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and the acquisition of temporal adverbs of contrast**
A longitudinal study in French, English and German L2

The interaction between the development of verb morphology and the acquisition of temporal adverbs of contrast
A longitudinal study in French, English and German L2[1]

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This paper investigates the correlation between the development of learner varieties and the acquisition of items such as *again*, *already*, *still*, *yet*, which are often called "temporal adverbs of contrast" (TACs, cf. Klein 1994). Previous studies on the expression of temporality in a second language have shown the important role of temporal adverbs at early stages of acquisition, nevertheless TACs seem not to be used until the advanced stages. The results of our analysis, based on longitudinal data of English, French and German L2 (ESF project), makes this assumption more precise: if we take the acquisitional progression proposed by Klein et Perdue (1997) of three main stages - prebasic, basic and postbasic varieties - it is shown that items expressing the reiteration of an event (such as *again*) are productively used at the basic variety stage, while others (such as *already*, *yet*, *still*) are indeed attested as TACs only at more advanced stages of acquisition, usually when the verb is functionally inflected. We claim that the reasons for this acquisitional sequence are to be found in the general development of the learner's variety, especially as regards verb morphology, and in the discourse functioning of the items in question.

1. Introduction

Previous studies on the expression of temporality have highlighted the interplay of various devices expressing temporal relations and their relative weight at different stages of second language acquisition. Generally speaking, it has been observed that, as long as the verb is not functionally inflected, temporal relations are mainly expressed by discourse organisational principles and adverbials, which allow learners to quantify over events or to locate events on the time axis (Dietrich et al. 1995). It has even been hypothesised that a clever handling of adverbs could prevent learners from progressing further and developing grammatical means for tense and aspect marking (cf. Sato 1990, Starren & Van Hout 1996).

In spite of the important role assigned to temporal adverbs in early stages of acquisition, temporal adverbs of contrast such as *again*, *already*, *still*, *yet* (from now on TACs) seem to be mainly attested in the production of advanced learners (cf. Dietrich et al. 1995 : 266). This late acquisition has been explained on the basis of their conceptual complexity: as a matter of fact TACs relate and contrast different time intervals of a state or an event (cf. next section), so that they can be considered to express cognitively complex temporal configurations, at least more complex than an adverbial like *last week*.

The statement about a generally late acquisition of TACs needs anyway to be attenuated, as recent research indicates that some of them can appear, combined in a creative idiosyncratic way, at earlier stages (cf. Starren 2001).

Such observations suggest that the L2 acquisition of this adverbial category needs further investigation: actually it still is not clear at which stage they start appearing in learner production, how learners make use of them, what their place is among other devices to express temporal relations and indeed why, in spite of their adverbial status, they should typically belong to the repertoire of advanced learners.

Moreover TACs can be considered as scopal items whose meaning changes, providing temporal (cf. 1a) or non-temporal readings (cf. 1b), according to the constituent they have scope over:

(1a)   Il boit *encore*   (= he *still* drinks, he drinks *again*)
(1b)   Il boit *encore* un café   (= he drinks *another /one more* coffe)

Given their scope properties and/or their polysemy according to TL norms, it is interesting to observe how learners deal with their temporal meaning among other possible ones and what the link is between their acquisition and the acquisition of other scopal items.

In order to pursue this subject, we have analysed the longitudinal data of learners of English, French and German L2, which belong to the ESF data-base (European Science Foundation's Project on Second Language Acquisition by Adult Immigrants, Perdue 1993). The research presented here is part of a larger study on scopal items in L2 (Benazzo 2000), where we observed the acquisition of additive, restrictive and temporal particles.

For the aims of the present paper, attention will be focussed on :

- the emergence and use of TACs, in relation to other scopal items and in relation to the general development of the L2 system.

In the following sections, before analysing TACs in L2, we will briefly define the temporal configuration they express and describe the linguistic development of the learners analysed during the observation period.

2. Temporal adverbs of contrast and other scopal items

Items such as *still, already, again* (and their negative equivalents *yet, anymore, no longer)* form a special category of temporal adverbs (cf. Klein 1994) which encode complex time

configurations[2]. In order to observe their semantic contribution, consider the following sentences:

(2) a. at 10 John was **still** sleeping
     b. at 10 John was sleeping **again**
     c. at 10 John was **already** sleeping

In comparison to the explicit time interval "at 10" at which the state-of-affairs "John's sleeping" obtains, the presence of *still* implies that the corresponding event (John's sleeping) was going on from a <u>previous</u> <u>adjacent</u> time interval ("continuative" reading); *again* means on the other hand that the same event has taken place in a previous but <u>not</u> <u>adjacent</u> time interval ("iterative" meaning), while *already* marks the transition from a <u>negative</u> to a <u>positive</u> phase of the same event ("resultative" reading)[3]: it implies that John wasn't sleeping in a previous undetermined time interval. The basic semantic contribution of each of them can be defined as the quantification of alternative time spans for a given state or event.

While in English each item is somewhat specialized for a certain semantic time configuration, in other languages, for example French, some items are multifunctional: this is the case of **encore** (cf. Borillo 1984, Franckel 1989) which corresponds to both *still* and *again*:

(3) il dort *encore*   (= he is *still* sleeping */* he is sleeping *again*)

The distinction between an iterative or continuative reading is then mainly based on the aspect of the predicate: imperfective aspect implies continuative reading (*il dormait encore = he was still sleeping*), while perfective aspect implies iterative reading (*il est encore tombé = he has fallen again*). In other contexts, the same item can also correspond to *more*:

(4) il dormira ici *encore* une nuit   (= he will sleep here one *more/another* night)

In previous examples *encore* is a temporal adverb affecting the VP, whereas in (4) it is used as an additive particle quantifying over the NP-constituent *one night*. Similar scope properties characterize also German *noch/schon* - which can be used for temporal meaning (equivalent to *already/still*) or as additive scalar particles (equivalent to *even*) - and English *just*, which can show up in the restrictive scalar meaning (*he ate just an apple*) or in the temporal one (*he's just gone*). Temporal as well as non-temporal (additive/restrictive) readings can be accounted for by the fact that TACs and additive / restrictive particles share the common property of quantifying alternatives, although for TACs these alternatives are limited to time intervals (for more details cf. König 1977 and 1991, Löbner 1989, Muller 1975). Given the

versatility of each item, it is necessary to look carefully at the discourse context where they occur in order to determine with which value they are used.

3. Learners and their development

The emergence and use of TACs is investigated in the language production of learners first studied in the European Science Foundation's Project on Second Language Acquisition by Adult Immigrants (Perdue 1993). The following longitudinal data have been analysed:

3 Italian learners of English   (Santo, Andrea, Lavinia)
2 Italian learners of German   (Tino, Angelina)
3 Spanish-speaking learners of French (Bernarda, Palmira, Alfonso)

The informants are all adults who had settled in the TL-country for economic and/or political reasons and have been recorded monthly over a period of about 30 months. The recordings are organised in 3 data-collection cycles, each cycle corresponds to a series of communicative activities which were accomplished in a fixed order and repeated in the following two cycles (for more details, see Perdue 1993).

At the beginning of the recordings most of them just knew a few words of the target language, that is they were 'real' beginners, while at the end of the observation period their proficiency in the target language is quite variable: as attested in previous studies (for ex. Klein & Perdue 1992, Dietrich et al. 1995), some of them attain a very advanced stage (Tino, Lavinia, Alfonso), others "fossilize" early (Angelina, Santo).

In order to make crosslinguistic comparisons, in the following table they are classified according to the acquisitional progression proposed by Klein and Perdue (1997) in 3 main stages: prebasic, basic and postbasic.

Table 1 Learners' second language development

SL/TL	Learners		prebasic v.	basic v.	Postbasic v.
Ital > English	Santo		+	+	
	Andrea		+	+	+
	Lavinia			+	+
Span > French	Palmira		+	+	
	Bernarda		+	+	+
	Alfonso				+
Ital > German	Angelina		+	+	
	Tino		+	+	+

Note that some learners' production initially oscillates between prebasic and basic variety (Santo, Andrea and Tino), while the attainment of a postbasic stage is for some learners limited to the development of selected features (Andrea, Bernarda).

Each stage corresponds to a specific organisation of the learner's system, concerning utterance structure as well as the expression of temporal relations.

At the **prebasic** level, learner utterances mainly consist of nominal constituents (roughly corresponding to TL nouns, adjectives, adverbs), which are related on the basis of pragmatic principles; temporal reference can be reconstructed from the interlocutor's contribution (scaffolding), inferred from discourse organisation principles as the Principle of Natural Order (= events are related following their chronological order) or expressed by some adverbials, especially calendaric expressions.

The following stage, the **basic** variety, is marked by an organisation of the utterance around a non-finite verb and its arguments. At this stage verb morphology is dysfunctional (no grammatical marking of tense or aspect), but the presence of verb-argument structure permits the expression of inherent lexical aspect (*Aktionsart*), expressions equivalent to *start / finish* signal event boundaries, while a large repertoire of temporal adverbs - of position (*4 o'clock, yesterday, last year*), of frequency (*three times, once a week*) and of duration (*for one hour*) - allow learners to locate events in time and to quantify their frequency or duration, as can be seen in the following passage.

(5)   *monday* i gone in the hospital and speak doctor
          for i chop my nail *last month*
          i going hospital
          two hours in the rooom operation   (Santo, cycle 2, rec. 22)

The **postbasic** variety is characterized by the emergence of finite verb morphology, which thus expresses grammatical tense and aspect. The transition from the appearance of the first functional morphological oppositions to their systematic application is usually a slow and

gradual process: for the learners analysed finite verb forms first appear on the copula or the auxiliaries, before spreading to lexical verbs (cf. Perdue et al. 2002).

Given that at this stage learners paths differ as they approach the TL specifics, further details on the progression stated for each learner will be given in the next sections, during the analysis of TACs. The following tendencies concern however all of them (cf. Dietrich et al. 1995):

- initial coexistence of various morphological forms without appropriate functions;

- tense marking precedes aspect marking;

- irregular morphology precedes regular morphology.

The expression of temporal relations is then marked by a crosslinguistic development sequence where pragmatic devices (discourse organisation principles), precede lexical ones (temporal adverbs, lexical content of verbs, etc.), which in their turn precede grammatical ones (verb inflection). The passage from one stage to the next provides new means for the specification of finer temporal relations. Starren (2001) has for example pointed out which temporal relations adverbials can or cannot express according to the degree of grammaticalisation of the verb. She found that the lexical devices applied at the basic variety level allow learners to express a dense web of temporal and aspectual relations, but events are invariably more or less simultaneous to the lexically specified time span. In order to dissociate them, as in prospectivity (focus on the pre-time of the relevant event) or as in perfect (focus on the post-time of the relevant event)[4], verb morphology is needed.

4. Overview on the repertoire of the L2 scopal items

Learners' progression towards the TL is marked by a parallel use of an ever wider range of scopal items. The following tables (2-4) give a preliminary overview of this process: for each learner they represent - vertically - the particles spontaneously produced (direct repetitions of an item from native speaker input and uninterpretable utterances are excluded) and - horizontally - the sequence of recordings. As these are organised in 3 data-collection cycles, the first number indicates the cycle, the second number the recording (15 means 1st cycle, 5th recording). The contextual meaning of multifunctional items is identified by letters (A= additive, It = iterative, C = continuative), while idiosyncratic uses are marked by asterisks.

There are correspondences between the acquisitional stage and the type of particles used by the learners, hence the acquisitional stage is given on the top line of the Tables.

Table 2   Repertoire of scopal items: learners of English

Santo	Preb. to Basic V.		
rec.	11-13	15-17	18-24
only / just	13	18	39
again	-	9*	9*
too/also	-	-	2
just (T)			
already			
still			

Andrea	Preb. to Basic V.			Postbasic V.	
rec.	11-12	13-17	18-23	24-29	31-35
only / just	9	5	10	11	6
again	3	1	-	6*	1
also / too	-	-	1	-	-
just (T)				1	-
still ?				-	2*

Lavinia		Basic V.		Postbasic V.		
rec.		11-13	14-18	21-23	24-27	31-36
only / just		16	11	15	6	4
again		1	7	5	7	9
also/too/as well		-	3	8	8	6
just (T)				2	-	-
already				3	1	2
still				-	3	1

*Idiosyncratic uses: some occurrences of Santo's *again* seems to have an additive value equivalent to *also, more;* Andrea's *again* is produced in contexts of continuity, thus requiring *still*; Andrea's *still* has not an adverbial status, functioning as an idiosyncratic auxiliary.

Table 3   Repertoire of scopal items: learners of French

Palmira	Prebasic V.			Basic V.		
recordings	11-18	21-22	23-24	25-26	31-34	35-36
seulement	-	3	-	7	20	4
aussi	-	-	1	-	1	-
autre fois (I)	-	-	-	-	1	-
déjà	-	-	-	-	-	1
encore (C)	-	-	-	-	-	-

Bernarda	Prebasic V.			Basic V.			Postbasic	
recordings	11-13	14-15	16-18	19-21	22-23	24-26	31-33	34-36
seulement	-	1	12	22	34	7	43	37
aussi / encore (A)				7	6	1	35	30
encore/autre fois (I)				1	-	1	2	1
déjà							4	6
encore (C)							1	-

Alfonso			Postbasic		
recordings			11-19	21-26	31-36
seulement			41	12	21
aussi / encore (A)			16	43	64
autre fois/encore (I)			4	16	3
déjà			34	24	25
encore (C)			-	-	-

Table 4   Repertoire of scopal items: learners of German

Angelina	Prebasic V.			Basic V.		
recordings	11	13-14	15-16	21-26	29-35	36-38
allein	-	1	1	1	3	1
auch / noch (A)	-	-	2	2*	9*	2
nochmal				-	-	-
noch (C)				-	-	1
schon						

Tino	Prebasic V.		Basic V.			Postbasic V.		
recordings		11-12	13-14	16	17	21-24	25-33	35-39
nur			1	4	3	4	12	29
auch / noch (A)			-	1	5	22	49	74
nochmal			-	-	3	3	7	6
schon						2	12	26
noch (C)						-	4*	5

*Idiosyncratic uses: some occurrences of Angelina's *auch* and of Tino's *noch* seem to have an iterative
 value equivalent to *nochmal*.

We first comment the Italian learners of English. At the beginning of the observation period their production shows the typical features of the basic variety: most utterances consist of non-finite verbs with their arguments and, optionally, adverbials, although some traces of a previous prebasic level are still present in Santo and Andrea.

Santo does not go beyond this stage: even if the verb starts presenting some morphological variation, there is no clear functional marking of tense or aspect till the last recording (cf. ex. 5). As can be seen in table 2, he makes use of a limited range of particles: restrictive and additive ones (such as *only, just, also, too*), and one temporal item, that is *again*. In Santo's production *again* principally marks the reiteration of a state or an event (6a), but sometimes it is used as an additive particle (6b) and probably also with other meanings (6c).

(6a) (free conversation: the NS has just come back from holiday)
when going in holiday **again**?[5]   (Santo: cycle 1, rec. 17)

(6b) (free conversation: the interlocutor has told Santo that he knows a few words of Italian)
again (= *more*) 20 years and you speak Italian   (Santo: cycle 1, rec. 19)

(6c) (Santo is waiting for his driving licence)
maybe i wait **again** another month   (Santo: cycle 1, rec. 16)
(= *I keep on waiting? i wait one more month? once again i wait one month*?)

At the beginning of the recordings, Lavinia and Andrea's productions also roughly correspond to the basic variety and, as Santo, their initial repertoire of particles includes a productive temporal item, that is *again*.

But, unlike Santo, these learners progress further. During the 2nd and 3rd cycle, **Andrea** shows some signs of development into a postbasic variety, although this is limited to the progressive development of a functional opposition between present and past verb forms. At this stage he presents first some idiosyncratic uses of *again*, which is overgeneralised to contexts requiring a continuative adverb like *still*, and later on some occurrences of *still*, which is however not used in the adverb function (therefore the question mark after it). These idiosyncratic uses will be commented on later.

Lavinia's progression into a postbasic variety ends up with her mastering of the English verb morphology. This evolution coincides with the production of many different temporal items: *already, still, just* (in the temporal function, 2 occurrences marked by a T in the table), *not... yet* and *not… anymore* (cf. 7a-e).

(7a) I was **just** going out to the park when I see this   (Lavinia: cycle 2, rec. 21)
(7b) (the NS asks Lavinia whether she has taken her examination)
I have to + no **yet**   (Lavinia: cycle 2, rec. 22)
(7c) my landlord **already** + did + this kind of thing   (Lavinia: cycle 2, rec. 23)

(7d)   (the NS asks Lavinia whether Yugoslavs come over to Italy quite a lot)
         they used to, but not **anymore**   (Lavinia: cycle 2, rec. 24)
(7e)   (Carlo) is **still** working   (Lavinia: cycle 2, rec. 26)

The comparison of the three Italian learners of English reveals a certain correlation between the type of particles used by learners and their acquisitional stage: the iterative *again* is attested very early in the production of all of them, while other items appear (as TACs) only in the production of the more advanced learner.

A similar order of acquisition is also attested for learners of French and German L2 (cf. tables 3 and 4). The initially less advanced learners (Palmira and Bernarda for French L2 and Angelina for German L2) provide evidence for the very beginning of the acquisitional process: the first items to appear are namely <u>restrictive</u> (*seulement, nur, allein*) and / or <u>additive</u> particles (*aussi, encore, auch, noch*) which are produced from pre-basic varieties, thus preceding the emergence of <u>iterative</u> items. These are sometimes idiosyncratic forms - as *autre fois* in French L2 instead of the TL *encore / de nouveau*[6] - or idiosyncratic extensions of already available additive items - as *auch* in German L2 instead of TL *nochmal / wieder*), but anyway attested with an iterative function from the level of the basic variety.

Learners who progress further (Bernarda, Alfonso, Tino) enrich this repertoire with items equivalent to <u>*already*</u> and <u>*still*</u>: this means either the appearance of a new item (*déjà / schon = already*) or the specialization in the functions of an already available item (*noch / encore*) which was first used to mark the addition of entities (= *more*, cf. 8a), and last of all for time intervals (= *still*, cf. 8b).

(8a)   noch für ein Monat   (Tino: cycle 2, rec. 25)
         < *for one more month* >
(8b)   ich bin noch böse   (Tino: cycle 2, rec. 27)
         < *I still am angry* >

Their negative counterparts equivalent to *not yet, no longer, no more* are, as in English L2, late marginal acquisitions, often limited to formulaic expressions and therefore not counted here[7].

The comparison of the three groups of learners highlights a fixed order of acquisition: after additive and restrictive items, learners start producing **iterative** items; only later on do they gradually develop TACs equivalent to (resultative) ***already*** and (continuative) ***still***.

Besides the variable frequency of items, this order of appearance correlates crosslinguistically with the general development of the learners' production, as it is summarised in the following diagram.

Table 5. Enlargement of the L2 scopal repertoire

Additive Restrictive >	Iterative >	Resultative Continuative
Fr. *seulement, aussi, encore* Engl. *only, just, too, as well* Ger. *auch, allein / nur, noch*	*autre fois* *again* *nochmal*	*déjà, encore* *already, still* *schon, noch*
PREBASIC V.	BASIC V.	POSTBASIC V.

Precocious use of items here classified at postbasic-variety level - namely continuative *noch* in Angelina (1 occ.) and *déjà* in Palmira (1 occ.) - do not run counter the general picture of this diagram, as they are very rare and do appear after additive / restrictive and iterative items. It is however useful to remark their presence, which will be further commented in the next section.

5. Learners' use of TACs in discourse

In order to explain the acquisitional sequence which results from the tables, it is necessary to look at the discourse functioning of these particles and at the devices used by learners to express temporal relations.

5.1. Iterative items at the Basic Variety

As we have said iterative items appear at the basic variety. At this stage temporal relations are mainly expressed by <u>lexical means</u> (temporal adverbials and the lexical content of the verb), otherwise they are situated by default at the time of utterance or inferred by the listener on the basis of shared knowledge (the expression *when in Italy,* said by an Italian learner, is interpreted with reference to the past such as *when I was in Italy*).

How do learners use iterative items at this stage? Sometimes in association with a temporal adverbial (for ex. Andrea: *six o'clock again go in Holborn*), or with other expressions implying temporal reference, as in the following passage:

(9)   (Santo has paid a fine for having crossed a street while the trafic light was red)
        NS what you paid fifty pounds for?
          for traffic light .... is very expensive for traffic light

possible twenty and next ++
next traffic light me **again** *non* (=don't) see the traffic light
possible fifty one hundred pound   (Santo, cycle 1, rec. 18)

In (9) the situation "pay fifty pounds" is first referred to the past (temporal anchoring maintained from the NS question) and then to an hypothetical future. Given that verb morphology is still dysfunctional, the time span which separates the two occurrences of the same situation is given by the unit "next traffic light", which is roughly interpreted as "next time I cross a red traffic light".

But iterative items are more frequently present in narratives, as in the following extracts, and without any adverbial specification:

(10a)   (film retelling : reporting a scene where different people try to open a locked door)
another man <u>prove for er open the door</u> but no possible
allora that woman er/ this woman ...phone the *brigate* fire for help...
another woman ...<u>prove</u> **again** <u>for open the door</u>   (Andrea: cycle 1, rec. 13)

(10b)   (film retelling *Modern Times*: the police arrests the girl who has stolen a bread)
die polizei <u>fliehe</u>   *the police run*
nehme die mädchen mit brote .... .   *take the girl with bread*
die polizei <u>fliehe</u> **nochmal**   *the police run again*
                                                                          (Tino: cycle 1, rec. 17)

(10c)   (film retelling *Modern Times*: two times a beam falls onto Chaplin's head)
 le tombe   ... <u>une table sur la tête</u>...   *(C.C.) him falls a beam on the head*
(series of actions)
monsieur chaplin rentre à la maison   *mister chaplin goes into the house*
* y **otra*** **fois** le <u>tombe le table</u> sur la tête   *and again him falls the beam on the head*
                                                                          (Palmira: cycle 3, rec. 34)

The basic temporal meaning of *again* implies that the relevant event designed by the predicate has already taken place before, in a previous but not adjacent time interval. In all of these passages the antecedent event is mentioned in the preceding co-text (see underlined phrases) and the iterative item creates an anaphoric link with it, that is between the predicate it specifies as being repeated and the previously mentioned predicate. In this way, from a discourse point of view, iterative items behave like additive particles, which establish a similar additive link, but prototypically between entities[8].

From a temporal point of view the repetition of an event means two tokens, temporally ordered and not adjacent, of an event of the same type. In order to be repeated (instead of, for ex., 'continued') an event has to be bounded. In highly structured texts as narratives, this is achieved by simple adherence to the principle of natural order, which is regularly applied: respecting this pragmatic principle implies that each newly mentioned event shifts the

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narration time forward, thus providing a right boundary to the previously mentioned event. In these examples, a continuative reading is moreover prevented by the mention of other events between the ones which are repeated; otherwise the temporal boundary is explicitly given by lexical means as *after* or *next*.

The analysis of examples (9-10a-c) shows that the concept of iteration is easily expressible by the repertoire and discourse organisation principles at work in the basic variety, that is independently of verb morphology. Moreover *again* and its equivalents enhance textual cohesion through the anaphoric link they establish towards the preceding co-text.

5.2 Continuative and resultative items in postbasic varieties

The acquisitional path and discourse functioning of other TACs is at first view relatively less homogeneous than what we have seen for iterative items, but so are postbasic varieties in general, given that at this stage the learner system develops TL specific features. Generally speaking the transition to postbasic varieties is marked by the development of a functional verb morphology, but this process presents slight individual and crosslinguistic peculiarities. Learners of French and German L2 share remarkable similarities both in the evolution of their system into postbasic varieties and in the discourse functioning of TACs. In order to capture this (mutual) interaction, it is useful to look first at these learners and then at learners of English L2.

Learners of French and German L2

In both German and French L2 postbasic varieties, TACs such as *déjà / schon* are very frequently produced, but the context they occur in does not always allow a temporal reading. Actually their acquisition seems to take place in 2 phases, according to the constituent they have scope over and the consequent semantic interpretation.

- Phase 1: *déjà / schon* + adverbials

The initial occurrences of *schon* (Tino) and *déjà* (Bernarda, Alfonso as well as Palmira's unique occurrence) are mainly attested in utterances containing a temporal adverbial specification, which indicate either the frequency (11) or the position on the time axis (12) of the relevant event.

(11)   (about some dangerous friends, with whom Tino has gone out 3 times)
      schon drei mal mit ihm ... mit waffen nur eine mal   (Tino: cycle 2, rec. 27)
      < (I was) already 3 times with him .... with weapons just once >

In (11) the association of *schon* with an *adverbial of frequency* seems to rule out the pure temporal value of the analysed item. This shows up through negation: the negative counterpart of temporal *already* is *not yet,* while this negative transformation is not possible in (11): *already three times* is rather opposed to inferior quantities (*not just one or two*). While in its temporal meaning the item has scope over the VP, in (11) it has scope over the frequency adverbial *three times* and induces a scalar reading, that is an evaluation of the relative quantification (cf. Muller 1975, Löbner 1989).

A similar remark can also hold for utterances like (12), which represents the typical initial occurrences of *déjà*.

(12)   je [fe] un stage de français   …
      < I do a training course of French >
      déjà je [komãse] le vingt-sept :de novembre
      < already I start(ed) the 27th of november >   (Bernarda: cycle 3, rec. 31)

Here, the association of *déjà* with an *adverbial of position*, indicating the reference time of the situation (*the 27th of november),* is quite bizarre: the presence of this TAC usually gives the possibility to leave undetermined the precise moment where the event has taken place, otherwise we obtain once again the scalar reading (cf. Löbner 1989), so that *already the 27th of november* seems to be opposed to *not just a few days ago.*

However in (12), and similar occurrences, a temporal interpretation of *déjà* cannot be completely excluded. It is noteworthy to remark that at this stage tense marking on verb morphology is not systematic: in French L2, the auxiliated construction (aux-Ve) is emerging in opposition to Vo for the present, but in many contexts the base form Ve is still attested (cf. *komãse* in 12). As a consequence, the simultaneous presence of calendaric expression and of a resultative item could be considered as an attempt to mark temporal relations by several lexical means - adverbials, TACs and the lexical content of the verb *commencer* - instead of relying on verb morphology. This is clearly the case in (13), where the past reference is indicated first by the lexical item *avant,* then by the calendaric expression *3rd March,* which is in its turn further specified by the determination *déjà passé.*

(13)   (Bernarda about her daughter's birthday)
      NS ça va être son anniversaire ?
      < is it going to be her birthday ?>

oh non non [se] le dimanche avant...
< oh no no it is the sunday before ..>
le trois + le trois de mars **déjà** [pase]
<the 3rd of March already past > (Bernarda: cycle 3, rec. 32)

As a matter of fact Alfonso, who is a bit more advanced than Bernarda, uses TACs (and especially *déjà*) in ambiguous contexts in order to place the relevant event in the past (14), although in other contexts without *déjà*, and at the same period, the verb is correctly inflected to mark *passé composé*.

(14)   (the NS has not understood whether the event related by AL refers to the past or to the future)
         NS ?tu y es allé + ou tu iras?
         < have you gone there or will you? >
         ... je **déjà** je [ale] là bas oui
         < ... i already go there >
         et après je [ale] otra fois je [ire] otra fois
         < and afterwards I go again I will go again > (Alfonso: cycle 1, rec. 19)

Contrary to French learners, Tino's verbal opposition between simple and auxiliated forms in German L2 (Vo vs. Aux geV) seems to be already well established at this stage, nevertheless *schon* appears mainly as a clear scalar particle (sometimes also as modal particle) or in association with other adverbials. Consequently it seems that, in spite of variable morphological marking on the verb, learners of German and French L2 go on anchoring their utterances in time through several means: verb morphology and temporal adverbials. Some scalar readings of *déjà / schon* could be an epiphenomenon of grammaticalisation, but the status of these items is still an ambiguous one, between scalar particle and aspectual operator.

- Phase 2:   *déjà /schon* + VP

In a subsequent phase the presence of time adverbials decreases, *déjà* and *schon* are more frequently attested in utterances where these items can mark the resultative or the semelfactive character of the event (ex. 15a-c); while in the previous phase the relevant predicate had prototypically a past or perfect value[9], now they also appear in predicates with present tense and imperfective value (cf. 15c).

(15a)   er hat nich gesehen das die/ + die zug ist **schon** weggefahrt
        < he has not seen that the train has already left > (Tino, cycle 3, rec. 33)

(15b)   tous les gens que j'ai **déjà** dit
        < all the people I have already said > (Alfonso, cycle 3, rec. 33)

(15c)   (ma fille) elle va **déjà** au lycée
        < (my daughter) already goes to secondary school > (Alfonso, cycle 3, rec. 33)

The transition between the first and the second phase is accompanied by a further morphosyntactic development :

- in French L2 the distinction Aux-Ve et Vo becomes more systematic, while learners start using periphrastic forms (such as verb *aller + Vinf* , or *être en train de*) and the *imparfait* of the copula;

- in German L2 we state the emergence of *Praeteritum* for the copula and the modals, which is then opposed to *Perfekt*; imperfective aspect is sometimes expressed by the adverbial *im Moment* (cf. Dietrich et al. 1995).

This evolution concerning the expression of temporality corresponds to a change in the scope of the analysed adverbs: in the first phase they affected principally a nominal adverbial phrase, now they affect more often the VP and quantify over the time span indicated by the verb's finite morphology[10].

As for continuative items, in both French and German L2, additive particles *noch* and *encore* get meanwhile applied to time intervals (=*still*, as in 16-17), although in French only one[11] such occurrence is attested (17).

(16)   ich bin **noch** bose mit die andere   (Tino, cycle 2, rec. 27)
        < I am still angry with the other >

(17)   NS tu as toujours peur de la mer ? oui + **encore** oui   (Bernarda, cycle 3, rec. 32)
        <are you always afraid of the sea?> < yes + still yes >

Learners of English L2

Already is attested only in the production of the most advanced learner, Lavinia, and for a relatively low number of occurrences (6 times in 2 cycles). Contrary to its French and German L2 equivalents, the first utterances with *already* do <u>not</u> contain time adverbials (ex. 18), but this item appears at a stage where the learner already has a functional opposition between present and past, while aspectual distinctions (perfective, imperfective and perfect) are being elaborated and will be shortly afterwards systematized :

(18)   my landlord **already** + did + this kind of thing (Lavinia, cycle 2, rec. 23)

In comparison to Tino, Bernarda and Alfonso, Lavinia's occurrences of *already* correspond right from the beginning to other learners' phase 2 and so does her verb morphology.

Further development of aspectual distinctions, is accompanied by the appearance of *still* and occurrences of *already* with predicates in present tense (ex. 19a-b)

(19a)　　Carlo + is **still** working　　　　　　　　(Lavinia, cycle 2, rec. 26)
(19b)　　the course is full up **already**　　　　　　(Lavinia, cycle 3, rec. 31)

The less advanced learner Andrea shows a special path because of idiosyncrasies which blur the picture. As it has already been pointed out, his transition to a postbasic stage is limited to the development of morphological opposition of tense, while aspectual distinctions (Vo/Ving or Ved/Aux-Ved) are dysfunctional till the end of the observation period. At this stage *again* appears in contexts which imply a <u>continuative</u> reading (20).

(20)　　　(the learner is talking about the Italian town he comes from)
　　　　　　　　when i had ten years
　　　　　　　　twenty years ago ... a lot of er woods
　　　　　NS and now ?all the woods have gone?
　　　　　　　　no there are + **again** but no like before　　　　(Andrea, cycle 2, rec. 24)

In the last recordings *again* is attested in its iterative function; meanwhile Andrea produces *still*, which, in alternation with *stay*, seems to be used as an idiosyncratic auxiliary marking imperfective aspect (21a-b).

(21a)　　(description of a picture where someone is buying apples)
　　　　　this man **still** to take some/ some apples into ... his bag　(Andrea, cycle3, rec. 31)

(21b)　　(film retelling: the protagonist calls his dentist)
　　　　　he **stay** to take an appointment with the dentist ….　　　(Andrea, cycle3, rec. 32)

From what we have seen so far, there could be said to be some idiosyncratic features in Andrea's postbasic variety development of verb morphology as well as in his use of TACs. Some of his overgeneralisations can probably be traced back to SL influence (Italian *ancora* corresponds to both *still* and *again*, while Italian *stare* is both a lexical verb equivalent to *stay* and an imperfective marker), but they are attested precisely when the learner is elaborating functional tense oppositions on verb morphology.

5.3 Comparison of the acquisitional paths and explanatory hypotheses

The exposed analysis has revealed commonalities as well as divergences in the acquisitional path of *already / still*: these items usually appear at postbasic variety level, but resultative *already* seems to be acquired in two phases (Bernarda, Alfonso, Tino) or one (Lavinia) according to the development of verb morphology; a further morphological evolution seems to coincide with the emergence of continuative *still* (Lavinia, Bernarda, Tino), although other

forms are also used for this function at a less advanced level (Andrea) but in an idiosyncratic way. The comparison of the three groups of learners suggests an explanation based on the development of verb morphology. Under this perspective, the passage to postbasic varieties seems to be marked for all learners by at least two main stages :

- first, development of grammatical means encoding **tense** oppositions: emergence of the auxiliary in French and German L2, while in English L2 simple forms for the present are opposed to the past of irregular verbs;

- later on, appearance of grammatical means encoding **aspect** distinctions: periphrastic forms as Fr. *aller + V, être en train de V*, Engl. *used to, going to* or verbal morphemes as Germ. *Präteritum*, French *imparfait* for the copula, Engl. *progressive form* Ving and the distinction between Ved / Aux-Ved.

The correlation of this development with the observed sequence of TACs could be generalized as follows: a functional opposition of <u>tense</u> is necessary for the emergence and use of resultative *already* (which prototypically appears in past contexts), while a functional marking of <u>aspect</u> (perfective vs. imperfective) is required for the use of *still* (which needs imperfective aspect in order to get a continuative reading). This hypothesis perfectly accounts for the acquisitional path observed for example in Lavinia, however it does not explain the idiosyncrasies noticed in Andrea (continuative *again* or *still / stay* as markers of imperfectivity), nor many of the occurrences corresponding to the first phase of *schon/déjà* (ambiguous status or attempts to mark past reference) respectively in Tino, Bernarda and Alfonso.

A more powerful explanation is represented by the exact opposite hypothesis: even if *already / still* generally appear in postbasic varieties, in case of a still ambiguous verbal morphology these items can be used as **compensatory means** contributing to **tense** (cf. *déjà* in French L2) or **aspect** (cf. *still/again* in Andrea's production) marking of the predicate.

As a matter of fact, when French L2 auxiliated forms are about to emerge in opposition to Vo but in competition with the basic form Ve, so that even tense marking through verb morphology is not reliable, Bernarda and Alfonso use *déjà* in alternation or in association with other temporal adverbials in order to signal <u>past reference</u> (cf. ex. 12-14).

Later on, verb morphology of both French L2 learners, as well as Tino's for German L2, is limited to one functional opposition: auxiliated forms are opposed to simple forms, but they are applied to all past contexts, while aspectual distinctions are expressed by adverbials or the lexical content of the verb. At this stage we can suppose that the presence vs. absence of

schon / *déjà* discriminates respectively <u>perfect</u> from <u>perfective</u> aspect, such distinction being not marked by verb morphology alone (nor in the standard TLs).

Even if it is not always easy to state the exact function (scalar, temporal, aspectual) of the items analysed, the hypothesis of their compensatory role is clearly supported by the idiosyncrasies noticed in the less advanced learner of English L2, Andrea, who produces continuative *again* and *still* when he masters grammatical tense distinctions but not aspectual ones (ex. 20-21). A continuative item requires imperfective aspect, but in his production this condition is reversed: we infer imperfective aspect thanks to the presence of these items, which are thus used as markers of <u>imperfectivity</u>.

On the contrary Lavinia quickly acquires the TL verb morphology which shows a very transparent form / function relationship as far as tense and aspect are concerned: the opposition between simple forms and progressive forms corresponds to the distinction of perfective / imperfective, while the perfect form encodes perfect aspect; these aspectual distinctions are available for the three tenses: present, past and future (cf. Klein 1994). In Lavinia's production tense and aspect are rapidly specified by verb morphology, hence the potential compensatory role of *already / still* is not needed, they are at once used with their standard temporal meaning.

On the basis of these statements, the unequal frequence of certain items (*déjà / schon*) as well as idiosyncratic uses (where *still* has the function of an imperfective auxiliary and *again* gives a continuative reading) could be due to the learners' attempts to clarify an ambiguous verb morphology:

- as long as one verb form applying to all present contexts is opposed to one form applying to all past contexts, verb morphology does not allow any aspectual distinctions for the specified tense: this aspectual specification is then expressed by TACs (*déjà / schon* marking "perfect"*; noch / still* and Andrea's *again* marking "imperfectivity");
- when the auxiliary is about to emerge, so that even tense marking on verb morphology is not reliable, a resultative item can be used to signal "past" reference (cf. initial occurrences of *déjà* in French L2).

We would like tentatively to extend this explanation to the sporadic, precocious presence of continuative *noch* in Angelina (1 occ.), *déjà* in Palmira (1 occ.) and maybe continuative *again* in Santo (cf. ex. 6c), which are produced at the basic variety level, but their rarity does not allow any precise statements. Their presence anyway suggests that a learner fossilized as for grammatical structures can progress further on compensatory lexical items[12], which however

keep an ambiguous status, as shown by the different possible interpretations of Santo's utterance given in 6c (and repeated here), and of Palmira's following utterance.

(6c)   (Santo is waiting for his driving licence)
        maybe i wait **again** another month   (Santo: cycle 1, rec. 16)
        (= *I keep on waiting? i wait one more month? once again i wait one month*?)

(22)   (Palmira says she has headache)
        NS maintenant ?
          < *now?*>
         déja déja hier soir eh * dolor *   (Palmira: cycle 3, rec. 36)
        < *already yesterday evening pain = already yesterday? from yesterday ? also yesterday?*>

The interrelation established between underdetermined verb morphology and presence of TACs is confirmed by other studies. Carroll / von Stutterheim (1997)'s analysis of temporal reference in German and English narratives reveals the speaker's preference for different linguistic means according to the language in question: temporal adverbs in German and event structure in English. The speaker's choice would reflect the linguistic resources available in the respective language: the English system allows a rich repertoire of temporal - aspectual distinctions through verb morphology, which are not possible through the German verb system, so that German speakers resort more often to temporal adverbs.

Dankova (1997), who studied narratives produced in esperanto by Italian, French and Russian speakers, has stated a similar connection: "plus la morphologie verbale est riche, moins les expressions adverbiales de temps sont nécessaires ... si les italophones expriment des différentiations aspectuelles par des moyens verbaux, les francophones et surtout les russophones", who show a less varied verb morphology, "sont amenés à utiliser les adverbes de nature de transition et de contraste" (p.189). Briefly, speakers who present a rich verb morphology in esperanto, use a few adverbs of contrast; while speakers who show a less rich verb morphology use more adverbs of contrast.

6. Conclusions

The proposed analysis has allowed us to see that learners of different TLs show a similar order of appearance and use of scopal items at a given acquisitional stage of L2. In order to generalize the statements of the previous sections, the acquisition of TACs could be integrated

in the developmental sequence for the expression of temporal relations identified by Dietrich et al. (1995), as in the following diagramme:

prebasic varieties	basic variety	transition	postbasic variety
---		>	------------------------
implicit reference > (PNO)	explicit reference by lexical items : Tadvs of pos. frequ., duration **+ iterative items**	> emergence of finite verb (auxiliary) *already* / *still* + Tadv. scalar meaning or compensatory value	morphosyntactic ref. Vfin *already* / *still* + Vfin contrastive value

In <u>prebasic varieties</u> no TACs are attested, although there may be other scopal items (additive / restrictive particles). At the <u>basic variety</u> temporal relations are mainly explicited by lexical means, which allow learners to mark events boundaries or to specify "some time span, its position on the time axis, its duration and (if iterated) its frequency" (Dietrich et al. 1995:268). From this stage on appear **iterative** items: under a discourse perspective they establish an anaphoric link towards a previously mentioned event; from a temporal point of view they make reference to another occurrence of the same event in a previous time interval, from which the actual one is separated (non adjacent) through mention of other events (PNO) or the presence of lexical elements such as *after* or *next*. Iterativity perfectly fits the organizing principles at work at this stage.

In <u>postbasic varieties</u> the main change is represented by the emergence of finite verb morphology. Learners develop at least one verb form for the present, opposed to one verb form for the past; there follows the eventual elaboration of grammaticalized aspectual oppositions. This development has an important consequence for discourse organisation: verb morphology can signal by itself whether the temporal reference is valid for the present or for the past, a function that was previously accomplished by temporal adverbs or inferred by default. At this stage items such as ***already*** and ***still*** can be used to relate and contrast different time intervals of the same event. The association of these items with a functional verb morphology is necessary to get their standard temporal meaning: *already* marks the transition from a negative to a positive phase of a state or an event, while *still* marks its continuation from a previous undetermined time interval. In both cases finite verb morphology indicates which is the actual time span of the event talked about (Klein 1994's Topic Time), while TACs make reference to alternative (previous) time spans of the same event.

The transition between the two varieties can be marked by an <u>intermediate phase</u> where morphological variation is not yet reliable or systematic, so that temporal relations are still

mainly expressed by lexical means. In this phase *already / still* have an ambiguous status: they can be used as scalar particles or as compensatory means contributing to the marking of **tense** (*already* = past) or **aspect** (*already* = perfect; *still* = imperfective), but not contrastively. In this phase can also be included the rare occurrences attested in the production of learners which do not go beyond the basic variety level.

Coming back to the initial questions, we have thus described the emergence / use of TACs in relation to the development of learner varieties and their place among other devices to express temporal relations, but what are the reasons explaining this developmental sequence? Theoretically nothing prevents learners from using all of these adverbs from the initial stages of L2 acquisition, as they do with other adverbials. But we have seen that this does not happen. On the contrary the observed items appear in a fixed order and the particle repertoire gets enriched in parallel with the progression of the learner system towards the TL morphology. The sequence of appearance and use of the items in question seems indeed to be determined on the one hand by the development of the learner variety, given that this is the systematic feature common to the 3 groups of learners, and on the other hand by their discourse functioning. This correlation becomes clearer by considering not only TACs but also their structurally linked scopal items and the relative constituent they have scope over:

additive/restrictive particles, attested from prebasic varieties, quantify over the <u>lexical elements</u> (NP-referents or adjectives) which constitute the typical repertoire of this stage;

iterative items, produced from the basic variety level, quantify over <u>tokens of events</u> which have to be bounded and the repertoire of the basic variety allows to do it;

resultative / continuative items relate and contrast time intervals of a <u>single event</u> and, in order to do so, need a specification of the relevant time interval by a functional verb morphology.

This correlation provides an alternative explanation for the late appearance of certain items. The reasons for the observed acquisitional sequence are to be found in the constraints governing the learner system at a given time and in the discourse functioning of the items in question, rather than in the conceptual complexity of TACs: internal factors concerning the grammaticalization process seem to be better candidates than cognitive factors to explain the acquisition of TACs.

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¹ A first version of this paper was presented at the Euroconference on "the Dynamics of Learner Varieties" in Sant-Feliu (Spain), October 2000. We are very grateful to Clive Perdue for many commentaries and precious suggestions on preliminary versions.

² There are many different interpretations of the meaning of TACs. Some authors consider them in terms of the speaker's expectations: *already / still* would signal that the relative event has taken place earlier or later than expected (cf. Hoepelman & Roeher 1980, Vet 1980). Others prefer to consider these items as aspectual operators, while such expectations are treated as contextual pragmatic inferences, which are independent of their basic (temporal) meaning (cf. Löbner 1989, Borillo 1984 and Klein 1994 among others). In the following we adhere to the second view.

³ In other contexts, as in *John has already been to Spain,* this item implies a 'semelfactive' reading: it means that the relative event 'John's being to Spain' has taken place at least one time before the time of utterance. In this case the negation of *already* is not *not yet*, but *never*.

⁴ For a more precise definition of these aspect notions, cf. Klein 1994.
⁵ Learner examples present the following conventions: *..* enclose passages from SL; [..] contain the phonetic transcription of ambiguous verb forms; ... signal omitted passages; + means a short pause; NS introduces native speaker turns; scopal items are reported in bold.

⁶ In comparison to English and German L2, iterative items are quite rare in the production of French L2 learners. A possible explanation is that in Romance languages iterativity is also frequently expressed by the verbal prefix **re-** like in *repasser* for *come again* ou *redescendre* for *go down again*. Spanish-speaking learners of French seemingly rely more on verb lexical aspect rather than on specific adverbs, as can be seen in the following extracts.
In order to get the interlocutor's question repeated, the Italian learner of German Tino says "*bitte nochmal*" = *please (say it) again*; while the Spanish-speaker learner of French Alfonso says : *vous pouvez répéter, s'il vous plaît*? (= *could you repeat, please*?).

⁷ Typical occurrences are f.ex. *je ne sais plus.* For more details on the acquisition of negative items by learners of English and French L2, cf. Giuliano (2000), and for learners of German L2, cf. Becker & Dietrich (1996).

⁸ By the way this is a possible explanation of some idiosyncratic uses mentioned in tables 2-4: certain learners take advantage of the structural similarity between additive and iterative items, using iterative particles instead of additive ones (cf. *again* in Santo) and additive particles instead of iterative ones (cf. *auch* in Angelina). For details about the anaphoric link established by additive particles, cf. Watorek / Perdue (1999) and Benazzo (2000).

⁹ Some authors consider these occurrences in terms of iterative meaning (cf. Gosselin 1996), as opposed to durative meaning (*already / still* + imperfective aspect)

¹⁰ Besides the detailed occurrences, we attested also other non-temporal occurrences of *déjà / schon*, which are used for example as modal particles (e.g. *ich kann schon sagen*). Although interesting in themselves, as they imply a diversification in the functions of *schon / déjà*, they will not be treated here because they go beyond the interests of this paper. For more details, cf. Benazzo 2000.

¹¹ The tiny number of continuative *encore* is probably due to SL influence: Spanish-speaking learners of French L2 seemingly resort more often to verbs like *continuer* (= go on, *continuar* in Spanish), instead of using specific adverbs (cf. note 6 for iterative items).

¹² There seems to be a slight different acquisitional path between learners progressing beyond the basic variety and the ones fossilized at this level: in the former case, learners are more oriented towards TL structures and use *already / still* contrastively once they have reached a postbasic level; in the latter case, they fossilize as for grammatical structures, but progress further in the acquisition of

scopal items by attributing new functions to the repertoire they already have (f.ex. *again / noch* with continuative meaning).