowed into some Nguni varieties. Broadly speaking, in Sotho-Tswana, it is used as the default form to describe personal or situational abilities (often including deontic possibility). In Nguni, it is used more rarely, and when it is used, it is more likely to occur with personal ability meaning. Regarding (ii), Nguni speakers much more frequently use a verb related to the lexical verb /**azi**/ ‘know’ in non-epistemic possibility contexts (ability, permission, etc.); in Sotho-Tswana modal systems, ‘know’-derived modals are less common, and if used, are generally speaking are restricted to personal ability contexts.

These distinctions play out in the experimental data. A typical utterance from an L1 speaker of the Nguni language isiNdebele is shown in (1), using the modal verb **kwazi**, from *azi* ‘know’. The same context was expressed as in (2) by an adult L2 learner (L1: Setswana), using a version of **kghon** (phonologically hypercorrected to *khon*). The utterance in (2) is not “incorrect”, but neither is it the version most Nguni L1 speakers produced in this context.²

(1) L1 isiNdebele (Nguni)

¹ The very notion of L1 is challenging in multilingual communities such as these; we employ speaker self-assessments of their language abilities and comfort levels, combined with age at learning and external anonymous assessments by speakers of the “standard” varieties.

² Unsurprisingly, the overall frequency of /**kx^hon**/ cognates in Nguni varieties is clearly correlated with the extent of contact with Sotho-Tswana languages.

... ngombana a-wu-**kwazi** u(ku)-gijim-a...
 because NEG-SP_{2SG}-POSSIB INF-run-FV

‘...because you can’t run...’

(2) L2 isiNdebele (Nguni) [L1 Setswana (Sotho-Tswana); adult learner]

... wena, a-wu-**khon-i** u(ku)-gijim-a...
 PRON_{2sg} NEG-SP_{2SG}-POSSIB-NEG INF-run-FV

‘...you, you can’t run...’

L2 Nguni speakers who acquired a Nguni language at a younger age were more likely to use the ‘know’-derived modal, but also frequently used it in the lexical (**azi**) form rather than the modal-specific (**kwazi**) form.

Results from the experiment underscore both the borrowability of modal expressions and the challenges in acquiring modal systems.

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Multilingualism research on tense and aspect in Romance languages: Exploring promising avenues for future studies

Lukas Eibensteiner (University of Jena)
 Francesco Vallerossa (University of Pisa)

The acquisition of tense and aspect has a long-standing tradition in SLA, with well-known hypotheses highlighting the influence of factors such as lexical aspect, grounding, and L1 transfer (e.g., Bardovi-Harlig/Comajoan-Colomé 2020). Only recently, however, have studies in this field started to consistently adopt a multilingual perspective by accounting for influences of the learners’ entire linguistic repertoire, and not only their L1 (e.g., Salaberry 2020). This presentation will provide a state-of-the-art review of multilingualism research on tense and aspect focussing on Romance languages. We begin with a critical discussion of traditional SLA hypotheses (e.g., Andersen 1986) in light of recent findings from multilingualism research (e.g., Rothman/González Alonso/Puig-Mayenco 2019), laying the groundwork for a broader perspective. Building on this foundation, we will emphasize the need to move beyond traditional perspectives by hinting at less explored, yet promising avenues for future research. In particular, two core factors will be discussed as possible departure points for future investigations on how tense and aspect are appropriated in multilingual learners: sociolinguistic variation and metalinguistic awareness. The latter is a key component in multilingualism research (e.g., Jessner 2008), but its impact has not been consistently addressed in research on tense and aspect. As for sociolinguistic variation, its role in tense and aspect studies has mainly been related to geographic variation, especially in the acquisition of different varieties of Spanish (e.g., González/Kleinherenbrink 2021). Accounting for the role of regional varieties in the case of other Romance languages and integrating the influence of other types of sociolinguistic variation (e.g., register), may indeed offer new perspectives on how learners may develop sensitivity to different uses of

tenses but also, more generally, on learning communicative language skills in a foreign language.

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Navigating tense and aspect: Insights into teaching Spanish Preterit and Imperfect in the Republic of Cyprus

María Victoria Soulé (University of Cyprus)

The acquisition of tense and aspect is a significant challenge for second language learners. In the specific context of Spanish as L2, the distinction between the Spanish Preterit and Imperfect tenses has consistently been identified as particularly difficult, not only among speakers of languages where such distinctions are not grammatically encoded, such as English (Salaberry, 2008), or Korean (Soulé, 2014); but also for speakers of diverse languages where it is grammatically marked, such as French (Amenós Pons, 2010), Modern Greek (Soulé, 2020) or Russian (Mañas, 2016).

Previous studies have quantitatively investigated the potential influence of research on Spanish language teaching in the context of tense-aspect acquisition (Comajoan-Colomé, 2022). Building on this work, the present study adopts a qualitative approach to explore the factors shaping the teaching of the Preterit and Imperfect tenses within the educational context of the Republic of Cyprus. Twelve Spanish instructors representing diverse educational settings participated in the study, including public and private secondary schools, adult education colleges, universities, and the Instituto Cervantes. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA), employing both a deductive, theory-driven approach and an inductive, data-driven approach (Selvi, 2020). The analysis involved first- and second-level coding to organize the data into thematic categories. The coding process was facilitated using NVivo Release 1.0 (Jackson & Bazeley, 2019).

Preliminary findings revealed that Spanish instructors employ various mechanisms to explain this grammatical construct, such as equating the Greek *Aoristos* and *Paratatikos* with the Spanish Preterit and Imperfect distinctions—an approach that has been shown to be inaccurate (Soulé, 2020). Moreover, instructors often draw on contradictory perspectives,

including the purely temporal stance proposed by the Spanish Functionalist School (Rojo & Veiga, 1999), the aspectual perspective (García Fernández, 1998, 2013), and the discourse perspective (Gutiérrez Araus, 1998; Weinrich, 1968). However, no references to the sequence of acquisition of Spanish verbal morphology (Andersen, 1991; Domínguez *et al.*, 2013; Salaberry, 2011) or its interaction with instructional treatments (Tracy-Ventura, 2008) were identified in the instructors' excerpts. These results, along with their implications for teaching and learning, will be further discussed during the conference session.

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On some evidential uses of *resultar* from L2 teaching and learning perspective

Yuko Morimoto (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid)

María Victoria Pavón Lucero (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid)

The Spanish <*resultar* + nominal subordinate clause>-construction, (1), represents a paradigmatic case of 'turn out' expressions and has been recognized as such by several authors (Serrano-Losada 2017; Dendale 2019). Although debated, the relationship between the 'turn out' meaning and evidentiality is generally recognized, as is its link to *resultar* (Serrano-Losada 2018). Our objective is (i) to characterize syntactically the 'turn out' uses of *resultar*, which -we will argue- would not be limited to its combinations with a subordinate clause, and (ii) propose a unified treatment for both type (1) and type (2) constructions from the perspective of teaching and learning Spanish as a L2.

(1) Resulta que ahora soy yo quien tiene la culpa

(2) El documento resultó falso

To achieve these objectives, based on our previous work (Morimoto/Pavón 2007), we will review the different uses of *resultar* as a pseudocopulative and predicative verb from syntactic, semantic, and aspectual perspectives. As a predicative verb, *resultar* can take as its subject a nominal subordinate clause headed by *que*, (3), or a noun phrase expressing a consequence or result, (4). The subject can also be an infinitive clause, in which case the subordinate verb is usually a copulative verb: *ser*, (5) or *estar*, (6).

(3) se produce un juego de contrastes, de lo cual resulta que radiaciones iguales producen sensaciones distintas

(4) De aquella reunión resultó un exitoso proyecto

(5) Así que esto resultó ser una conspiración

(6) Pero si resulta estar equivocada, tendrá que admitirlo

Pseudocopulative *resultar* has an aspectual value, (7), and a non-aspectual value, (8).

(7) Dos pasajeros resultaron heridos en el accidente

(8) Ese color resulta demasiado llamativo

In its non-aspectual use, the attribute is presented as the result of a evaluation process by the speaker (Morimoto/Pavón 2007). As we have indicated, the 'turn out' use of *resultar* is found not only in its predicative value, with a nominal subordinate clause as subject, (1), but also in its pseudocopulative use, (2). This latter 'turn out' use is a case of non-aspectual pseudocopulative *resultar*.

After a close examination of the relationship between the pseudocopulative 'turn out' *resultar* and <*resultar* + nominal subordinate clause> construction, we will propose a unified analysis of both uses in order to facilitate their acquisition by learners of L2 Spanish.

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Perfecting past expression among Spanish heritage speakers: Avoiding ambiguity when there is variation in the baseline

James Corbet (University of Southampton)
 Laura Domínguez (University of Southampton)

Spanish heritage speakers of varieties of Spanish that uniformly associate perfectivity to the Preterite generally associate the Preterite with perfective meaning (e.g. Montrul, 2002). However, in several varieties of Spanish, the Present Perfect is expanding as a perfective marker (e.g. Schwenter, 1994). In these varieties, perfectivity maps onto two forms, potentially making perfective marking more vulnerable for heritage speakers of these varieties, due to pressure to ‘avoid ambiguity’ by preferring one-one form-meaning mappings (Polinsky, 2018).

In the present study, 19 heritage speakers of Spanish (aged 5;5 to 15;5) and 15 of their parents completed an adapted version of the *Cat* story task (Domínguez et al., 2013), targeting historically distant perfective readings, for which the Preterite is used in all varieties of Spanish. The children and parents were divided into two groups for analysis based on the parents’ country of origin; an ‘extending variety’ group, and a ‘non-extending variety’ group. The distribution of tokens is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Use of Spanish verb forms by child heritage speakers and their parents in distant past perfective contexts.

Group		Preterite	Present Perfect	Imperfect	Present	Other	Total
Variety extends	Parents (n = 10)	182 (98%)	-	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	-	186
	Children (n = 11)	78 (58%)	35 (26%)	11 (8%)	6 (4%)	4 (3%)	134
Variety does not extend	Parents (n = 5)	67 (98%)	-	-	1 (2%)	0	68
	Children (n = 8)	58 (81%)	-	2 (3%)	7 (10%)	5 (7%)	72

The ‘extending variety’ children were highly heterogeneous, with four only using the Preterite and seven using the Present Perfect to varying degrees. In view of the small sample, we compared differences using Wilcoxon rank sum tests. The ‘extending variety’ children (Median = 0.13) differed from both their parents (M = 0.00, U = 20, p = .015) and the other children (M = 0.00, U = 16, p = .023) in using the Present Perfect. At the same time, the overall use of either marker by the children in this group (M = 0.88) was similar to the use of the Preterite by the other children (M = 1.00, U = 30, p = .215) Consequently, whilst both groups similarly map perfective meaning to a perfective marker, the more complex baseline form-

meaning mappings are vulnerable for the ‘extending variety’ group, in line with Polinsky’s (2018) proposal.

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Perfective and imperfective aspect comprehension among primary school pupils: an eye tracking study on L2 Italian

Karin Zambonati (Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, Italy)

Previous studies have investigated the comprehension of aspect and tense among preschoolers and primary school pupils in their L1s (Rocca, 2007; van Hout, 2008; Zhou et al., 2014; García-del-Real, van Hout, 2022; Savić et al., 2022). By contrast, research on these topics in the L2 context has been conducted mainly on adults.

The present study aims to analyze the processing and comprehension of grammatical aspect (perfective/imperfective) in L2 Italian primary school pupils (age 8;0-11;6), considering three past tenses, i.e. *passato prossimo*, *passato remoto* and *imperfetto*. The first two tenses are perfective, while the last one is imperfective.

In comparison with *passato prossimo* and *imperfetto*, *passato remoto* is still an under-researched tense in SLA and L2 teaching fields and it is usually found in advanced acquisitional stages of L2 Italian (Duso, 2023).

Furthermore, as the restandardization process of Italian shows, *passato remoto* is used primarily in written language and its usage is also influenced by the diatopic dimension of variation (Berruto, 2012).

Two groups of L2 Italian learners were formed based on their time of exposure to L2 Italian. The most represented L1s in the sample are Bengali, Chinese and Romanian, which express tense and grammatical aspect differently. In addition, a control group of L1 peers was included for comparison.

Data collection is ongoing; participants perform a sentence-picture matching task while their eye movements are recorded by an eye tracker. The target experimental stimuli were created considering both the grammatical aspect dimension (perfective/imperfective) and the lexical aspect component, following Croft’s (2012) classification. Differences in accuracy, time and eye movements pattern between groups are expected. In particular, a higher error rate in the processing and comprehension of sentences containing *passato remoto* is predicted for both L2 groups, even though an L1 effect is also anticipated.

The results will contribute to our knowledge on the acquisitional trajectories of L2 Italian past tenses in developmental age within L2 immersion contexts. The implications will also be relevant for L2 teaching and educational purposes, since participants are children with migration background acquiring Italian as an L2 while attending primary school in Italy.

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Practitioner insights as hypothesis generators: Teachers' observations and the role of instructional sequencing in L2 Spanish aspect

Claudia Sánchez Gutiérrez (UC Davis)

Sophia Minnillo (UC Davis)

Teachers are not grammar theorists, but they are daily observers of language learning in action. Their intuitions—shaped by years of classroom practice—offer powerful, underutilized insight into persistent challenges in L2 acquisition. This presentation draws from two related studies that foreground Spanish instructors' perspectives on one of the most difficult distinctions for L2 learners: the preterite vs. imperfect.

In our first study, we surveyed 62 instructors from around the world and conducted interviews and teaching material analyses with nine instructors from a large U.S. university program. One consistent finding was that instructors often feel caught between what is "technically correct" and what is pedagogically feasible. Teachers reported that students were frequently confused by oversimplified textbook rules (e.g., "the imperfect is for emotions") that fail in real-life usage. Although many instructors couldn't always articulate the precise grammatical explanation, they could recognize that a student's sentence, while rule-compliant, still sounded wrong. In such moments, they faced a pedagogical dilemma: correct a student who applied the rule correctly but produced an awkward or inaccurate sentence, or validate the sentence to maintain student confidence, despite its inaccuracy.

One particularly resonant teacher observation was that students tend to default to the preterite, even in contexts where the imperfect would be more appropriate. Interestingly, their hypotheses for this phenomenon—that the preterite is taught first and receives more instructional time due to its irregular forms—mirror theories in the research literature, such as Salaberry's (1999, 2002) Default Past Tense Hypothesis and related work (e.g., Daidone, 2019; Domínguez et al., 2013).

In response to these insights, we designed a second study to test whether teaching the imperfect first would disrupt this defaulting pattern. We inverted the traditional order of instruction in a large Spanish program (N = 697 students), keeping all other curricular materials and structures intact. Our hypothesis was that early exposure to the imperfect

would promote more balanced tense use. However, the results contradicted this prediction: students in the imperfect-first group did not outperform their peers in the preterite-first group, either in overall accuracy or in use of the imperfect. Follow-up interviews with instructors who had taught the imperfect first revealed that they found the experience pedagogically limiting: without the preterite, students struggled to express narrative meaning, reinforcing the idea that the two tenses function as a system.

Both teachers and researchers, in the end, arrived at a shared conclusion: order of instruction alone does not significantly impact acquisition of tense-aspect distinctions. Instead, repeated exposure to and extended practice with the preterite—especially its irregular forms—may be shaping learner perceptions of its primacy.

These findings suggest the need for more nuanced curricular interventions that go beyond reordering content. They also highlight the value of teacher insight as a source of hypothesis generation and as a vital partner in research-practice collaboration.

Processing periphrastic and non-periphrastic tense forms in L2 Catalan: The role of morphosyntactic transparency and lexical cues

Ares Llop Naya (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)

Llorenç Comajoan-Colomé (Universitat de Vic-Universitat Central de Catalunya)

Eloi Puig-Mayenco (King's College London)

The acquisition of L2 past tense is influenced by learners' reliance on both lexical (adverbials, lexical aspect) and morphological (verbal inflection) cues (Bardovi-Harlig, 2000). Previous research has showed that L1 background and cue salience influence tense processing, with speakers of morphologically poor L1s favoring adverbial cues and those of rich-morphology languages prioritizing verb inflections (Deshors, 2020; Sagarra & Ellis, 2013). Additionally, periphrastic vs. non-periphrastic past forms vary in their acquisition depending on morphosyntactic transparency and context-sensitive usage (Deshors, 2020).

This study investigates how L2 learners of Catalan process periphrastic and non-periphrastic tense forms in relation to morphosyntactic transparency and lexical cues. Catalan presents a particularly relevant case, as the perfective past is formed periphrastically with the verb *anar* ('to go') followed by an infinitive, a construction that contrasts with other Romance languages, where similar periphrases typically mark future tense (*anar + a + infinitive* is imminent future in Catalan). This study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do L2 learners process tense-aspect periphrastic forms (*anar + infinitive*, perfective past; *haver + past participle*, perfect)?
2. How do L2 learners process transparent (*anar a + infinitive*, imminent future) vs. non-transparent (*anar + infinitive*, past) forms?
3. To what extent do L2 learners rely on lexical cues (presence vs. absence of adverbials) in temporal processing?

We will test a group of native Catalan speakers (n = 50) and L2 learners of Catalan (n = 50) from a variety of L1s using two experimental web-based tasks. The first is a Self-Paced Reading (SPR) task (Just et al., 1980), which manipulates (a) tense (perfect, perfective periphrastic past, and future) and (b) the presence and congruence of the tense-adverbial

association. Participants will read sentences in a moving-window paradigm and assess their grammatical acceptability. The second is an online categorization task, in which participants will classify sentences into present, past, or future, which will provide results on the learners' conceptualization of temporal distinctions.

Through these tasks, we expect to collect (a) sociolinguistic information about the participants, (b) processing data from the SPR task (reaction times in milliseconds), (c) judgment data (grammatical acceptability ratings), and (d) categorization data (tense classification patterns). Data collection is scheduled between May and September 2025. In this presentation, we will discuss preliminary findings regarding tense-aspect processing theories, multilingual acquisition beyond university contexts, and implications for L2 Catalan instruction.

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Revisiting the acquisition of modal readings of the Imperfect tense in Spanish: A close replication of Mañas, Rosado, Mujcinovic and Fullana (2024) in L1 Chinese learners of Spanish

Bruno Isaac Benavides-Gonzales (UCM)
Rocío Cuberos-Vicente (UCM)

The distinction between Imperfect and Preterit has been widely studied in L2 Spanish research. Yet, it is only in recent years that TAM studies have specifically targeted the acquisition of modal values of the Imperfect tense by L2 speakers (e.g., Ahern et al., 2014; Amenós-Pons et al., 2014; Mañas et al., 2024). This ongoing study aims to contribute to this line of research by conducting a close replication study of Mañas et al. (2024), a methodological rigorous investigation of the politeness, evidential and nonfactual modal values of the Imperfect in L2 Spanish. Whereas the L1 of the non-native participants in the original study was Russian, we explore whether Mañas et al.'s results extend to Mandarin-Chinese learners of Spanish. Participants in the replication study will complete the same Timed Acceptability Judgments (TAJ) Task as the initial study.

The rationale for this replication is to enrich TAM in L2 research by increasing the L1 investigated which will in turn contribute to understand to what extent the learners' L1 influences the acquisition of modal values of the Imperfect tense. L1 background gave rise to the present study, therefore the participants' L1 was the only major modification. The remaining changes were minor. In order to ensure validity and reliability, standards for designing replication studies in SLA research are followed (McManus, 2024).

In this presentation we provide a comprehensive description of the research method design followed to conduct the replication study. Tentative results based on the pre-piloting of the TAJ task in group discussions with L1 advanced Chinese learners suggest that, as L1 Russian learners, evidential and nonfactual modal values pose greater difficulties to L1 Chinese learners than the Imperfect of politeness. The challenges and implications of replication studies in the field of acquisition of TAM in L2 are discussed.

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TAME in the academic writing of Estonian-speaking students in L3+ Spanish: A corpus-driven analysis of undergraduate dissertations

Dámaso Izquierdo-Alegría (ICS, University of Navarra, Spain)

As a Finno-Ugric and thus non-Indo-European language, Estonian employs markedly different strategies for expressing tense, aspect, modality, and evidentiality compared to Spanish. For instance, Estonian lacks future tense, whereas future tense in Spanish presents a vast array of meanings, ranging from chronological future to other values related to TAME, as is the case of the conjectural future (Squartini 2001; Escandell 2010; Rivero 2014; Hennemann 2014; Lara Bermejo 2021). In contrast, Estonian exhibits a much richer grammatical expression of evidentiality: indirect evidentiality is grammaticalized through the quotative mood and independent past participles, and can also be expressed through various stable evidential strategies, including the perfect and pluperfect tenses or the verb *pidama* ('must') in the past tense followed by an infinitive (Erelt 2002; Erelt et al. 2006; Tamm 2009; Lindström et al. 2019). These differences suggest that Estonian-speaking learners of Spanish may face a variety of difficulties in mastering certain TAME resources, especially if we consider that Spanish is typically learned as an L3+ in Estonia (Kruse 2018; León-Manzanero & Izquierdo-Alegría 2025).

Research on the Spanish interlanguage of Estonian-speaking learners is limited and does not focus on TAME, but on other linguistic areas typically perceived as challenging, such as articles, prepositions, or false friends (Kruse 2018, 2020, Eller 2022; Kruse & Rapún 2023; Rapún & Tramallino 2023; Rapún et al. 2024). Moreover, the comparison of TAME in Estonian and Spanish has been largely overlooked, even in contrastive and translation studies (Löbus

2016), especially when compared to research on other language pairs (e.g., Estonian-French; Alas & Treikelder 2010; Alas 2012; Treikelder 2016a, 2016b; Käsper 2016, 2019).

This paper provides a corpus-driven analysis of the most salient characteristics in the expression of TAME in Spanish by advanced Estonian-speaking learners (B2-C1). Two corpora have been compiled: a corpus of 81 undergraduate dissertations in Spanish written by Estonian students specializing in Spanish Language and Literature at the University of Tartu; and a comparable corpus of 81 undergraduate dissertations by L1-Spanish students of the same discipline at selected universities in Spain. Using the keyword function in *Sketch Engine*, the tags and n-grams with the highest keyness scores in each corpus were extracted, allowing for the identification of overused and underused TAME resources. These have been qualitatively analysed to explain the patterns observed in the texts produced by Estonian learners.

The findings reveal several particularities related to TAME: Estonian learners (a) underuse the future tense and overuse the present tense; (b) compensate for this imbalance by combining present tense verbs with adverbs denoting future time when referring to subsequent sections (“*Luego presento mis análisis [...]. Después investigo los lemas [...] y más tarde hago un análisis sintáctico*” ‘*Then I present my analyses [...]. After that, I investigate lemmas [...] and later I do a syntactic analysis*’); (c) overuse perfect tense verbs, often employing them to introduce citations (e.g., *Montesquieu, el filósofo francés, ha dicho hace siglos...* ‘*Montesquieu, the French philosopher, has said centuries ago...*’), and (d) overuse the n-gram *se puede + infinitive* as a hedge.

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Telicity inferences and event conceptualisation in L2 English by L1 Slovak vs. L1 Spanish speakers: The effects of L1 and task type on linguistic and conceptual transfer

Zuzana Nadova (University of the Basque Country)
Pilar García Mayo (University of the Basque Country)

Aim: Recent studies about L2 and L3 acquisition of tense and aspect propose differential learning paths for prototypical and non-prototypical contexts [1] and differentiate between the notions of linguistic and conceptual transfer [2]. The present study examined these differences by studying predicate telicity, aspectual coercion, and event construal in the conceptualisation and verbalisation of events in L2 English.

Background: In English and in Spanish, telicity is marked by determiners carrying the syntactic [q] feature, which contributes to telicity calculation of standard accomplishments in narrow syntax, while in Slovak, telicity is marked by verbal prefixes imposing a definite and specific quantity interpretation on the object argument [3]. Aspectual coercion, defined as ‘enriched semantic composition’ at the syntax-semantic interface [4] or as a phenomenon

whereby the default telic interpretation is overridden by adverbial modifiers functioning as ‘pragmatic shifters’ with interpretation dependent on inferences, pragmatics and world knowledge [5], is accomplished via null coercion operators in English and in Spanish [6], while in Slovak, verbal prefixes and suffixes function as type shifters [7]. L1-L2 differences in the grammaticized means to express progressive aspect and event boundedness were shown to yield differences in the conceptualization phase of speech production (in speech onset times) as well as in event verbalization (adopting a holistic perspective, describing events as bounded, with an endpoint vs. segmentation of events into phases, presenting them as ongoing, unbounded) [8].

Method: The following experimental tasks targeting these L1-L2 differences were conducted with advanced L2 English learners with L1 Spanish vs. L1 Slovak and a control group of English NSs: (i) an offline sentence conjunction task with a 2x2 factorial design combining telic and atelic predicates with semantically matched and mismatched clauses indicating event completion or continuation rated on a 6-point Likert scale, (ii) a self-paced reading task comparing the processing costs of iterative coercion of accomplishments, subtractive coercion of accomplishments, and iterative coercion of semelfactives, followed by an offline acceptability judgment task testing the same conditions, and (iii) an elicited production task including 2 control conditions (videoclips of events with an endpoint reached, indicated by a finished object or a goal reached by the agent) and 2 experimental conditions (videoclips of events with an endpoint not reached, depicting an intermediate phase of the event or a goal not reached by the agent), comparing speech onset times and verbalization of event endpoints or not.

Results: The stimuli and the design of the experimental tasks will be presented and further possible applications of these task types in TAM L2A research will be illustrated. Preliminary data from pilot studies will also be discussed, showing that L1 transfer at the level of event conceptualisation is harder to overcome than linguistic transfer, as well as providing support for Salaberry’s (2020) hypothesis about persistent difficulties of L2 learners in non-prototypical contexts. The results show how these difficulties manifest differently in online vs. offline tasks and how L2ers’ performance is affected by differences in the encoding of telicity and in the possibility of effectuating aspectual coercion in their L1.

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Testing the L2 acquisition of grammatical aspect using complex sentences with embedded clauses

Luigi Palumbo (University of Groningen, University of Greenwich)

Angeliek van Hout (University of Groningen, University of Greenwich)

María J. Arche (University of Greenwich)

Grammatical Aspect has been shown to play a determining role in establishing temporal ordering (Arche, 2006, forthcoming). The grammars of different languages vary in the way they encode perfective and imperfective aspect information, presenting more or less explicit morpho-syntactic cues (Arche, 2006, 2014). Assuming full native language (L1) transfer (Schwartz & Sprouse, 1994), second language (L2) learners need to account for cross-linguistic variation in order to acquire aspect distinctions and achieve correct temporal interpretation in the target language. Previous L2 studies have examined the acquisition of Grammatical Aspect using simple (i.e. one-clause) sentences (Domínguez et al., 2017; among others). However, complex sentences with a past-tense verb of speech in the main clause and another past-tense verb in the embedded (complement) clause (e.g. *Mary said that John made/was making bread*) represent a litmus test to assess learners' acquisition of the core ordering function of Grammatical Aspect (Arche, 2006, 2014; Demirdache & Uribe-Etxebarria, 2000; Klein, 1994). The present study investigates learners' ability to establish temporal ordering between the intervals of the main and embedded clauses in complex sentences. Following the Feature Reassembly Hypothesis (FRH; Lardiere, 2009), the acquisitional task is conceptualised as the reassembly of aspect features in L1 English-L2 Spanish learners across three L2 proficiency groups. This language pair was chosen in light of the existing aspectual form-meaning mismatches requiring re-mapping. The present findings reveal that learners correctly reassembled aspect features in the case of direct mappings between the L1-L2 forms and meanings, but struggled with mismatching cases, in full accordance with the FRH. Theoretical, experimental, and pedagogical implications of these results will be discussed in this talk.

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The expression of evidentiality in adult German-Spanish bilinguals living in Germany

Katrin Schmitz (Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Germany)

Tim Diaubalick (Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Germany)

The linguistic category of evidentiality is broadly understood as information source or mode of access to information/perspectivisation. Many languages have some means of specifying the source of information which can differ in the ways of linguistic codification (e.g., Aikhenvald 2018, Haßler 2023)

Neither in Spanish nor in German, there are distinctive evidential morphemes; both languages use modal verbs and adverbials to convey knowledge about information sources. Unlike Spanish, however, German lacks grammatical aspect and has no verb tense to convey evidential meaning. The German evidential system relies more on lexical means and may be considered less complex compared to Spanish.

Typically, evidentiality involves the interaction of pragmatics with (verb) morphology and/or lexical elements (modal verbs/adverbs). As such an interface phenomenon, evidentiality is particularly challenging for bilingual language acquisition, being vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence. This may lead to delayed development of the more complex system in the young child and/or convergence towards the system of the majority language in older bilinguals (see e.g. Montrul 2004, Müller et al. 2023).

The talk aims to contribute to a further understanding of the expression of evidentiality in bilinguals in the understudied language combination Spanish/German. The investigation addresses the question of whether there is convergence in the means of expression of evidentiality in the Spanish of different types of bilinguals. Here, we part from the assumption that there are detectable similarities but also differences between L2 learners on the one hand, whose learning task consists of a feature reassembly (see Lardiere 2009), and heritage language acquirers on the other hand, who have to carry out a feature assembly first (i.e., it is not *a priori* clear if they arrive at convergence, see Cuza & Tattam 2015). Consequently, we will compare various groups: German-dominant Spanish speakers of 1st generation (i.e., L2 speakers; n=10 from Spain, 22 from div. countries in Southern America) and speakers of 2nd generation (i.e., 2L1 speakers; n=10 with Spanish heritage, born in Germany). They will be compared with monolingual Spanish speakers from Spain (n=10) and Peru (n=10). We use semi-structured interview data, allowing the analysis of larger discourse units, both in terms of the employed linguistic means and their features as well as extra-linguistic factors which explain differences between the groups (age, residence in Germany, proficiency in German).

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The influence of (non-)prototypicality on transfer in multilingual acquisition of aspect

Lukas Eibensteiner (University of Jena)
Tim Diaubalick (University of Wuppertal)
Rafael Salaberry (Rice University, Houston)

Prototypicality is a key component of the Lexical Aspect Hypothesis and its influence on the acquisition of aspect is widely acknowledged in the literature on tense and aspect (Bardovi-Harlig & Comajoan-Colomé 2020). However, prototypicality has received comparatively little attention in multilingualism research (Rothman et al. 2019). Only recently have studies started to explore the interplay between prototypicality and multilingualism in more detail (Diaubalick et al. 2020). The present talk contributes to this growing interest by examining the Prototypicality Transfer Hypothesis (PTH) (Salaberry 2020). According to this hypothesis, deep conceptual components of language – as exemplified in the non-prototypical aspect markings – cannot be fully acquired in a foreign language (L2/L3/Ln) and must be exclusively transferred from the L1. In contrast, prototypical meanings can be appropriated and also transferred between non-native languages (e.g., from L2 to L3).

To test this hypothesis, we employ updated versions of interpretation tasks used in previous studies (e.g., Diaubalick 2019; Eibensteiner 2021). The final instrument comprises four conditions (two prototypical/two non-prototypical) with 32 items (including 12 distractors) and was administered online to (advanced) German-speaking learners of L3 Spanish and native Spanish speakers (NS). The learner group was further subdivided according to their L2 English level based on a proficiency test. Unlike German, English has a grammaticalized and compulsory progressive tense which shares some features with the Spanish Imperfect. Both English and German lack, however, the perfectivity-imperfectivity contrast characteristic for Romance languages. According to the PTH, we predict that both learner groups will differ significantly from NS in non-prototypical contexts due to negative L1 transfer. In prototypical contexts (especially in progressive contexts), in turn, we expect positive L2 transfer; consequently, only learners with limited English knowledge will show significant differences from NS. The findings will be discussed in relation to recent research (Vallerossa 2023), highlighting implications for the understanding of prototypicality and transfer in multilingual acquisition of aspect.

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Unraveling polyfunctionality: tense, aspect, and pragmatic challenges in Spanish modal acquisition

Irene Balza (University of the Basque Country)

This study investigates the acquisition of Spanish modal verbs by 30 English learners at three proficiency levels, focusing on two aspects: (i) the interaction of modals with tense and aspect and how this is reflected morphologically, and (ii) the high polyfunctionality that arises from this interaction. These aspects are particularly challenging for English learners, whose native modal system is defective, as they must acquire highly opaque inflectional (tense/aspect/modal; TAM) forms expressing different meanings (1). Two inverse context matching tasks and an interpretation test were designed to assess participants' TAM preferences and comprehension in different contexts. Results show that, even at advanced levels, participants did not acquire the full range of temporal/modal interpretations tied to TAM combinations. They performed notably worse on items with polyfunctional modals and frequently failed in selecting correct TAM forms, regardless of modality type. The findings support feature reassembly (Lardiere, 2008), as learners struggle to reorganize temporo-aspectual features and map them onto Spanish TAM combinations, which ultimately affects modal interpretation. They also highlight the difficulty of acquiring not only epistemic modality —known for delayed acquisition in both L1 and L2 (Ozturk and Papafragou, 2015; Mifka-Profozic, 2017)— but other modal meanings reflecting the speaker's perspective (e.g. counterfactual deontics). These, we argue, occupy the topmost structure at the interface with pragmatics (Wiltshcko, 2021; Miyawaga, 2022), and trigger complex semantic (evidential/logophoric) relations that hinder ultimate attainment (Sorace, 2004; Tsimpli & Sorace, 2006; Slabakova, 2009).

(1) El ladrón pudo entrar por la ventana. (Laca, 2006)

the thief CAN_{preterite} enter by the window

(i) The thief *was able/managed to come* in through the window. (IMPLICATIVE)

(ii) The thief *could have come* in through the window (but he didn't). (COUNTERFACTUAL)

(iii) It *might have been* the case that the thief came in through the window (EPISTEMIC)

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Verbs in context: Learner awareness of sociolinguistic variation in Spanish and Italian

Anna Gudmundson (Stockholm University)
 Camilla Bardel (Stockholm University)
 Francesco Vallerossa (Università di Pisa)

Sociolinguistic variation involves differences in linguistic use based on mode (written vs. oral), register (formal vs. informal), and regional variation (dialects), all essential for achieving communicative competence, especially at advanced levels. For L2 learners, developing this type of competence is important to enhance effective language use, but also for cross-cultural competence (Council of Europe 2020). However, SLA studies have traditionally focused on idealized and standardized forms of the target language (Ortega 2013), while less attention has been paid to learners' sociolinguistic competence (Kanwit 2022). The relatively sparse research on sociolinguistic variation in L2 learners of Romance languages has primarily examined the acquisition of Spanish dialects (e.g., Geeslin et al. 2013; Zahler et al. 2023), while some other studies have explored the learning of linguistic mode and register (see e.g., Howard & Edmonds forthcoming). However, findings remain inconclusive. This study is part of a larger project aiming to contribute to filling this research gap by exploring how learners of Spanish and Italian develop awareness of these variations, focusing on the verb system. Data collection includes interviews, proficiency tests, written/oral tasks, and judgment tasks targeting formal, informal, and regional verb use. The verbal domain is a suitable variable to explore within a sociolinguistic framework, as both Spanish and Italian provide a broad array of grammatical forms associated with diverse contexts, stylistic as well as geographical. Although verb grammar development is a thoroughly researched area within SLA, few studies have considered this kind of variation. This paper presents initial findings from interviews with Spanish and Italian learners at a Swedish university. Using Qualitative Content Analysis (Mayring, 2015), we examine students' awareness of mode, register, and regional variation, focusing on how these variations are manifested in the verbal system.

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