INTERPRETING EVIDENTIALITY IN NON EVIDENTIAL LANGUAGES: L2 SPANISH BY L1 FRENCH SPEAKERS

Evidential meaning, the grammatical indication of information source (Aikhenvald, 2004), is expressed in Romance languages by means of forms that encode other kinds of aspectual and modal values, such as the conditional, the imperfect indicative (IMP-IND) or future tense (Squartini, 2001). However, the forms conveying evidentiality –under particular discourse conditions –, and the specific types of evidential interpretations, vary across these languages, despite close typological proximity. This presentation will be developed under the assumption that theoretical descriptions of the distinctions between the encoded semantic values of Romance verb tenses and the various modal, temporal and evidential interpretations they obtain can benefit from empirical SLA studies comparing L1 and L2 interpretations of evidential utterances, and examining the role of transfer from Romance L1s to L2s.

We offer data on the acquisition of evidentiality in L2 Spanish by L1 French speakers, from two interpretation tasks involving the IMP-IND under conditions that induce reported or inferred evidential readings (Escandell & Leonetti, 2003; Amenós-Pons, 2015): a first offline task examining L1 French speakers' (N = 42, CEFR A2 to C1 levels, plus L1 control group, N = 19) ability to recognize evidentiality in L2 Spanish IMP-IND in if-conditional utterances; and a second, online interpretation task (N = 70, CEFR A2 to C1; and L1 control group, N = 25) involving a variety of Spanish tense-aspect combinations, of which this presentation will focus on further uses of IMP-IND with evidential readings, as shown in (1) and (2).

Our results suggest that, in contrast with other tense uses common to French and Spanish, the specificity of the conditions leading to evidential interpretations of the IMP-IND in each language reduce the potential benefits of L1 transfer. In connection to these conclusions on the acquisition of IMP-IND as a mark of evidentiality, we will discuss the consequences for the study of the Spanish future tense (FUT) as an encoded evidential (Escandell-Vidal 2015).

The Spanish IMP-IND contrasts with the FUT in that the former encodes temporal-aspectual meaning; the evidential readings of the IMP-IND are the result of a pragmatic, last-resort interpretive procedure arising only in linguistically restricted environments. For L2 learners, the identification of evidential readings is challenging because it requires processing at the syntax-pragmatics interface, and for the same reason it has been seen to induce a degree of variability in native speakers (Ahern, Amenós-Pons and Guijarro-Fuentes, 2015).

On the other hand, the Spanish FUT has evolved into an inferential evidential marker (Escandell-Vidal, 2015), as exemplified in (3) and (4), so L1 Spanish speakers clearly prefer the present tense or periphrastic future forms to express pure temporality, as in (5) and (6). This implies that interface processing is not an essential aspect of the evidential interpretation of FUT by L1 speakers. In contrast, the FUT of other Romance varieties has not evolved to encode evidentiality; therefore, assuming transfer, to interpret evidential L2 Spanish FUT readings, processing by L1 French speakers will involve grammar-pragmatics interface integration processes. In consequence, variability can be expected in L2 interpretation of Spanish FUT, to a more significant degree than in L1 Spanish interpretation and production, based on the predictions of the Feature re-assembly hypothesis (Lardiere 2008, 2009): re-assembling bundles of features in the L2

lexicon are an obstacle in the L2 acquisition process of closely related language pairings.

Examples:

(1) **Reported inferential reading of the IMP-IND:**
    + ¿Qué tal está Pedro?
    - Muy ocupado, creo. Se examinaba del permiso de conducir la semana que viene.
    + How's Pedro?
    - Very busy I think. He was taking (IMP-IND) the driving licence test next week.

(2) **Inferrred inferential reading of the IMP-IND:**
    El programa electoral del Partido Ecologista establecía que si llegaba al gobierno acabaría con la energía nuclear en menos de 20 años.
    The electoral programme of the Ecologist Party established that if they got (IMP-IND) into government they would put an end to nuclear energy in less than 20 years.

(3) **Inferred inferential reading of the FUT (epistemic interpretation):**
    María no ha venido. Estará enferma…
    María hasn't come. She must be ill (FUT)

(4) **Inferred inferential reading of the FUT (concessive interpretation):**
    + Jorge es muy listo.
    - Será muy listo, pero no lo parece.
    + Jorge is very clever.
    - He may be (FUT) very clever, but he doesn´t seem like it.

(5) **Present tense with future time reference:**
    El Real Madrid juega el domingo.
    Real Madrid plays (PRES) next Sunday.

(6) **Periphrastic future:**
    Creo que no va a venir.
    I think s/he is not going to come. (PER. FUT).

References:
Ahern, Amenós-Pons and Guijarro-Fuentes. 2015. Metarepresentation and evidentiality in Spanish tense and mood. *Belgian Journal of Linguistics*, 21, 61-82.
Aikhenvald, Alexandra. 2004. *Evidentiality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Amenós-Pons, José. 2015. Spanish 'Imperfecto' vs. French 'Imparfait' in Hypothetical Clauses: A Procedural Account. *Cahiers Chronos* 27, 243-271.
Escandell-Vidal, Victoria and Manuel Leonetti. 2003. On the quotative readings of Spanish Imperfecto. *Cuadernos de Lingüística* X: 135-154.
Squartini, Mario. 2001. "The internal structure of evidentiality in Romance", *Studies in Language* 25 (2): 297-334.
Escandell-Vidal, Victoria. 2015. Evidential futures. M. Kissine, P. de Brabanter & S. Sharifzadeh (eds.) *Future Times, Future Tenses*. Oxford. Oxford University Press.
Lardiere, Donna. 2008. Feature Assembly in Second Language in Second Language Acquisition. In J. Liceras, H. Zobl and H. Goodluck eds. *Features in Second Language Acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 106-140.
Lardiere, Donna. 2009. Some thoughts on a contrastive analysis of feature in second language acquisition. *Second Language Research* 25.2, 173–227.