

**Relating two simultaneous events in discourse:
The role of on-goingness devices in L1 Tunisian Arabic, L1 French
and L2 French by Tunisian learners**

INÈS SADDOUR

Doctor of Philosophy

ASTON UNIVERSITY

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THESIS SUMMARY

Our PhD study focuses on the role of aspectual marking in expressing simultaneity of events in Tunisian Arabic as a first language, French as a first language, as well as in French as a second language by Tunisian learners at different acquisitional stages. We examine how the explicit markers of on-goingness *qa:’id* and «*en train de*» in Tunisian Arabic and in French respectively are used to express this temporal relation, in competition with the simple forms, the prefixed verb form in Tunisian Arabic and the *présent de l’indicatif* in French. We use a complex verbal task of retelling simultaneous events sharing an interval on the time axis based on eight videos presenting two situations happening in parallel. Two types of simultaneity are exploited: perfect simultaneity (when the two situations are parallel to each other) and inclusion (one situation is framed by the second one). Our informants in French and in Tunisian Arabic have two profiles, highly educated and low educated speakers. We show that the participants’ response to the retelling task varies according to their profiles, and so does their use of the on-goingness devices in the expression of simultaneity. The differences observed between the two profile groups are explained by the degree to which the speakers have developed a habit of responding to tasks. This is a skill typically acquired during schooling. We notice overall that the use of *qa:’id* as well as of «*en train de*» is less frequent in the data than the use of the simple forms. However, *qa:’id* as well as «*en train de*» are employed to play discursive roles that go beyond the proposition level. We postulate that despite the shared features between Tunisian Arabic and French regarding marking the concept of on-goingness, namely the presence of explicit lexical, not fully grammaticalised markers competing with other non-marked forms, the way they are used in the discourse of simultaneous events shows clear differences. We explain that «*en train de*» plays a more contrastive role than *qa:’id* and its use in discourse obeys a stricter rule. In

cases of the inclusion type of simultaneity, it is used to construe the ‘framing’ event that encloses the second event. In construing perfectly simultaneous events, and when both «*en train de*» and *présent de l’indicatif* are used, the proposition with «*en train de*» generally precedes the proposition with *présent de l’indicatif*, and not the other way around. *qa:id* obeys, but to a less strict rule as it can be used interchangeably with the simple form regardless of the order of propositions. The contrastive analysis of French L1 and L2 reveals learners’ deviations from natives’ use of on-goingness devices. They generalise the use of «*en train de*» and apply different rules to the interaction of the different marked and unmarked forms in discourse. Learners do not master its role in discourse even at advanced stages of acquisition despite its possible emergence around the basic and intermediate varieties. We conclude that the native speakers’ use of «*en train de*» involves mastering its role at the macro-structure level. This feature, not explicitly available to learners in the input, might persistently present a challenge to L2 acquisition of the periphrasis.

Key words / phrases

Temporal simultaneity - Perspective taking - Aspect - Event construal – Learner varieties

DEDICATION

*This thesis is dedicated to the memory of **Professor Clive Perdue**, who introduced me to the wonderful field of Second Language Acquisition and convinced me to pursue my career in Linguistics and Acquisition. He also strongly encouraged me to work with Dr Emmanuelle Labeau at Aston University. He will always remain an inspiration in my academic career.*

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ARABIC TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS



Table 2. Arabic transcription conventions of vowels



Source : <http://semtalk.talkbank.org/arabictranscription.htm>

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

&	Indicates that affixes merge with the root of the word
∅	Zero element
-	Is used when affixes and the root do not merge
Δ0	No change
Δ _{sit}	Change of situation of the video
Δ _{sit+form}	Change of situation and form
0S	0-State lexical content
1S	1-State lexical content
2S	2-State lexical content
A.high	Advanced high stage
A.Low	Advanced low stage
A.Med	Advanced medium stage
Adv	Adverbial
AP	Active participle
AUX	Auxiliary
BAC	Baccalaureate, A-level equivalent
Bas.V	Basic variety

BF	Base form
CA	Classical Arabic
DOC	Direct object complement
E1	First event
E2	Second event
ESF	European Science Foundation
Fem	Feminine
FIN	Finiteness
FLA	First language acquisition
FrL1	French as a first language
FrL2	French as a second language
FUT	Future tense
GER	<i>Gérondif</i>
Hab	Habitual
H-educated	Highly educated
High-Near-N	High to near-native stage
Ich	Inchoative
Imp	Imperfective
INC	Index of narrative complexity

INF	Infinitive
Int.V	Intermediate stage
Ite	Iterative
L.V	Learner variety
L1	First language
L2	Second language
L-educated	Low educated
M	Marked form
Masc	Masculine
MS	Main structure
MSA	Modern Standard Arabic
NEG	Negation
No spec	No specification devices
Nonprg	Non progressive
P1	First protagonist
P2	Second protagonist
PAR	Particle
Pct	Perfect
Per	Perfective

PM	Preverbal marker
PP1	First person plural
Pr	Proposition
PRG	Progressive marker
Prg	Progressive
Pr _{mar}	Proposition with the marked form
Pro	Prospective
Pr _{unmar}	Proposition with the unmarked form
PS1	First person singular
PS2	Second person singular
PS3F	Third person singular feminine
PS3M	Third person singular masculine
PV	Prefixes verb form
S1	First situation
S2	Second situation
SAL	spoken Arabic language
Sb1	Sub-event related to Situation 1 of the video
Sb2	Sub-event related to Situation 2 of the video
<i>Sim</i>	Simultaneity

Sit ₁	First situation related in the retelling
SLA	Second language acquisition
Spec	Specification devices
SS	Side structures
SV	Suffixed verb form
TAL1	Tunisian Arabic as a first language
TAM	Tense, aspect and modality
TL	Target language
TSit	Time of the situation
TT	Topic time
TTR	Type / token ratio
TU	Time of the utterance
U	Unmarked form
Unc	Unclear aspectual value
V0	Verbless clause
VOCD	Vocabulary diversity parameter

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INTRODUCTION

Simultaneity is the partial or total temporal overlap of events (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994; Broccias 2008). From conceptualisation to verbalisation, this temporal relation presents a number of complexities to the observer as well as to the speaker.

It is a very well known fact, in physics at least, that simultaneity of events depends on the frame of reference from which the events are observed (Jammer 2006; Levitin *et al.* 2000). Furthermore, in order to speak about two events that happen at the same time, it is inevitable to verbalise them one after the other, which is paradoxical, unless the related events are summarised in one proposition, which means that a different perspective is taken on events. The difficulty therefore is to make sure the interlocutor understands and interprets those related events as simultaneous and not sequential, as it is the default meaning of two adjacent propositions in the absence of any marker indicating otherwise (Berman & Slobin 1994a; Klein 1994). One way to achieve that is to pick the appropriate linguistic devices from the available ones in the language to link the two events in order to convey their relation of simultaneity. In this respect, different languages can have different means of expressing simultaneity. Another possibility is to leave it to interpretation from the extra-linguistic shared knowledge (Schmiedtová 2004).

To illustrate, imagine one who observes two people in a public park, for example a boy playing football and a girl eating ice cream and the observer wishes to relate the events. He / she can simply say, “They are enjoying themselves”, representing the two events conceptualised with just one proposition. This utterance though conveys through extra-linguistic pragmatic knowledge that the two people are having fun at the same time, does not give details about what each person is doing. It merely gives an appreciation of what is going on in that park at a certain reference time. If the speaker chooses otherwise to construe each of the events relating them as simultaneous, he or she has to do so uttering one event after the other. In addition, he or she has to choose how to mark the relation of simultaneity between the two events <boy playing football> and <girl eating ice cream> either explicitly or implicitly.

The choices we are talking about are part of the process of solving a “complex verbal task” (Klein & Perdue 1997; Klein & von Stutterheim 2006). As argued by Perdue (1997), very little in our verbal productions is not perspective-driven, i.e., does not emanate from a particular choice. Perdue (1997) says in the paper he presented in response to Harriet Jisa:

« Harriet Jisa conclut en posant la question : qu'est-ce qui ne relève pas de la perspective ? La réponse est certainement «très peu», et cela concerne les contraintes grammaticales absolues.»

In order to solve the verbal task of relating simultaneous events and give his / her “version” of the situations “observed” in the visual world, the speaker takes a particular perspective. He /she has a number of options within his / her reach, including linguistic options and personal preferences, but also at least four constraints restricting those options (von Stutterheim *et al.* 2009, p.196). The first constraint is related to the particular cultural and social habits of the community the speaker belongs to. The second constraint concerns the properties of the language used to complete the verbal task. Among the constraints of the language are the ways in which it expresses the fundamental categories of tense and aspect. The third constraint is the nature of the communicative task itself. The fourth and last constraint type is to do with the level of proficiency of the speaker, which limits the way, he / she has access to the language options.

In this PhD project, we focus on the temporal perspectives taken by speakers to go about the verbal task of retelling simultaneous events. Compared to the relation of sequentiality, which was privileged in the studies of the narrative discourse (e.g., Hopper 1979; Labov 2003; Labov & Waletzky 2003; Noyau 1990; Noyau 2002; Noyau *et al.* 2005), little research has been devoted to the relation of simultaneity. Prominent exceptions are Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim (1994) for German and Turkish, Leclercq (2007; 2008; 2009) for English L2, Schmiedtová (2004) for German and English learners of Czech. Some other studies considered particular markers of simultaneity, such as Broccias (2008) and Silva (1991) who studied *as-* and *while-*clauses in English.

What is of particular interest to us is the attested role of aspect, namely the expression of on-goingness in expressing the relation of simultaneity (e.g., Leclercq 2007; 2008; 2009 and

Schmiedtová 2004). In fact, simultaneous contexts trigger the use of the progressive marker «*en train de*» according to the study of Leclercq (2007). In addition, Schmiedtová (2004) observes in her research that aspect is fundamental in marking simultaneity in Czech for instance, and that overall, speakers of English and Czech use different “aspectual styles” to express simultaneity.

Comparing two typologically different languages, Tunisian Arabic and French, we focus on the role of aspectual marking, namely the role of using devices expressing on-goingness in the expression of simultaneity of events in Tunisian Arabic as a first language (L1) and French L1. We also examine the productions, on the same task, of Tunisian learners of French as a second language (L2) at different acquisitional stages.

The shortage, or rather absence, of empirical research on the temporality of Tunisian Arabic is noteworthy. However, the descriptions of the traditional grammars of written Arabic (considered conventionally as one entity) and Semitic languages, as well as some studies of other Arabic languages show us that we have at hand an aspectual language. This means that the predicate in Arabic primarily expresses aspectual distinctions. We can intuitively confirm this assumption. However, based on oral productions we gathered, we will be able to give more insights into the temporal system of Tunisian Arabic, and more importantly provide an accurate understanding of how Tunisian native speakers express on-goingness.

French, on the other hand, morphologically marks more tense distinctions than aspectual ones. We are therefore tempted to compare these two different languages and see if aspect will be used to express simultaneity. Due to the supposed differences in expressing temporal relations¹ between the two languages, namely aspectual expression, we question whether the use of aspectual expression will be different between the two languages. We are also curious to investigate if, and how learners use aspect to express simultaneity.

Given the recent interest in the expression of on-goingness in French, a few studies have already

¹ Temporal relations refer in this project to the expression of time in language in general.

demonstrated that modern French has a periphrasis «*en train de*», which competes with *présent de l'indicatif* in progressive contexts (Borillo 2005; Lachaux 2005; Leclercq 2007; Mortier 2005; 2008; Pusch 2003; 2005). When it comes to Tunisian Arabic, however, we can only rely on the very limited study of Cuvalay (1991) at this stage. Tunisian native speakers have a pre-verbal marker *qa:'id* used with a prefixed verb form to convey on-goingness. Our comparison intends therefore to verify whether this common feature would result in similar behaviours of the speakers of each language on the same verbal task.

The objective of our research is threefold:

- (i) Our first objective is to examine the most frequently used devices for expressing on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic and in French establishing the specificities and contexts of their use.
- (ii) Secondly, we plan to investigate how on-goingness devices in each L1 are used to express simultaneity of two events.
- (iii) Thirdly and finally, within an acquisitional perspective, we are interested in looking at how Tunisian learners of L2 French use on-goingness devices in the target language to express simultaneity. We will do so cross-sectionally, examining different learner profiles in various varieties.

In order to achieve our objectives, we use a complex verbal task of retelling simultaneous events sharing an interval on the time axis. Two types of simultaneity are exploited: perfect simultaneity (when the two situations are parallel to each other) and inclusion (where one situation is framed by the second one). We hope to test whether different types of simultaneity would elicit different uses of aspectual marking.

Our informants in French and in Tunisian Arabic have two profiles, highly educated and low educated speakers.

To summarise, our project investigates the temporal perspectives under which the speakers present simultaneous events in discourse in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 by Tunisian learners. It focuses on the use of on-goingness devices in expressing two types of simultaneity, perfect simultaneity and inclusion. With this background, this research looks at the different choices made by native speakers of two typologically different languages regarding expressing on-goingness to mark simultaneity. We diversify the informants' sample in each language group to include speakers with different profiles. Through our investigation of the complex verbal task of relating simultaneous events, we will be able to study the impact of some constraints as highlighted by von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009, p.196) as susceptible to control the perspectives taken by our informants. Specifically, we will be able to study whether native productions will differ due to the different L-educated and H-educated speaker profiles and how this will affect the aspectual specificities of the language used. We will also be able to examine whether the specificities of Tunisian Arabic and French will result in differences in native speakers' productions in the two groups. We will also be able to investigate whether the specificities of the learners' mother language (Tunisian Arabic) will affect the way they complete the verbal task in L2 French and also the way they use aspectual means to express this temporal relation.

1. Research questions

To summarise, this project specifically attempts to provide considered answers to the following questions:

- (1) How is on-goingness expressed in Tunisian Arabic and in French native speech? This will also consider what are the different aspectual markers available in each language? What are their specificities and contexts of use? And does the educational background of informants in the respective L1s affect the way they complete the task?
- (2) What is the role of on-goingness devices in the expression of each type of simultaneity? In addition, what is the role of simultaneity in the use of the different devices in Tunisian Arabic L1, French L1 and in French L2 by Tunisian learners?
- (3) Does the L1 of Tunisian learners of FrL2 influence the way they use aspectual marking in

retelling simultaneous situations in L2?

(4) How are the on-goingness devices structured in the discourse of simultaneous events, in Tunisian Arabic L1, French L1 and in French L2?

2. Overview of the PhD thesis

This PhD study is divided into two major parts and each part is composed of a number of chapters. Part 1 deals with the key concepts that nourished our thinking and inspired our research questions. Part 2 is about the actual research, its methodology and the results.

Part 1

In Part 1, we present all the key concepts relevant to our investigation of the relation of simultaneity and its expression in discourse. Therefore, we define this temporal relation at the outset of Chapter 1. Then, we review the main research on simultaneity in the narrative discourse in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, we focus on the role of aspect as a marker of simultaneity in discourse. In Chapter 4, we introduce the concept of learner variety and we review the main research into the learner varieties and acquisitional stages, which will constitute our framework in deciding about our learners' profiles. In Chapter 4 we narrow down the scope of this review of the literature to focus on the main findings of research on the expression of on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic and in French. We naturally give special attention to presenting the expression of temporality in Tunisian Arabic, which is virtually still unknown.

Before moving to the second part of the thesis, we round up the main issues discussed in the theoretical background, remind the reader of our research questions, elaborating on them with more specific enquiries, and we highlight our contribution to the investigation of aspect in native language and in language acquisition.

Our second part is devoted to the project. It starts with a presentation of the research methodology, presenting the fieldwork and procedure of data elicitation and gathering in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, we present all the data analysis tools selected and adopted to serve the purposes

of this study. The whole chapter 3 is devoted to the presentation of our findings. We first present the quantitative analyses, and then we focus on qualitative analyses of on-goingness devices more at the proposition than at the discourse level. In Chapter 4, we discuss our findings in the light of the results of other studies. Finally, in Chapter 5, we present our general conclusions and discuss the imitations of this work, suggesting new avenues for future research.

PART 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

This theoretical part aims at giving a detailed overview of the literature relevant to our study, namely, the literature on how speakers go about relating events in a discourse. For this, we appeal to the research findings based on the Heidelberg Project (Carroll & Lambert 2003; Carroll & von Stutterheim 2003; Leclercq 2007; Schmid 2004; von Stutterheim 2003; von Stutterheim & Carroll 2006; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002; von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002). We review therefore the options and constraints speakers are faced with in general, as well as the literature on the relation of simultaneity and its expression in discourse, in particular.

In the first chapter of this theoretical overview, we define the concept of simultaneity and its expression in language (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994; Chia 2002; Jammer 2006; Schmiedtová 2004), lingering on temporal expression in language and the categories of tense and aspect, which are highly related to the concept of simultaneity (Jammer 2006; Leclercq 2007; Leclercq 2008; Leclercq 2009; Schmiedtová 2004).

In the second chapter, we deal with the relation of simultaneity as it is expressed in the wider context of discourse, namely in narrative discourse. By discourse, we mean the oral texts generated as a response to a given or underlying question. We review the state of the art of narrative as well as its structure (Hopper 1979; Labov 2003; Labov & Waletzky 2003; von Stutterheim & Klein 1989; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2009).

In the third chapter, we narrow down our review to focus on the role of aspectual perspective in the expression of the relation of simultaneity in discourse. We begin the chapter by explaining the role of aspect in structuring the narrative discourse in general and we finish by reviewing the main research findings on the role of aspectual perspective in expressing simultaneity. In the fourth chapter, we further narrow down the scope of the previous one to pay particular attention to progressive marking and its role in expressing simultaneity, as was showed by Leclercq (2007) for example. We close the chapter with an exposition of how on-goingness is marked in the languages we are investigating - first Tunisian Arabic, then French.

We devote the fifth chapter to the expression of simultaneity in learner varieties. We start our chapter by defining what a second language learner is, and reviewing the different learner varieties (Bartning 1997; Bartning 2009; Bartning 2009; Bartning & Schlyter 2004; Bhardwaj *et al.* 1988; Dietrich *et al.* 1995; Klein 2005; Klein & Perdue 1992; 1997; Labeau & Myles 2009; Perdue 1993a; 1993b; Véronique 2000; 2009). We then focus the review on the main research findings on the expression of simultaneity by L2 learners, mainly those of the studies of Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim (1994); Leclercq (2007; 2008; 2009) and Schmiedtová (2004).

CHAPTER 1. THE RELATION OF SIMULTANEITY

1.1. What is simultaneity?

Simultaneity is a temporal relation (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994; Schmiedtová 2004), one of the three possible relations that can hold between two situations². In fact, one situation can be anterior to, subsequent to, or simultaneous with another situation. The concept of temporal simultaneity (henceforth *Sim*) raises a number of problems in cognitive sciences, physics, and in philosophy. One of those problems is associated to perception as Levitin *et al.* (2000, p.323) argue:

«An unsolved problem in cognitive science concerns the perception of simultaneous events, particularly when the information impinging on the sensory receptors comes from two different sensory modalities. For example, an event in the external world may give rise to both visual and auditory signals that may or may not be received at the sensory receptors of a human or a machine at the same time. »

Whitrow (1961, p.75), in Jammer (2006, p.20), points out that the fact that we can be aware that two situations can happen successively presupposes that they can happen simultaneously:

«Our conscious appreciation of the fact that one event follows another is of a different kind from our awareness of either event separately. If two events are to be represented as occurring in succession, then—paradoxically— they must also be thought of simultaneously.»

When the two situations happen in a perceptibly shared space, the observer can see without any difficulty that the two situations are simultaneous. The notion of a shared space is therefore very informative to the perception of *Sim*. Actually, as reported by Jammer (2006, pp.8-9), the original meaning of the term ‘simultaneity’ encompasses space. The term dates back to the interpretation of:

² The term situation is used in the research of Acsu-Koç & Christiane Von Stutterheim (1994) to mean an event, a process or a state. The difference between the three is a temporal one: an event or a process are temporally bounded, whereas a state is temporally unbounded (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994; Herweg 1991, p.977). As it will be defined later, we use the terms SITUATION and EVENT to mean different entities at different levels of experience. *Situations* are related to the external world, whereas *events* are their conceptual representations (von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003).

«(...) an Egyptian hieroglyph transliterated by “h3w” and interpreted as a “term that denotes the simultaneity of events.” As the well-known Egyptologist Eberhard Otto showed, however, the original meaning of this term was not a temporal but rather a spatial relation denoting “local proximity or neighborhood.»

The perception of *Sim* relation becomes more problematic when the two situations do not happen in the same spatial context; i.e. in a “distant simultaneity”.

«One of the major problems debated by philosophers of science in our time is the controversial question of whether the concept of distant simultaneity denotes something factual, empirically testable, or at least unambiguously definable, or whether it refers to merely an object of a convention, that is to an arbitrary stipulation without any factual content, as to which events are to be called simultaneous.» (Jammer 2006, p.18).

Of course, the answer to the problem pointed out is not simple. It is also beyond our scope. What is obvious from what is said above however is that the concept of time is fundamental to understanding *Sim*. The concept encompasses not only spatiality but also temporality. *Sim* is indeed of great importance to the concept of time, as it is well attested in the theories of modern physics. For example, Jammer (2006, p.5) reports that

«The notion of time, as Einstein demonstrated in 1905, presupposes a definition of simultaneity, it is clear that, indeed, the importance of the concept of simultaneity for kinematics, and therefore for physics in general, can hardly be exaggerated.»

Jammer (2006, pp.4-5) further argues after Reichenbach (1928, 1958) that not only temporal measurements but also spatial measurements depend on the notion of *Sim*. To explain this, he quotes Reichenbach when he says,

«The length of a moving line-segment is the distance between simultaneous positions of its endpoints. »

Sim is also a basic component of the different relations we express in a language: Indeed, languages express three types of temporal relationships between (a) the time for which a claim is made about an event– *Topic Time* (TT) (Klein 1994) – and (b) the moment at which we speak; *Time of the Utterance* (TU). These three possible relationships are precedence, subsequence and

simultaneity. The three relations between TT and TU explained below result in what we are familiar with calling *past*, *future* and *present* respectively. We further develop the temporal relations below in 1.3.1.1.

In this study, we define simultaneity of external world situations according to Acsu-Koç & Von Stutterheim (1994) as any type of overlapping between two situations sharing a value on the time axis. They state:

«Two events, processes or states are simultaneous if they share one value on the time axis. Their boundaries need not coincide.» (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994, p.397).

Sim of two events in discourse is the linguistic representation of the conceptual representation of *Sim* of two situations. Therefore, a *Sim* relation holds between two events, if they are located on the time axis and if they share the same or part of Situation Time (TSit) and the Topic Time (TT) parameters.

«The time intervals referred to, [TSit and TT], are either identical or overlap. » (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994, p.400).

This means that the relation may not necessarily imply perfect overlap of both events and perfect coincidence of their boundaries. The variation in types of overlap is partly due to the types of situations perceived as simultaneous, and to their relating together in the language. Accordingly, the definition that we adopt implies that we can have many possible types of *Sim*. This is what we explore in section 1.2. However, here we establish clear definitions of the terms ‘situation’ and ‘event’. We insist in accordance with von Stutterheim & Nüse (2003) that we distinguish between three levels of experience:

- a) The external world,
- b) The speaker’s partial conceptual representation of the external world. This representation is dynamic and can be reorganised at any time, and
- c) Linguistic representations.

The three levels make the definition of *situation* and *event* clear. In fact,

(a) Situations take place in the external world. In our study it is the term we use to talk about the two simultaneous situations shown in our visual stimuli to the informants (see methodology section in part two).

(b) Events are the conceptual representation of situations, as the definition below confirms:

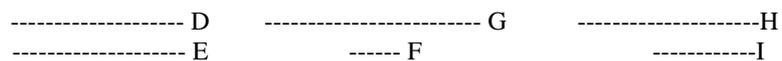
«An event is a self-contained segment in a conceptual representation of a network of interrelated situations, conceptualised as a time-substance relation. The substance constituting an event is characterised by the features DYNAMIC and POTENTIALLY BOUNDED» (von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003, p.854).

(c) Linguistic representation of an event is what we access from the speaker's conceptual representation of an event through production.

It follows from these definitions that there are many possible cognitive representations of a particular situation as an event. In turn, there are many options for representing an event linguistically (von Stutterheim et al. 2003; von Stutterheim et al. 2009). In the following section, we focus on the different possible types of *Sim*.

1.2. Types of simultaneity

As stated earlier, according to our definition, any overlap of two situations is a type of *Sim*. Consequently, there exists a multitude of *Sim* types. Comrie (1985, pp.5-6) describes three possible types of overlapping: a) two situations cover the same time stretch, b) one occurs wholly within the second; which can also be called inclusion, or c) part of the first situation is also part of the time stretch of the second situation while another part is not.



He describes the three types as follows:

«(...) Situations D and E overlap, so do F and G, and also H and I, although the precise natures of the overlaps are somewhat different (D and E cover exactly the same time stretch; F occurs wholly within G; part of the time stretch of H is also part of the time stretch of I, while there is also part of the time stretch of H that is not part of I). »

Comrie's (1985) three types (a, b, c) discussed above would be called respectively 'total simultaneity', 'inclusion' and 'initial boundary' in Schmiedtová's (2004) framework. She adds two other possibilities, 'final boundary' and 'overlap'. The five categories are listed below (we repeat Schmiedtová's (2004, p.10) examples to illustrate the different types she identifies:

Total simultaneity, e.g.:

(1) Maria walked through the door. At the same moment, Hans looked up.

Simultaneity – overlap, e.g.:

(2) While Hans studied in Berlin, Maria was working in Italy.

Simultaneity – inclusion, e.g.:

(3) Maria was reading a book. Hans came into the room.

Simultaneity – final boundary, e.g.:

(4) Maria will wait until Hans has finished cooking.

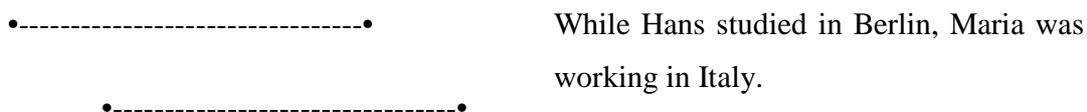
Simultaneity – initial boundary, e.g.:

(5) Just as Peter was coming into the room, Mary began to open the window.

As the examples show, the devices used to express *Sim* highly determine the *Sim* type identified. In fact, two situations that are described using identical devices in the discourse are perceived to share the same time interval from their beginning to their end. One possible way is to uphold the aspectual marking for both of them (e.g., the use of the perfective in 1). Two simultaneous situations can also share a span of time only. In this case, the shared time interval does not

coincide with the TSit of both situations. Indeed, taking the 1st situation as a reference, the overlap can happen in the beginning of its TSit, in the middle, or the end, thus focusing respectively on ‘initial boundary’, ‘an internal phase’ and ‘final boundary’. What characterises the examples given for the three types is the contrast between the aspectual values used for each of the simultaneous situations. In addition, other explicit devices are used which convey the type of *Sim* expressed: The verb *to finish* in (4) focalises on the final boundary of the event whereas «*to begin to*» in (5) focuses on its initial boundary.

Schmiedtová's (2004) taxonomy gives a valuable insight into the categorisation of *Sim* relations. Furthermore, her description of *Sim* types represents a detailed account of all possible overlaps. We are not sure however that we need a separate category called ‘overlap’. We repeat example 2 and we schematise below the *Sim* type for convenience



Firstly, the name ‘*overlap*’ is ambiguous as any of the other *Sim* types is also a case of overlap, as our definition of *Sim* suggests. Second, nothing shows that the situation <*Hans studied in Berlin*> is not included in TSit of <*Maria was working in Italy*>. In other terms, the interpretation of *Sim* type as an ‘inclusion’ type of *Sim* is possible.

In order to avoid such a problem, we oppose in our study two broad types of *Sim*. First, we have the type of total *Sim* that we call ‘perfect simultaneity’ where two situations happen in parallel from their start to their end; and the ‘inclusion’ type, i.e., when a situation with its boundaries happens simultaneously with another one that starts before it and that finishes after it. Our two *Sim* types are chosen to serve our investigation of the role of aspect in expressing *Sim*. Indeed, we would like to test the following hypothesis put forward by Leclercq (2007) that the use of

aspect to mark *Sim* is not affected by the type of *Sim*.

« Les critères « emboîtement » ou parallélisme ne semblent donc pas être déterminants en français pour susciter l'emploi de « en train de » (Leclercq 2007, p.291)

In fact, regardless of the type of *Sim*, speakers would use the aspectual contrast of forms in their retellings. We look deeper at this issue later on in the analysis. For now, we present our two *Sim* types in Table 3 (| and | represent left and right boundaries of situations)

Table 3. Types of simultaneity in this project



The two types of *Sim* described in Table 3 can operate on the time axis at three possible levels (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994):

1. *Time axis of events* : which concerns the simultaneous situations to which language relates.
2. *Time axis of discourse*, which denotes how a speaker reports / describes *Sim* in language. The level of discourse concerns the way speakers talk about those simultaneous situations and present them in discourse. Either they can present them as following the “real time structure” or as deviating from it; which constitutes an introduction of a “subjective perspective on the events” (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994, p.398); and
3. *Time axis of perception* that is a crucial one since it is what shapes our contact with simultaneous situations in what we call the ‘real’ world. In fact, perception shapes whether or not we can observe a *Sim* relation of situations, regardless of whether they are physically simultaneous or not. The renowned illustration of the importance of this level is the *Sim* relation

of the two events of thunder and lightning. Without the theoretical knowledge about them happening simultaneously, the two situations are never simultaneous to human perception.

Considering the connection of the three levels of *Sim* explained above, our investigation's focus is on the expression of *Sim* in language. We are therefore aware that the first level (*Sim* of events on the time axis) is not a condition to the expression of *Sim*. Two situations can indeed be sequential but speakers may choose to express them as happening in parallel depending upon their perspective. Furthermore, we need a large context of investigation and discourse, since the reference of *Sim* can be expressed in utterances that are not contiguous. Indeed, Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim (1994, p.401) point out that

« (...) Simultaneity in narrative discourse needs to be analysed beyond adjacent pairs of utterances, taking into account a wider discourse context. »

We concentrate in the following section on the different devices for expressing *Sim*.

1.3. Expression of simultaneity in language: Focus on time reference

Investigating how *Sim* is expressed in language can be tricky. In fact, a *Sim* relation can be overtly expressed by linguistic devices, or not expressed at all. In the latter condition, the *Sim* relation can in some cases still be understood and in other cases, ambiguous. We illustrate with the following example a case of explicitly expressed *Sim*:

(6) When we entered the house, our mother was talking on the phone.

The second example below taken from Schmiedtová (2004, p.25) shows that *Sim* is implicitly expressed and its understanding relies on “extra-linguistic”, pragmatic knowledge.

(7) A string trio was performing last night. Jane played cello, Peter played violin, and Jake played viola.

The following example taken from Labov & Waletzky (2003, p.91), illustrates an ambiguous case of implicitly expressed *Sim*

(8) Martin Cassidy's mother give him some money an' tell him to go get a bushel of

peaches.

In fact the two utterances are linked with the coordinator *and*. As the authors argued, the two events can possibly be interpreted as happening simultaneously given the semantics of the verbs *give* and *tell*.

Schmiedtová (2004) distinguishes between *explicit* and *implicit* devices of expressing *Sim*. Implicit devices are not observable, but only understood through pragmatic interpretation. Acsu-Koç & Von Stutterheim (1994, p.395) explain that explicit marking of *Sim* goes hand in hand with a complex temporal structure. They state:

«Simultaneity (...) is usually not expressed overtly when deictically anchored. Explicit reference to the simultaneity relation is rather typical of complex temporal structure in discourse. » (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994, p.395).

Among the devices available in languages to express *Sim*, the most straightforward ones are adverbials, e.g. *in parallel*, *at the same time*, *while*...etc. Some studies like Acsu-Koç & Von Stutterheim (1994); Leclercq (2007) and Schmiedtová (2004) attest the role of aspectual marking in *Sim* expression.

We focus in this research on the role of aspect in conveying *Sim* of events. Therefore, we now follow with with an introduction of tense and aspect, These domains are highly relevant to an investigation of *Sim* as Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim (1994) point out, focusing on the expression of on-goingness in the task of retelling simultaneous situations.

To describe an event, speakers can present it as on-going or completed. For this, they have a multitude of options available to them in language. Part of the perspective taken on an event is constrained by the lexical and grammatical options that a particular language offers (von Stutterheim et al. 2009). Among these important features are the categories of tense and aspect. As showed by von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009, p.196)

«A second type of constraint is given with the lexical and grammatical properties of the particular language used. Some languages, English, for example, force their speakers to indicate the time at which the event

occurred, since tense marking on the verb is obligatory. The speaker must therefore locate the event in the past, present or future. Other languages, such as Chinese, leave it to the speaker's discretion to provide information about the "when" of the event. Similarly, some languages have a form that is neutral with respect to "on-going" and "completed"; other languages force their speakers to choose between one of these options, while another set force them to make an aspectual choice for one tense but not for another. »

As discussed earlier, *Sim* is a temporal relation, which holds between two situations that share a value on the time axis. Therefore, the investigation of *Sim* tackles the larger domain of 'basic time concept' and the expression of temporality in language. In fact, as argued by Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim (1994, p.398)

«In order to refer to two situations as being simultaneous, a concept of time is required which includes a number of basic notions: - the deictically given speech-time (S), - a reference time (R), the event time (E). These notions are crucial for distinguishing different "levels" of simultaneity which can be found in discourse. They complicate the picture and add another dimension of diversity to the different types of simultaneity which can be identified. »

In fact, to relate one or two events on the time line, being simultaneous or not to one another, we need to locate at least one of them in relation to some reference point or interval, namely, TU, the moment of speech. Secondly, we need to specify the temporal characteristics of the situations, whether they are punctual, or take time, thus represented as a stretch on the time line. The two processes referred to are the conceptual domains of tense and aspect, crucial to the expression of *Sim*. Furthermore, tense and aspectual markers constitute some of the linguistic devices attested to express it. For example, Schmiedtová (2004) attests the role of aspectual means, mainly the progressive aspect in the expression of *Sim* in Czech, German and English. Similarly, Leclercq shows the crucial role played by grammatical aspect, discourse organisation and lexical aspect in the expression of *Sim* in English L1, French L1 and English L2 by French learners (Leclercq 2007, pp.295-297). Temporal reference is the linguistic encoding of time relations, both of tense and aspect. The two categories are highly connected. For instance, to understand aspectual distinctions, one should look not only at the temporal structure of verbs, but also at the time at which the claim is made (Klein 1994; Von Stutterheim *et al.* 2009).

Klein (1994) defines aspect in terms of temporal intervals where the categories of tense, grammatical and lexical aspects are closely related, but also independent categories.

After reviewing many theories on temporality in different languages (Binnick 1991; Comrie 1976; Comrie 1985; Dahl 2000; Garey 1957; Klein 1994; Smith 1997; Vendler 1967; Vet 2007; Vet & Vettters 1994; Vettters 1996; Wilmet 1995), we chose to adapt for our analysis the theoretical framework of temporal reference of Klein (1994). Klein's framework is neutral enough to allow for the description of many languages' temporal systems and especially of learner varieties as shown in many studies for example the research on L2 acquisition of temporality (e.g. Leclercq (2007; 2008; 2009), Noyau (1997; 2002; 2003) or Noyau *et al.* (2005)). Moreover, it provides an alternative to the problems of anterior theoretical frameworks such as those of Comrie (1985, 1976); or Reichenbach (1947) (see for a discussion of temporal theories Binnick (1991), Vet (2007) and Vettters (1996). Klein's approach accounts for both the universal concepts related to temporal reference and those that are expressed in all languages as well as the specificities of the languages themselves. His framework takes into account all the linguistic means for encoding temporal reference, not just the verb. Such means include the grammatical categories of tense and aspect, temporal adverbials, verb predicate lexical contents, inherent temporal properties of verb semantics. It is therefore important to take into account all the lexical entities of an utterance to grasp the inherent temporal features, discourse principles and their role in mapping the temporal information.

Klein (1994) defines temporality in terms of temporal intervals (*time spans*) not points, which is a more adequate description of situations. Indeed, the most punctual of them take place over a stretch of time. There are three crucial types of time spans (Klein 1994, p.3):

Time of the Utterance, (abbreviated as TU); it is the time at which the utterance is made;

Topic Time, (abbreviated as TT), is the time for which the claim is made; and

Time of the Situation, (abbreviated as TSit), as its name indicates, it is the time during which the situation takes place.

The three types of time spans are crucial for understanding the grammatical categories of tense

and aspect.

1.3.1. Tense

Tense is a deictic category that is related to the “here” and “now”. It is the encoding of the temporal relation between the time for which the claim is made; TT, and the TU. Table 4 presents the three typical temporal relations expressed in many languages (Klein 1994, p.122).

Table 4. Temporal Relations of Tense in Klein’s Framework

Relation	Name
TT Before TU	Past
TT After TU	Future
TU Included In TT	Present

As stated by Acısu-Koç & Von Steutterheim (1994), “Simultaneity is a basic element in our concept of time. It is one of the three "basic relations" [...], the other two being the temporal relations of 'before' and 'after’” (Acısu-Koç & von Steutterheim 1994, p.394). What we characterise as present tense is the relation of simultaneity between the TT and the moment at which we make a claim.

«There is, however, an interesting constraint in the use of present tense, namely that an event which is simultaneous to utterance time needs to be durative or progressive, or habitual (see Bennett and Partee 1978: 13). This constraint apparently results from the fact that a speaker needs some amount of time for producing his statement about an observed event, and hence, by the time he has produced his statement, the observed non-durative or non-habitual event would have turned out to be a "past" event. » (Bhat 1999, pp.16-17)

Yet, it is clear from Bhat's (1999) statement, that in investigating *Sim*, we need to consider the temporal reference in both its manifestations of tense and aspect. Indeed, the present tense indicates *Sim* with the TU, but it is perceived only when we observe duration of the situation in question. In the following part, we define aspect in its two sub-categories: grammatical aspect and lexical aspect.

1.3.2. Aspect

The definitions and descriptions of the category of aspect in the literature are not straightforward. In fact, despite the vast amount of theories on the matter, little agreement has been reached when it comes to its basic description. Indeed, the following criticism by von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009, p.198) following criticism portrays the situation well:

«Aspectual characterisations may not be incorrect – but they are definitely not fine-grained enough. »

In our research, we highlight two features of the category of aspect. First of all, the notion of aspect is expressed differently in different languages. Some aspectual categories like the progressive for example, have distinct grammaticalised entities to express them in a certain language but not in another. Second, in dealing with the broad category of aspect, we differentiate between the grammatical category and the lexical category. Binnick (1991) distinguishes between both categories as follows:

« Aspect is a fully grammaticized, obligatory, systematic category of languages, operating with general oppositions such as that of perfective and non-perfective, while *Aktionsarten*³ are purely lexical categories, non grammatical, optional, and unsystematic, defined in very specific terms such as inceptive or resumptive. » (Binnick 1991, p.170)

Notions of grammatical aspect and lexical aspect are strongly interconnected as Vetters (1996) postulates in what follows.

«Le mode d'action⁴ influence l'emploi et le sens des aspectifs. Il y a souvent des restrictions de compatibilité entre les aspectifs et les modes d'action, de sorte que la ligne de partage entre les aspectifs ne correspond pas nécessairement à celle entre les aspects perfectif et imperfectif. Les différences entre les systèmes aspectuels du français, de l'anglais et du russe se situent au niveau de la relation entre aspect et mode d'action. » (Vetters 1996, p.108)

³ *Aktionsarten* means verb lexical classes.

⁴ “*Mode d'action*” is yet another name used for lexical aspect.

Despite their relatedness, we separate both concepts in this overview.

1.3.1.2.1. Lexical aspect

While grammatical aspect stands for the morphosyntactic marking of aspectual categories, lexical aspect is a semantic category that refers to the temporal characteristics of verbs and verbal predicates' meanings, or in Klein's words, to the "lexical content" (Klein 1994). The notion of lexical aspect has been extensively discussed and classified into *Aktionsarten*, i.e. semantic classes (Binnick 1991; Mourelatos 1981; Vendler 1967). These classes are based on the following five temporal features (Klein 1994, pp.79-80):

- (i) Qualitative change; refers to whether the lexical content involves a change of state or not
- (ii) Boundedness; refers to whether the content has a left or a right boundary or not at all;
- (iii) Duration; refers to whether the content is punctual or non-punctual, and if it is short or long in duration;
- (iv) Inner quantification; refers to whether the content involves repeated sub-events or sub-states, i.e. if it involves an iterated event for example; and
- (v) Phase; refers to whether the content focuses on a sub-phase like the beginning or the endpoint of a situation.

Some frameworks focus on some of the above features more than others. For instance, Kozłowska (1998a, p.103) highlights the importance of boundedness for understanding lexical aspect. She states that

«Le bornage est, d'après nous un critère plus pertinent que les classes aspectuelles et même que les temps verbaux dans la détermination des relations temporelles dans le discours.»

Moreover, Vendler's (1967) classification is mainly based on boundedness; the telic / atelic distinction, i.e., whether events have an inherent endpoint or not, and inner quantification, i.e.,

whether or not it can involve subdivisions and be treated with a degree of granularity⁵ (Kozłowska 1998b, pp.103-104).

Vendler's (1967) classification of English verbs is as follows: He distinguishes between four main classes: (a) Activity verbs, such as <run>, <walk>; (b) State verbs, such as <desire>, <love> and <have> (c) Accomplishment verbs, such as, <paint a picture>, <make a chair> (d) Achievement verbs, such as <win the race> and <recognise somebody>.

As demonstrated by Binnick (1991), the available classifications can present problems when applied to different temporal systems. Klein (1994) however, applies a “single basic criterion” that, he believes, is necessary to the analysis of tense and aspect: “the behavior of a lexical content with regard to its linking to some topic time.” (Klein 1994, p.80). Lexical contents are understood to be related to the TT in three different ways (Klein 1994, p.81):

(i) **0-State contents**: are lexical contents that are linked to a particular TT and to any other TT. They present « no TT-contrast » (Klein 1994, p.101). In

(9) The book is in Russian

the assertion will hold true for the TT the proposition is linked to, and also for **any** other TT.

(ii) **1-State contents**: they involve **one** TT-contrast. The situation described is not necessarily confined to TT, but does not apply before or after that TT (Klein 1994, p.102). In

(10) John was in Poland

the assertion holds true for one contrast between < not be in Poland> vs. <be in Poland>

(iii) **2-State contents**: They involve **two** TT- contrasts, e.g,

⁵ Calling it also « *le grain* », Noyau & Paprocka (2000, p.88) define granularity as « *le degré de différenciation temporelle du macro-événement en micro-processus auxquels renvoient les propositions constituant le texte* ». Therefore, granularity is the differentiation by the speaker in the text between a globalising event and its possible phases, sub-events.

(11) John opened the window

the assertion holds true for two different contrasts < to be closed> vs. <to open>, <to open> vs. <to be open>.

2-state contents include a “source” and a “target state”. The TT may be the source or the target state or includes part of both.

1.3.1.2.2. Grammatical aspect

Grammatical aspect, in contrast to tense, is not a deictic category. It does not establish a relation with the moment of speech, but between the time for which the claim is made (TT) and the TSit. It is an obligatory category in languages, i.e., any language can express the category in grammar, regardless of whether it marks it overtly or not. Overt marking can be morphological or syntactic (Comrie 1976). Morphological marking is the presence of clear identifiable markers of aspect in the morphology of the verb. An obvious example is Standard Arabic where there are only two verb forms which express an aspectual opposition perfective / imperfective. Syntactic marking is the presence of many combined markers within an utterance, e.g., the English progressive (Verb + *ing* form) or the French periphrasis «*en train de*» (Comrie 1976, p.87).

The two constellations of *Sim* we are investigating (cf. Table 3 above) involve durative situations (S1). Consequently, we suspect that the progressive aspect is one way of expressing their overlap.

Despite the vast literature on aspect, the different available definitions are confusing and sometimes contradictory and they vary from author to author (Binnick 1991). According to Klein,

« Aspects are definable in terms of temporal relations between time spans. What is particular about aspect is not the nature of these relations but the time spans between which they obtain – the time of the situation and the topic time » (Klein 1994, p.119).

The Topic Time can precede the Time of Situation, it can follow it, it can contain it, or be partly

or fully contained in it (Klein 1994, p.87). In other words, aspect stands for the various perspectives or viewpoints the speaker may take with regard to an event, such as viewing it as 'perfective' vs. 'imperfective', 'progressive' vs. 'non-progressive'. Table 5 displays the major aspects expressed in natural languages:

Table 5. Major temporal relations between TT and TSit

Relation	Name
TT Included in TSit	Imperfective
TT At TSit and the time After TSit	Perfective
TT Before TSit	Prospective
TT After TSit	Perfect
TT is properly contained in the first state of the situation (English)	Progressive

In the following chapter, we look at the expression of *Sim* in its wider context, discourse.

**CHAPTER 2. SIMULTANEITY RELATION IN
NARRATIVE DISCOURSE**

2.0. Introduction

In our research, we look at the discourse produced by informants as a whole, as recent research studies such as von Stutterheim *et al.* (2003) and von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009) have shown necessary.

Therefore, in this section, we review the main theories about narrative, and we define narrative and narrative structure. Afterwards, we go over the main research findings of how events are related in narrative discourse in general. Subsequently, we deal with the main issues with regard to relating simultaneous situations in a narrative.

2.1. Definition of a narrative

The literature on narrative is quite extensive. Furthermore, many definitions and frameworks are available. From Labov until recent studies, there is some sort of agreement on what characterises a narrative. A narrative is a discourse composed of units retelling events often called “clauses” and linked together by a “narrative connection” (Peer & Chatman 2001, p.23). These units are characterised by a discernible temporal organisation (Berman & Slobin 1994b; Brès 1994; Brès 2001; Kozłowska 1998b; Labov 2003; Labov & Waletzky 2003). A narrative supposes a minimum of two temporally ordered propositions, which follow the “principle of natural order”, i.e. the order in which the events happened. This means that if inverted, the order of events, as interpreted, would also be reversed. For instance, in Lascarides & Asher's (1991) axiom, narration holds between two events e_1 and e_2 if e_1 occurs before e_2 .

Most of the research looking into narrative discourse recognises and takes as a starting point and / or reference the groundbreaking work of William Labov on narrative (Brès 2001; Edwards 1997; Peterson & McCabe 1997; Shiro 1997; Snow 1997). Labov establishes a link between a narrative and ‘actual’ experience. Therefore, a narrative is

«One verbal technique for recapitulating experience - in particular, a technique of constructing narrative units that match the *temporal sequence* of that experience. » (Labov & Waletzky 2003, p.74)

According to Labov & Waletzky (2003, p.81), “temporal sequence” is a defining property of a narrative. Indeed, for them, the basic component of a narrative is the fact that we retell events in the order in which they have occurred. Furthermore, a narrative is “any sequence of clauses that contains at least one temporal juncture” (Labov & Waletzky 2003, p.88). More precisely, we have a narrative if we have a minimum of two propositions that are temporally ordered:

«Two clauses that are temporally ordered with respect to each other are said to be separated by *temporal juncture*. This juncture has no relation to any free or restricted clauses that may fall in between the temporally ordered clauses. » (Labov & Waletzky 2003, p.87)

The two main propositions making up a narrative need not to be adjacent in a discourse, but they are separated by the *temporal juncture*, explained as follows:

«If narrative clauses succeed each other in uninterrupted sequence, the zero subscripts alone would show the temporal segmentation of the narrative, but because any number of free or restricted units can intervene between two narrative clauses, we must define temporal relations between any two clauses in the narrative, not necessarily contiguous. We wish to define formally the condition under which any two clauses are ordered with respect to each other and cannot be interchanged without change in the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation. Such a condition is met when the displacement range of a given clause does not extend past the actual location of some following clause, and conversely, the displacement range of this following clause does not extend past the actual location of the given preceding clause. More concisely, their displacement sets do not include each other. Two such clauses are temporally ordered with respect to each other. » (Labov & Waletzky 2003, p.87)

This means that the temporal juncture separates two clauses narrating a sequence of events. It is “semantically equivalent to the temporal conjunction *then*” (*ibid*, p.91). If the order of the clauses changes, it results in a change in the semantic interpretation. The semantic interpretation of a narrative “depends on the expectation that the events described did, in fact occur, in the same order that they were told in”.

Labov & Waletzky (2003, p.91) recognise that these narrative units are not the only possible units to make a narrative. They declare:

«Of course, the a-then-b relation is not the only one at work in narrative. If it were, we would have only a succession of narrative clauses. One also finds implied relations between clauses such as a-and at the same time-b, or a-and now that we think back on it-b. But among these temporal relations, the a-then-b is in some sense the most essential characteristic of narrative. Some narratives may use it exclusively, and every narrative must, by definition, use it at least once. »

Nevertheless, as we can see, they insist the defining component of narrative is a narrative sequence of two clauses. Consequently, the *Sim* relation would be a non-defining component of narrative. In other words, the task of retelling two simultaneous situations cannot generate a narrative. This constitutes one of the points on which Brès (2001) criticises the Labovian model. Additionally, the model may possess further limitations. For instance, Peterson & McCabe (1997) criticise the model's limitations regarding its applicability to children narratives and narrative abilities and propose extensions to it.

Actually, Brès's (2001) article gives us relevant insights for our study. He adequately criticises the definition of a narrative according to Labov and provides a satisfactory alternative, which covers other possibilities of retelling experience, among which the one we are focusing on: retelling simultaneous situations.

« Je suis bien d'accord que la relation a-then-b est primordiale et fondamentale pour autant cet argument ne justifie pas de négliger la relation a-and at the same time-b. Je considère au contraire que les occurrences de propositions en relation de simultanéité qui posent ($\chi=\beta$) aussi peu fréquentes soient-elles, conduisent à questionner la définition de la textualité narrative par la seule relation de progression non inclusive. » (Brès 2001, p.30)

In fact, he defines narrative as follows:

« Si le récit dispose principalement les événements narrés selon l'ordre progressif (non inclusif) c'est que cet ordre est celui qui correspond à l'appréhension active du temps par le sujet, l'orientation ascendante, selon laquelle le temps est vu se dérouler du passé en direction du futur. Cette appréhension structure le sujet comme le récit : nous sommes tout autant que des "hommes de parole", des hommes de récit parce que tout récit, aussi minimal soit-il, est une mise en ascendance du temps. » (ibid,

p.48)

Following Peterson & McCabe's (1997) criticism, we believe that the framework proposed by Labov & Waletzky (2003) constitutes a strong version of a rich narrative produced by a speaker with well developed narrative abilities. The model is limiting for an analysis of narratives with less developed and developing skills such as children's or L2 learners' narrative abilities.

2.2. The narrative structure

In this section, we give an overview on how a narrative is structured. Labov & Waletzky's (2003) canonical structure of a narrative has for a long time been used for narrative analysis. In this framework, a narrative is composed of

«The simplest possible narrative would consist of the single line of the complication, without a clear resolution; frequently we find minimal narratives that have both complication and resolution ("He hit me hard and we hit him back"). As we proceed to more complex narratives, told by speakers with greater overall verbal ability, we find a higher percentage of narratives that duplicate the exact form of this diagram. Perhaps the most frequent variant is the case in which the evaluation ends the resolution: jokes, ghost stories, and surprise endings take this form, as the story is reshaped by many retellings. » (*ibid*, p.102)

- 1) The *Orientation section* provides a framework to the story as it « orients the listener with respect to person, place, time and behavioural situation » (*ibid*, p.93)
- 2) The *Complication action* generally ends with a result.
- 3) The *Evaluation* is a set of statements about the speaker's evaluation of situations at a certain time.
- 4) The *Resolution* is the portion of the narrative sequence following the evaluation. It is the result of a narrative.
- 5) The *Coda* is "a functional device for returning the verbal perspective to the present moment" (*ibid*, p.100).

Both the micro and macro levels of the discourse are shaped by the nature of the *quaestio* underlining its production. The *quaestio* is the implicit or explicit question that a certain text or discourse answers (von Stutterheim & Klein 1989; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2003). Even when there is no explicit direct question generating the text, this latter is still determined and shaped by an underlying question:

“Even if there is no explicit question of this sort the speaker may behave as if there were such a question and a particular listener or group of listeners, who asks it.”(von Stutterheim & Klein 2002, p.63)

The *quaestio* constrains the way the discourse is built and defines most of the choices made by the speaker leaving him / her a certain amount of freedom to take particular perspective. In fact, the *quaestio* defines the type of text produced and how it is structured. Concerning the role of the *quaestio* in determining the type of discourse, a question like “what happened to you last night?” requests the interlocutor to talk about a “complex event” which happened to him / her during a certain time interval specified in the question “last night”. Retelling this complex event generates a specific type of text, a narrative in which the global event is divided into sub events happening within the general time interval (von Stutterheim & Klein 2002, p.73). The text is then built up based on a *quaestio*, which is partitioned into *quaestiones*: what happened to you at t_1 , what happened to you at $t_2 \dots t_n$. These t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n represent time spans. The time spans follow from a general principle - the 'topic condition' of narrative texts. This condition gives us the 'backbone' of a narrative, its 'main structure' (von Stutterheim & Klein 2002, p.73)

Therefore, the *quaestio* defines the main skeleton of the discourse, what is called by von Stutterheim & Klein (2002) “main structure”. It is composed of every utterance that constitutes a direct answer to the *quaestio*. Every utterance that does not bring an answer to the question, but gives additional information and commentaries, belongs to the “side structures” of the text.

Despite the different terminologies provided in the literature, the theories agree that the major criterion for identifying the main structure from the side structures is the chronology of events, their temporal order (Hopper 1979; Reinhart 1984; von Stutterheim & Klein 1989; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002). For example, Labov & Waletzky (2003, p.81) assert that the main

defining property of a narrative is temporal reference, which proceeds from its referential function. In other words, the narrative clauses belonging to the main structure must be an appropriate answer to the critical question “And then what happened?” The clause is the minimal unit of linguistic expression defining the functions of narrative (*ibid.*, p.75).

Hopper (1979) distinguishes between the *foreground*, the propositions that tell the events that constitute the main skeleton of the story reported in the narrative, and the *background*, and it is made up of all the utterances, which back up the *foreground* of the narrative (Hopper 1979, p.213).

Inspired by the *Gestalt* theory⁶, Reinhart (1984) sets up her theory on the criterion of *Gestalt*⁷ perception. She uses the figure / ground *Gestalt* metaphor to events. In fact, the temporal organisation of a narrative reflects the principles of spatial organisation in the visual field into a main part (figure) and a background (ground) just like a photographer who, using the camera focuses the figure and distinguishes it from a particular background leaving it out of focus (De Fornel 1988).

Grosz and Sidner (1985, 1986)⁸ give a “discourse intentionality criterion”. According to them, the main skeleton contains material that contributes directly or indirectly to the “leading part of the discourse” whereas the background is a digression from that leading part.

Having overviewed the advances in research about narrative and its structure, we focus in the following section on what constitutes the main core components of the narrative text, the events.

2.3. Relating events in a narrative

This section attempts to review the main research findings regarding how speakers relate to events in a narrative. In particular, we focus on how they go about retelling situations shown in a

⁶ See for example Wertheimer (1944)

⁷ *Die Gestalt* is the German word for ‘shape’. It refers to object as located in space and having external boundaries.

⁸ Cited in (Kuppevelt 1995, p.811)

given stimulus and relating them in a coherent discourse. Note the importance of the discourse in building assumptions about actual situations of the “external world”:

«In the great majority of cases, the only information available on the nature of the reported events is in the narrative itself: There is no independent evidence on what actually happened. At first glance, it might seem that the original events cannot be recovered and that the narrative must be considered an entity in itself, disjoined from the real world. Nevertheless, there are good reasons why the effort should be made to reconstruct the original events from the narrative evidence. Inferences about the original events will lead us to greater insights into how the narrator transforms reality in reporting it to others. Retracing these transformations tells us more about the character of the narrators: the norms that govern the assignment of praise or blame; and, in more serious cases, the narrator's complicity in the events themselves. »
(Labov 2003, p.64)

We disagree with Labov's statement about the interdependence between events as verbalised in discourse and the situations as they ‘happen’ in the external world, and the possibility that they can be recoverable from narrative. This belief makes a direct link between the external world and the linguistic representation, neglecting the level of conceptual representation of the external world. Pianesi & Varzi (2000, p.3) explain as follows:

«We speak of actions and other events with the same easiness with which we speak of people and other objects. We say of John that he is bright and of Bill's lecture that it is boring. We say of John's father that he is taller than Bill's and of John's life that it is better than Bill's. We say of Clark Kent that he is Superman and of Clark Kent's death that it is the death of Superman. The pervasiveness of this talk does not by itself imply that there are such things as events— that events are to be included in an inventory of the world over and above people and material objects. But one can hardly question that some theory of events is needed if one is to make sense of such talk at all. Moreover, we often speak in such a way as to suggest— implicitly— that we are talking about events. We say that Brutus stabbed Caesar with a knife. If this statement is taken to assert that a certain three-place relation obtains among Brutus, Caesar, and a knife, then it is hard to explain why our statement entails that Brutus stabbed Caesar (a statement that involves a different, two-place relation). But if we take our statement to assert that a certain event occurred (namely, a stabbing of Caesar by Brutus) and that it had a certain property (namely, of being done with a knife), then the entailment is straightforward. Again,

these reasons do not constitute a proof that there are such entities as events. But if we are interested in an account of how it is that certain statements mean what they mean, and if the meaning of a statement is at least in part determined by its logical relations to other statements, then one can hardly ignore the relevance of facts such as these. »

The conceptual level is crucial to understanding oral production as demonstrated by Levelt's (1989) blueprint of the speaker. Furthermore, it is at this level of conceptualisation that speakers of different languages differ when they complete the same verbal task (Carroll & von Stutterheim 1997; Carroll & von Stutterheim 2003; Leclercq 2007; von Stutterheim 2003; von Stutterheim & Carroll 2006; von Stutterheim & Lambert 2005; von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2003)

Trying to retrieve the situations of the non-linguistic world from the linguistic representation is a difficult endeavor. Using a stimulus material to elicit the narratives however, gives a stable reference for analysis. In fact, we have a better grasp of what the speaker is talking about if we set in advance the story he / she is retelling. (Berman & Slobin 1994b, pp.39-40) express this with regard to the *Frog Story*⁹ in the following:

«Every adult “reader” of Frog, where are you? is certain to extract a plotline which goes from loss of the frog, through searches, to recovery. And every adult narrator is certain to add details of the thwarted attempts along the way, with some commentary on the inner states that motivate and respond to some of the events. Thus, there is a sense of “well-formed” story type as the developmental target, although there is an infinity of potential well-formed versions of the frog story. »

The events that we can identify can be similar or different from the situations retold. In addition, speakers solve the complex verbal task of retelling events in different ways. Traditionally, it was believed that these differences could be explained by the diversity of cultural and stylistic traditions of speakers (von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003). Nevertheless, the findings of more recent

⁹ The Frog story has become famous in the research on temporality and spatiality as it is a picture book, which has been used by many linguists as a stimulus material to elicit narratives. The story is illustrated in 24 pictures, available online on this link <http://childes.psy.cmu.edu/manuals/frog.pdf>.

research studies show that the selection and structuring of information in discourse are influenced by structural contrasts between languages. Furthermore, the differences observed can be systematized as they can be generalised based on language-specific patterns of grammaticisation (Carroll & von Stutterheim 2003; Carroll *et al.* 2004; Leclercq 2007; von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002). Before we go into deeper details about the variation in solving the verbal task of retelling events, we tackle here what all speakers share to produce a discourse. According to Levelt (1989), speakers are “information processors” who go about the complex task of speaking through various processes. According to his highly benchmarked frame reviewed later by von Stutterheim & Nuse (2003), every language production is constituted of three main components:

(i) *The Conceptualiser*; it is the processing system where the message is planned and the preverbal message is produced. It comes into play when the speaker has a communicative intention. It hosts the following mental activities as explained by Levelt (1989, p.9)

«Talking as an intentional activity involves conceiving of an intention, selecting the relevant information to be expressed for the realisation of this purpose, ordering this information for expression, keeping track of what was said before, and so on. These activities require the speaker’s constant attention. The speaker will, moreover attend to his own productions, monitoring what he is saying and how. (ii) *The Formulator*, is the “formulating component”, it (...) accepts fragments of messages as characteristic input and produces as output a *phonetic* or *articulatory* plan. In other words, the formulator translates a conceptual structure into a linguistic structure. » (*ibid.*, p.11)

In fact, *the Formulator* is where the speaker has access to lemmas - word forms - and “syntactic building procedures”. He / she translates them into “a surface structure” through the *Grammatical encoder* then inculcates them through the *Phonological encoder* and translates them into a “phonetic or articulatory plan” (*ibid.*, pp.11-12)

(iii) *The Articulator* executes the phonetic plan and delivers it adapting to the articulatory conditions. In this, there is a difference between “internal speech” and “overt speech” whose delivery depends on the articulatory conditions of the speaker (*ibid.*, p.13)

While the *Formulator* and the *Articulator* have received much attention in research investigating linguistic structures, the *Conceptualiser* has remained an unclear constituent; its nature and composition have stayed behind for a long time (von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003, p.851). In fact, one of the murky areas concerns the role of language specificities in the *Conceptualiser* component. This area of research and looking at issues related to the functions of the *Conceptualiser* constitute some of the objectives of the Heidelberg project, some results of which we will highlight here¹⁰.

There are two positions on whether or not the *Conceptualiser* is based on language specificities: a “radical” one and a “moderate” one. The first radical position stipulates that it is language-free and that it is composed by universal patterns of conceptualisation. The second radical position states that the *Conceptualiser* is by nature language-specific. An advocate of this position is Levinson (1997) as stated by von Stutterheim & Nüse (2003). The third position is a moderate position as it stipulates interdependence between conceptualisation and linguistic assumptions. In fact, conceptual material is built up of a number of tasks that are solved through four main planning processes before retrieving the linguistic material in a preverbal message (von Stutterheim & Klein 2002; von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002):

(i) *Segmentation* is generally important to human understanding of events as pointed out by Zacks & Swallow (2007, pp.81-82):

«Event segmentation is the process by which people parse a continuous stream of activity into meaningful events [...] Event segmentation is an automatic component of normal perception that shapes how people remember and learn. »

In other words, it consists of cutting out unorganised and unstructured units from the knowledge

¹⁰ The Heidelberg project started with a series of studies with English and German speakers and then expanded to other languages, establishing cross-linguistic studies, which generated similar results concerning language-specific patterns in conceptualising events. Among those studies are the following: Carroll & von Stutterheim (2003); Carroll *et al.* (2004); Leclercq (2007); Schmiedtová & Flecken (2008); Starren & Natale (2008); von Stutterheim (2003); von Stutterheim & Carroll (2006); von Stutterheim & Lambert (2005); von Stutterheim & Nüse (2003); von Stutterheim *et al.* (2002) and von Stutterheim *et al.* (2003)

base. It is at this planning phase that the number of events reported compared with the number of events in the stimulus material as well as their level of granularity are decided upon (von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002). Granularity concerns a way of representing event structure in language. It is defined as “the degree of temporal partitioning of situations” (Noyau *et al.* 2005, p.158). Temporal granularity is

«... a qualitative dimension which characterises the ways in which, in texts, a complex dynamic situation will be conceptualised, with either a high degree of granularity, i.e. presenting a detailed series of micro-events, or a low degree, as one macro-event or a few events, in which the different components merge. The temporal interval associated with this situation is more or less segmented into sub-intervals corresponding to many or few micro-events. These micro-events fill either the whole temporal lapse or just parts of it, leaving temporal gaps which can be filled by the listener who then infers intermediate components of the macro-situation.» *ibid.*

So an event can be conceptualised as a macro-event, or *un événement globalisant* (globalising event) to borrow Leclercq's (2007) 's expression, segmentable into sub-events. The speaker chooses to relate only the macro-event, as he / can choose to account for its phases, micro-events.

(ii) *Selection* consists of selecting the conceptual building blocks that the speaker plans to verbalise into propositional units. Some of those building blocks are reference domains such as times, spaces, or actions. For instance, it is at this level of conceptualisation, that the speaker decides how to talk about a certain event, as bounded by pointing to its endpoint, or in progress, referring to it as a whole or talking about just a portion of it. Indeed, the speaker decides at this level which information the listener should have. The ultimate discourse verbalisation would only contain selected parts of the original representation and at which level of granularity they are put into words.

(iii) *Structuring or perspective taking* is the phase when the selected components are structured under several aspects: This structuring involves a number of decisions made by the speaker to assign argument or predicate roles, anchor events within a referential frame of time and space

and to attribute an information status to the components.

(vi) *Linearisation* is the process by which the units selected are organised before being transformed into speech. We give here special attention to point (iii) about the processes of structuring as perspective taking; which has so far received a great deal of interest and the importance of which has been demonstrated by many research studies (Carroll & von Stutterheim 1997; Carroll & von Stutterheim 2003; Carroll *et al.* 2004; Jisa 2002; Klein & von Stutterheim 2002; Klein & von Stutterheim 2006; Leclercq 2007; Perdue 1997; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002; von Stutterheim & Lambert 2005; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2009)

Perspective taking is what differentiates between the accounts of speakers (of different or similar language backgrounds) carrying out the same verbal task based on the same elicitation material.

Indeed, as the more recent study by Klein & von Stutterheim (2006, p.30) shows, answering a verbal task involves many more levels of processes than the three levels suggested by Levelt (1989):

«There is no received term for the complex cognitive structure which underlies a text. Indeed, there is not one such structure but various levels of representation, and text production is but the last step in a series of transductions from one level to the next. Take, for example, a narrative of an event, in which the speaker was involved. There is first the *real* event (level 0), which is experienced and perceived, hence transformed into some *percept* (level 1) and then somehow stored in long-term memory (level 2), where it quietly warps. It is then recalled on a given occasion (level 3), components of it are selected, linearized and possibly enriched by fictitious additions (level 4), and eventually, the resulting *discourse representation* is put into words (level 5, text). On the comprehension side, the listener extracts the meaning of these words (level 6), combines it with contextual information (level 7), and enriches the resulting interpretation by all sorts of inferences, based on his world knowledge (level 8). The number and nature of these levels as well as the ways in which they are related to each other are a matter of much dispute. We will not go into this controversial issue here but simply speak, with deliberate vagueness, of GESAMTVORSTELLUNG, which is meant to include all levels of representation on the speaker's side. The term

GESAMTVORSTELLUNG (entire representation) is borrowed from Wundt (1912).»

In a narrative, the decisions made by the speaker are the product of the various choices made to talk about something. They comprise contextual preferences such as the selection of the main components of the narrative, of the events to retell and those not to relate. Speakers also make structural choices, such as the way to organise the narrative, which events to put in the main structure and which ones in the background. Finally, they make lexical choices, that is to say the decisions related to the linguistic forms to use inside the utterances, and the relation between them. All these choices make up what von Stutterheim & Klein (2002) call *L-perspectivation*. Perspectivation stands for taking a position «from which a person or a group view something (things, persons or events) and communicate their views» (Graumann & Kallmeyer 2002, p.7). L-perspectivation is perspective taking in language. It operates as explained below:

«Whenever a speaker wants to produce an utterance in a particular language, he has to decide between various options with which this language provides him. In particular, he has a lexical choice, a structural choice, and a contextual choice. In each of these, the alternatives from which he has to choose are equivalent in one way, but not equivalent in another way. His eventual decision, therefore, reflects a particular way of presenting what he wants to say – it reflects a particular ‘perspective’ on the facts stated. If we want to understand the phenomenon of ‘perspective-taking’ in language, we must analyse how these three types of choice function in language production. » (von Stutterheim & Klein 2002, p.67)

As explained above, every text is a possible answer to a certain explicit or implicit *quaestio*. Therefore, L-perspectivation is partially constrained by the nature of the *quaestio* as explained in the following quotation:

«In a specific communicative situation the speaker sets out to verbalise part of what he has stored in memory. This is the point where language and hence L-perspectivation comes in. Very often text generation is initiated by a particular question which the speaker is supposed to answer, for example ‘*what did you see*’ or ‘*what did the truck that came from the left side look like?*’ or ‘*what did you do yourself?*’ or ‘*have you ever been in serious danger?*’. There need not be such an explicit question; the speaker may simply want to speak for one reason or another

about what he has experienced some time ago; in a way he is posing such a question to himself. In each case however there is a particular communicative goal that causes the speaker to activate his updated mental representation and to create a new, temporary conceptual structure, a discourse representation (other labels are conceptual structure', 'preverbal message' and similar ones). It is this discourse representation which underlies the concrete text to be produced by the speaker. » (von Stutterheim & Klein 2002, pp.65-66)

Yet despite the constraints imposed by the *quaestio*, the speaker is left with a certain amount of freedom that allows him to make different choices, and to take a particular perspective. L-perspectivation partly explains why speakers of the same language (and also of different languages), narrating the same story produce narratives with different characteristics and take different perspectives when completing the same task (Berman & Slobin 1994a; Carroll *et al.* 2004; Leclercq 2007; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002; von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002).

«When confronted with a particular subject matter and *quaestio*, speakers of different languages show different preferences for perspectivation of the communicative content. » (von Stutterheim & Klein 2002, p.80)

Talking about events in a language is a subjective activity. In fact,

«In talking about events, there is no neutral form for representing a situation in language. Speakers always have to choose among a number of options available for putting a situation into perspective. » (von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002, p.182)

In fact, the conceptualisation of events is a distinguishing factor, which partially determines the perspective taken on events. The means available to the speaker also shape his / her choices:

«Filtering world experiences are filtered through choice of perspective and through the set of options provided by the particular language into verbalised events. » (Berman & Slobin 1994a, p.9)

Telling or “retelling” a story (based on a certain material, e.g. video) is a free activity which is affected by several factors, such as the age the speaker and his / her individual choices (Berman & Slobin 1994b). For instance, comparing narrations by children of different ages and adults,

Berman (1994, p.263) reports on the differences between the productions at each age group as follows:

«In the literate Western-type cultures included in our study, even the youngest children, aged 3-4, were able to relate to the contents of the drawings and they were also all able to translate static, graphic material into dynamic verbal event-descriptions; by late preschool, around age 5-6, most children were able to express these events in terms of sequentially organised narratives. However, only older school-age children and adults were able to meet the requirements of constructing an overall story representation and so to produce globally well-organised narrative texts. »

Consequently, two different people retelling in the same language a story based on a short video might produce different stories and make different choices. Furthermore, retelling the same story in different languages reveals fundamental differences in perspective taking in each language. Some research studies reveal that narrating a sequence of events is highly affected by the way we conceptualise events:

«Speakers of different languages follow different preferential patterns when they encode events. We believe that these preferences which have so far been described from a linguistic point of view (i.e. surface structure) are rooted in differences in conceptualisation of events. »
(Schmiedtová & Flecken 2008, p.14)

Having reviewed the main findings on how speakers go about relating events in a narrative, stating the shared features and the differences between their accounts, we now turn to specify the scope of this overview and talk about how speakers relate simultaneous events in a narrative.

2.4. Relating two simultaneous events: main issues

Compared with research on narrating sequences of events, which has received a great deal of attention, the expression of the temporal relation of *Sim* has received little attention. Research on the expression of *Sim* in discourse has also been very limited to date. We focus here on the main issues raised in the few research studies that investigated the relation.

2.4.1. Simultaneity: from conceptualisation to verbalisation

The first issue regarding the investigation of *Sim* is obviously the speaker's conceptual representation of two situations of the external world as happening at the same time. The perception of this relation is fundamental to its linguistic representation. The question is to what extent two situations can be perceived as simultaneous by the observer / speaker. As established in the introduction, perception is constrained by many variables, such as the sensory level, remember for instance, the example of the thunder and lightning.

Another constraint would be the interaction of the two situations at hand. For instance, we hypothesise that the *Sim* of two situations interacting with each other is more easily perceptible than two unrelated situations. The difference is given in the following two examples respectively:

(12) Maggie was cooking when Paul phoned her.

(13) Lisa was cooking and Bart was playing the guitar.

The perception and conceptual representation of *Sim* are facilitated by spatial proximity of the two situations. In fact, it helps the speaker to see that the two situations are happening in the same space in order to perceive their *Sim*.

Another problem related to the question of perception of *Sim* is that even if we perceive situations to be simultaneous; we do not always choose a perspective of retelling them as happening at the same time (Schmiedtová 2004).

For these reasons, choosing visual stimuli showing events happening at the same time solves this

potential problem and ensures that understanding *Sim* is a prerequisite to understanding the scene shown.

2.4.2. Ambiguity of the expression of simultaneity

Secondly, as already mentioned above, the relation of *Sim* is not always marked by explicit devices, even if it is perceptually accessible to children from a very early age as Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim (1994) declare:

«Simultaneity on the other hand, is usually not expressed overtly when deictically anchored. Explicit reference to the *sim*-relation is, rather, typical of complex temporal structure in discourse. » (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994, p.395)

As they suggest, the expression of *Sim* is connected to the expression of temporal marking, of tense and aspect in the discourse. This is observed in the verbal tasks of children of different ages verbalizing simultaneous events (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994, p.396).

Accordingly, in the absence of any marker, it is difficult to establish with certainty that two events of a discourse are simultaneous, as opposed to sequential. Furthermore, there is the dilemma that if two utterances are produced one after another in discourse, without any explicit temporal marker, the default interpretation would be that they are sequential. This means that they are interpreted as following the natural order of situations they refer to, meaning situation 1 –then-situation 2.

Even though Labov & Waletzky (2003) mention the possible *Sim* interpretation in the example they cite, they insist that it is not a defining character of what builds up a narrative. This leads us to the third problem we would like to tackle here concerning building a narrative with simultaneous situations.

2.4.3. Building simultaneous events into a narrative discourse

The wide general belief is that the defining property of a narrative is temporal order of events of the type event₁-then-event₂ (Labov 2003; Labov & Waletzky 2003; Reinhart 1984). Furthermore,

as pointed out by Schmiedtová (2004), according to that belief, retelling situations - even simultaneous - as a sequence of events seems to be the easiest and most natural alternative to the speaker:

«It seems plausible to assume that the default strategy when narrating is to retell what is happening in terms of individual sequences, chronologically. It takes a special linguistic effort to mark simultaneity. That is, to mark simultaneity overtly means violating “The Principle of Natural Order” (PNO), which says that in the normal case, events are reported in the order in which they occurred. » (Schmiedtová 2004, p.2)

In order to do so, the speaker would separate the simultaneous situations to build one into the background of the story, and put the other one in its main skeleton, as stated by Reinhart (1984)

« When a sequence of simultaneous events is reported, only the one presented first carries the foreground aspect, while the rest are marked as background. » (Reinhart 1984, p.794)

In other words, and as pointed out by Labov & Waletzky (2003), *Sim* is not characteristic of a narrative, as it does not allow progression on the time line. In order for the speaker to find his / her way into sequencing, he / she has to impose an order to the events in the story.

Bres (1994; 2001) hypothesises that two simultaneous situations can be part of the main narrative sequence. This is possible with subordination :

« *Si dans la réalité deux évènements sont simultanés, la mise en récit peut subordonner syntaxiquement l'un à l'autre à savoir faire de deux évènements une et une seule proposition narrative.* » (Bres 2001, p.31)

Indeed, according to Bres (2001) two simultaneous events are transformed by subordination into one narrative clause, which sinks into the narrative thread of the discourse.

According to Leclercq (2007), retelling simultaneous situations does not always generate a narrative. She opts therefore for the terminology “*compte-rendu* offline” to characterise the productions she investigates. The terms simply signify a verbal account by a speaker of a visual stimulus presented beforehand and stopped during the completion of the verbal task.

All this brings our attention to the fundamental issues of building a discourse of simultaneous situations. In fact, we need to solve the paradox of having informants retell stories – and so presumably produce narratives based on simultaneous situations, which is supposedly incompatible with the task of narrating events.

In the following chapter, we focus this review upon the role of aspectual marking in the expression of *Sim*.

**CHAPTER 3. ROLE OF ASPECTUAL PERSPECTIVE
IN EXPRESSING SIMULTANEITY**

3.0. Introduction

In this chapter, our interest lies in the expression of *Sim* with aspectual means, mainly the markers of the progressive available in the languages under consideration. But prior to explaining the role of aspect in the expression of *Sim*, as advocated for instance in the works of Leclercq (2007; 2008; 2009) or Schmiedtová (2004), we deal with the role of aspect in discourse organisation in general. Therefore, we first consider the role of aspect in structuring discourse in general, followed by a discussion of the role of progressive markers in structuring the discourse of simultaneous situations and in expressing *Sim* relation.

3.1. Role of aspectual perspective in discourse organisation

As mentioned above, the broad term *aspect* refers to the *perspective* taken on events (Klein 1994; von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2009). Aspect is traditionally known as the ‘viewpoint’ that a speaker takes on events he / she conceptualises from the situations of the external world. *Aspectual perspective* is composed of the two words *perspective* and *aspect*. Graumann & Kallmeyer (2002, p.1) explain the link between both terms as follows:

«With “perspective and viewpoint,” we refer to a position from which a person or a group view something (things, persons or events) and communicate their views. With “aspects”, we refer to those sides, attributes or features in which the objects of our perception or cognition appear. These basic meanings are appropriate for everyday communication and understanding. It is only when we sit back and reflect that we begin to understand how these terms are interrelated, namely, as perspectival terms, i.e., as elements of a perspectival structure (perspectivity). It is from a given position in space that spatial objects are viewed in one of their aspects; when the viewing subject changes his/her position or viewpoint other aspects of the same object come into view.»

The aspectual perspective is, as mentioned above, determined by the relation of TT and TSit. Furthermore, it is constrained by the grammatical or lexical categories of aspect as implemented by morphemes, affixes or verb classes (Nakhimovsky 1988, p.34).

One of the three fundamental types of knowledge we have about events is aspectual knowledge

(Nakhimovsky 1988). The two other types are compositional knowledge, and it concerns the internal structuring of events into several stages, and durational knowledge with regard to the relation of a certain event to the time scale.

Furthermore, aspectual perspective taken on events determines how they are related in a discourse. Therefore, it plays a determining role in structuring discourse. The literature on the matter is abundant. For instance, Comrie (1985, p.28) points out in the following that the organisation of the discourse is not a property of the forms included but of the implicature behind the aspectual choices:

«Grammars of many languages claim that the language in question has a special form for indicating situations that occur in sequence, or for distinguishing sequences of situations that occur in a sequence from simultaneously occurring situations. However, in nearly every case, it is impossible to tell from the limited range of examples given whether the interpretation of sequentiality is indeed part of the meaning of the form in questions, or whether this is just an implicature following from a basically aspectual distinction. »

Furthermore, the results of numerous and varied studies agree upon the role of aspect in structuring discourse in general (Berman & Slobin 1994b; Hopper 1979; Klein & von Stutterheim 2002; Leclercq 2007; Schmiedtová & Flecken 2008; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002). In fact, as mentioned previously, the structure of a narrative text is affected by the nature of the *quaestio*. Moreover, it determines its microstructure and the macro-structure (Starren 2003; von Stutterheim & Klein 1989; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002). The macro-organisation of a text influences the choice of the linguistic devices and of the different temporo-aspectual markers used (Starren 2003, p.181).

Many studies agree on the fact that the structuring of a text into main structure and side structure is highly determined by the aspectual choices made by the speaker. In fact, it is widely believed that the main structure would be made of dynamic bounded and rather punctual / short events. Conversely, the side structures would contain durative events using mainly the imperfective (Hopper 1979; Reinhart 1984). On the basis of a study by Reid (1976), Hopper (1979) affirms that the *passé simple* and the *passé composé* are employed in the main structure of the narrative

because they present affinities with dynamic events and activities and thus allow progression of events on the time axis.

Klein & Perdue (1992) however, recognise the possibility of having exceptions, such that a globalizing event, summarising a sequence of events, can be part of the main structure of the narrative. They say:

« When an event involving a central protagonist itself serves as a temporal frame for another event involving him/ her or where an utterance acts as a “conclusion” giving the result of events involving him/her. » (Klein & Perdue 1992, pp.53-59)

Following Smith (1997) or Bres (2005), we question the rigid parallelism established between perfective / main structure; and imperfective / side structures, as claimed by Hopper (1979) or Reinhart (1984). However, we argue that the aspectual perspective chosen by speakers to construe events they conceptualise and relate between them in discourse is fundamental to structuring it.

Additionally, it appears that language-specific means available to the speakers influence the way they take perspectives to conceptualise and construe events in a particular language. This finding is further supported by the research carried out within the Heidelberg Project referred to earlier and which investigate many different languages. Indeed, the study by Carroll *et al.* (2004) shows that in languages that have proper means to denote that an event is on-going (e.g., English or Italian), speakers do not need to point out that the event is specific to a certain time interval by adding more details to the verb. This is because the specificity of the event as a single occurrence is taken care of by the grammatical marking of the progressive. By contrast, in languages that do not code on-goingness grammatically on the verb, for example German, speakers consider specificity selecting verbs and ways to express that the event in question is an individual specific case. Therefore, we hypothesise following the research on simultaneity that aspectual perspective is one of the main devices used to relate simultaneous events. We report on those research findings in the following section.

3.2. Role of aspect in expressing simultaneity

According to Reinhart (1984, p.789), when we have two simultaneous situations to retell, only the first one of the two is put in main structure of the discourse. The second one would be consequently put in the side structures of the discourse. She says:

« When a sequence of simultaneous events is reported, only the one presented first carries the foreground aspect, while the rest are marked as background. »

Therefore, it follows from Reinhart's (1984) views of the aspectual expression in the discourse organisation, in retelling two simultaneous situations that the first one of them is viewed as a punctual bounded event whereas the second one is viewed as a durative non-bounded one. Of course, even if this can hold true, it needs to be verified by further analyses in order for the claim to be generalised.

Recent studies on *Sim*, however, attest the important role of aspect in expressing the relation of *Sim* between events. Speakers make use of aspectual perspective to structure simultaneous events in discourse. In addition, they make use of aspectual marking when it is possible in the language they are using. Aspectual marking operates at the utterance level, which means it clarifies the perspective taken of each of the simultaneous situations, and at the discourse level, in terms of how aspectual marking organises the construction of the simultaneous events within the larger context of discourse.

When we speak of aspectual marking, we mean the linguistic devices available in a certain language to express a certain aspectual perspective, for example, *V-ing* in English to express on-goingness of an event.

Schmiedtová (2004) affirms that aspectual marking is a device for expressing *Sim* in her study comparing Czech, German and English productions. She identifies two possibilities of using aspect to construe two simultaneous situations in discourse. First, a speaker can oppose or juxtapose two aspectual forms such as the perfective and imperfective or the progressive form and the simple form, as in English. She calls this style the “stronger aspectual style”. The

“weaker aspectual style” is when the two aspectual forms are used in combination with adverbials to express *Sim*. The two aspectual styles are represented in the graph below.

Figure 1. Possible aspectual styles according to Schmiedtová (2004)



Another non-aspectual style is also possible. The pure “adverbial style” consists in the exclusive use of adverbials to express *Sim* relation of two situations.

As Schmiedtová's (2004) study shows, L1 speakers of different languages can manifest different preferences in using aspect to mark *Sim*. For instance, Czech speakers highly make use of aspectual marking, using the stronger aspectual style more often than English and German speakers do; the perfective and imperfective forms being grammaticalised categories in Czech. In contrast, in German, where there is no grammaticalised perfective or imperfective form, the speakers usually use the adverbial style. English speakers however employ the weaker aspectual style more frequently (*ibid.*, p.228). In her PhD thesis, Leclercq (2007) investigates the French and English languages and confirms Schmiedtová's (2004) findings. She attests that English native

speakers express the inclusion of events using the weaker aspectual style, that is, the aspectual contrast in combination with adverbials. Conversely, French speakers exploit less aspectual marking on the same task, they opt for adverbials with or without aspectual contrast (Leclercq 2007, p.295). She therefore concludes that the progressive marking *V-ing* in English and the periphrasis «*en train de*» are devices for structuring the discourse of simultaneous situations. She also notes the frequent use of progressive marking (in the two languages) in the discourse of simultaneous situations of the inclusion or “*emboîtement*” form. In fact, simultaneous situations also constitute the preferred use of «*en train de*» (Leclercq 2007, p.164). She concludes, similarly to Schmiedtová (2004) that progressive marking is a central tool for marking *Sim*.

In the next chapter we investigate in detail the major findings on the use of aspectual perspective by L2 learners in the expression of *Sim*.

**CHAPTER 4. EXPRESSION OF SIMULTANEITY IN
LEARNER VARIETIES: FOCUS ON THE USE OF
ASPECTUAL PERSPECTIVE**

4.0. Introduction

In this chapter, we aim to review the research on second language acquisition with a special focus on the expression of simultaneity using aspect. We start this overview with an introduction of the notions of first language (L1) and second language (L2). We focus afterwards on the various acquisitional stages. We start with the different stages identified in the ESF project, then we deal with the further developments suggested by subsequent second language acquisition research. We deal in the last part of this overview with the expression of *Sim* in L2 and with the use of aspect to express it.

4.1. L1 and L2

In this section, we aim to clarify the terms ‘first language’ (L1) (in reference to TAL1, and French by native speakers), versus ‘second language’ (L2), which is used to designate the French variety spoken by our Tunisian learners. We consider the terms L1 and L2 in the light of the definitions of Klein (1986). According to him, there exist four modes of language acquisition. Klein's (1986, p.15) table reproduced below explains each mode:

Table 6. Basic modes of language acquisition

Age	Acquisition of language		Designation
	A	B	
1-3 yrs.	+	-	monolingual FLA
	+	+	bilingual FLA
3-4 yrs. up to puberty	+	+	child SLA
after puberty	-	+	adult SLA

First language acquisition (FLA) possibly happens in two modes: monolingual FLA, when the child (1-3 years) acquires only one language. Bilingual FLA takes place when the child at the same time acquires two first languages. Second language acquisition (SLA) can happen early (from 3 years up to puberty) thus possibly overlapping with FLA, which can be still in progress at 3 or 4 years. We speak therefore of child SLA, whereas adult SLA is when a second language is acquired after puberty.

Therefore, to go back to defining L1 and L2, L1 is, as its name points out, what is acquired first:

“First language acquisition occurs when the learner - usually a child - has been without a language so far and now acquires one.” (Klein 1986, p.4)

Second language is obviously the language acquired second. Nevertheless, the line between L1 and L2 can be hard to draw especially at a stage when L1 is still in progress as Klein (1986, p.15) points out. In this project, we deal only with adult SLA acquisition. In fact, all our Tunisian informants are adults who settled in France for work or professional purposes. One group of informants is made of speakers who had to learn French “spontaneously” as opposed to “guided” or “tutored” learning (Klein 1986). The term is adopted from Klein (1986, p.16) and it means:

«The term 'spontaneous learning' is used to denote the acquisition of a second language in everyday communication, in a natural fashion, free from systematic guidance. A prototypical case is that of a Turkish worker who settles in a West European country not knowing a single word of the local language and who manages to acquire - through his sporadic and systematic social intercourse with the broader society - some knowledge of the language. A 'purer' example of spontaneous learning would be the missionary or social anthropologist who attempts to master the language of a hitherto unknown tribe, relying on his (possibly somewhat pathological) social intercourse without the benefit of any sort of guidance. Spontaneous language acquisition is anything but uniform. The person who learns a language independently in order to translate the bible into that language does so in quite a different way from someone who arrives in a strange country in order to seek employment for an unspecified period of time and throughout that time lives there, relatively cut off from the native population, preferring the company of his compatriots. »

Additionally, our L-educated informants have little or no knowledge of any other language at all except their L1. Those learners are similar to those of the L2 French speaking informants who took part in the European Science Foundation (ESF) project that took place in the eighties: Moroccan or Turkish immigrant workers in France immersed in “natural” acquisition of the language (Bhardwaj *et al.* 1988; Dietrich *et al.* 1995; Perdue 1993a; Perdue 1993b).

We take into account in our analysis the learner varieties as they appear in their actual productions on the complex task completed for the purposes of this study. We therefore adopt *the*

learner variety perspective, which represents a radical view and a break from the traditional concepts of “interlanguage” and “approximate systems” which take a “target deviation perspective” when analysing learners’ productions (Klein & Perdue 1997, p.309). In fact, these latter concepts rest on the assumption that the learner language is a “system in between, incomplete compared to the “target” system as maintained by Klein (1998, p.537). The learner variety perspective goes back to research projects on the languages of adult foreign workers (for example the ESF project) and it has three characteristics (Klein 1998; Klein & Perdue 1997; Perdue 1993b): First, the acquisitional process is a “continuous and gradual process” with no clear-cut boundaries between the various learner varieties through which the learner goes. Furthermore, the organisation of learner varieties and the learner’s development across them are quite systematic. Second, learner varieties are structured by a set of organisational principles that interact with each other. The type of interaction varies from one learner to the other and it changes over time. Learning a new component of the language would entail the reorganisation of the whole variety. Last, learner varieties are inherently systematic. They are “systems on their own right” characterised by a set of organisational principles, just like fully developed languages such as French or German. They should not be described in terms of errors and deviations from a “norm” or “a target” language (Klein & Perdue 1997).

4.2. Acquisitional stages

As for the acquisitional process, the still groundbreaking findings about its development are those resulting from the ESF project. The studies based on the ESF project identified three basic stages, which still constitute the ground for all the subsequent refinements made by functional theories on learner varieties. The three main stages identified in the ESF studies of language acquisition are: the *pre-basic varieties*, the *basic variety* and the *post-basic varieties*. While the *pre-basic* and *basic* varieties are maintained in subsequent investigations, the stages beyond the basic varieties received further attention. It was the topic of a special issue of *AILE*¹¹ in 1997. The varieties beyond the basic variety (*advanced varieties*) were investigated later. The central

¹¹ Acquisition et Interaction en Langue Etrangère (<http://aile.revues.org/>)

research which constitutes a valuable contribution regarding the advanced varieties are mainly those by Bartning (1997; 2009a; 2009b) and Bartning & Schlyter (2004). The advanced learner variety was the subject of investigation of the book edited by Labeau & Myles (2009). It grouped studies that have investigated in more depth the varieties beyond the basic variety (*advanced varieties*) and further divided them in three stages (stages 4, 5 and 6). Bartning & Schlyter (2004, p.296) justify this division in the following:

« La raison pour laquelle nous divisons la variété avancée en trois niveaux est due au fait qu'au fur et à mesure que l'interlangue se développe, cette évolution crée une richesse d'expressions qui permettent un choix dans le répertoire. »

The article by Bartning (2009b, p.16) brings in two more reasons for dividing the advanced varieties into 3 stages:

« Another reason is that the acquisitional pace slows down and it looks as though the advanced stages are more like a 'plateau' on which to linger rather than a rapid step to take. Another interesting explanation for the extensive variation at advanced levels would be factors concerning the representation of knowledge in the L2 user. »

We introduce in what follows the basic three stages as outlined by Perdue (1993b, pp.104-110), then describe their main characteristics. Afterwards, we review the major refinements of the advanced varieties.

4.2.1. Acquisitional process according to ESF studies

Stage A: *The Pre-basic varieties*: they are the first learner attempts to produce functional discourse based on what they have selected from the input of the new language. They are lexical, i.e., they consist of simple lexical items (nouns, adjectives, verbs used like nouns; i.e., in an invariable form; adverbials like *calendric*¹² noun phrases...). These lexical items are put together with the aim to produce meaningful utterances. Furthermore, they are heavily context-

¹² The term is used in Perdue (1993).

dependent. In addition, they do not show functional inflection, they rarely contain complex constructions except “rote forms” (individual lexical items). Finally, they are not subject to the source language influence as they do not imply what Perdue (1993b, p.105) calls “re-lexification” i.e., word-by-word replacement of the L1 constructions. Temporal devices at this stage consist mainly of adverbials, notably calendaric phrases.

Stage B: *The basic variety*: it is characterised by the presence of verbs in their *base form*. A base form is a form of the verb selected by the speaker in his / her speech. It can be the infinitive; which is usually the case in English according to Perdue (1993b, p.90). It is also the preference for Turkish learners of Dutch. It can be the bare verb stem (Moroccan learners of Dutch) or even a generalised inflected form; i.e. a selected finite form (Swedish). Those forms are uninflected verbs. In fact, learners at this stage produce no finite constructions except rote forms.

« (a) Utterances consist either of simple nouns, or a verb with some nominal complements; they can be complemented by adverbials in initial or final position (sometimes, especially in answer to a question, there are only adverbials); (b) Verbs show up in a single form, the *base form*. In English, this is usually the bare stem. In other languages, it may also be the infinitive or even a selected finite form; (c) There is no copula; (d) Adverbials are mostly of TAP-type, that is, they specify a position. They can be deictic (*now*), anaphoric (*before*) or ‘absolute’ (*Sunday*, *Christmas*). There are also a small number TAD and TAQ at this early point. » (Perdue 1993b)

The way words are put together at this stage follows a clearer pattern than in the previous stage. Its structure is more or less the same for all learners at the same stage regardless of their source language or target language. As for temporal means, the learners’ repertoire shows progressive development as it can include in addition to the calendaric devices, a variety of adverbials. More importantly to us here, the basic variety has no tense or aspect marking. Nevertheless, the function of the basic variety is not as narrow as it might sound. It represents a “sufficiently furnished house” as Perdue (1993b, p.108) put it. What it allows the learner to do is indeed very significant as pointed out:

«What the basic variety allows is the specification of some time span – a relatum -, its position on the time line, its duration and (if iterated) its

frequency. The event, process or state to be situated in time is then simply linked to this relatum. All the speaker has to do now is shift the relatum, if there is need. More systematically, we can describe the functioning of the basic variety by the following three principles. (i). At the beginning of the discourse, a time span – the initial Topic time TT_1 – is fixed. This can be done in three ways: a) By explicit introduction on the informant's part (e.g. *when Italia* 'when we was in Italy'); this is regularly done by a TAP [positional temporal adverbial] in utterance initial position; b) By explicit introduction on the interviewer's part (e.g. what happened last Sunday? Or what will you do next Sunday?) c) By implicitly taking the 'default topic time' – the time of utterance. In this case, nothing is explicitly marked. TT_1 is not only the topic time of the first utterance. It also serves as a relatum to all subsequent topic times TT_2, TT_3, \dots (ii). If TT_i is given, then TT_{i+1} – the topic time of the subsequent utterance – is either maintained, or changed. If it is maintained, nothing is marked. If it is different, there are two possibilities. The shifted topic time is explicitly marked by an adverbial in initial position. The new topic time follows from a principle of text organisation. For narratives, this principle is the familiar PNO 'Order of mention corresponds to order of events'. In other words, TT_{i+1} is some interval more or less right-adjacent to TT_i . (...) Principles I and II provide the temporal scaffolding of a sequence of utterances – the time spans about which something is said. The 'time of situation' of some utterance is then given by a third principle: III. The relation of TSit to TT in the basic variety is always CON, i.e., 'more or less simultaneous'. TT can be contained in TSit, or TSit can be obtained in TT, or both, i.e., they are really simultaneous. In other words, the basic variety allows no aspectual differentiation by formal means. » (Perdue 1993b, pp.106-107)

Stage C: *Beyond the basic variety*: If the learner's development proceeds beyond the basic variety¹³, he / she starts to increasingly adapt to the specificities of the target language. Initially, the post-basic varieties would manifest formal variation, which would precede functional use. This *form-before-function* stage shows the co-existence of morphological forms with no appropriate functions. It can be simple tenses or complex periphrastic constructions. Furthermore, the development beyond the basic variety is slow and gradual. The learner slowly increases his / her vocabulary and the forms are more and more used for appropriate functions.

¹³ All the learners do not develop beyond the basic variety, it was the case of some speakers in the ESF project such as Mahmut and Zahra (Perdue 1993b, p.108)

One significant characteristic of this stage is that tense marking is acquired first. It therefore precedes aspectual marking. Another observation made by Perdue (1993b) about this stage is that irregular morphology emerges before the regular one.

Conclusion

The three acquisitional stages as generated by the ESF studies still constitute a solid theoretical framework for understanding the developmental process of acquisition. In the following table, we summarise the general tendencies observed in learner varieties regarding the expression of temporality and the connection of utterances in discourse. This detailed exposition will help us determine our learners' acquisitional stages later on.

Table 7. General tendencies of expression of temporality and discourse cohesive devices in learner varieties according to the ESF studies (Perdue 1993b)



As we can see, while the boundaries of the pre-basic and basic varieties can be easily drawn from the characteristics detailed above, the varieties beyond the basic variety are less refined in the framework presented by Klein & Perdue (1992; 1997) or Perdue (1993b). In Bartning & Schlyter (2004), six acquisitional stages are proposed for French learners. The advanced learner varieties are further refined in more recent work (cf. Bartning (2009a; 2009b)).

Bartning (1997; 2009b) add to the three stages described above a fourth one: The “*near-native*” stage. This stage is characterised by near-native lexicon and grammar usage. Nevertheless, the grammatical intuition and discourse organisation would differ from those of native speakers.

According to Perdue (1993b, p.116), achieving native-like competence in the target language is possible

«There are a number of learners who approach the target variety to a degree where it is at least very similar to a native speaker’s competence. We have no evidence that an adult second language learner is in principle unable to achieve full mastery of the target language –as far as the expression of temporality is concerned. This does not exclude of course, that such changes of ‘the language processor’ might exist for other domains of language, such as phonology or intonation. »

Furthermore, he argues that the source language of speakers does not exert significant influence on the acquisition of temporality in a second language (*ibid.*, p.117). This statement is a little bit challenged by the findings of Leclercq (2007; 2008; 2009) who finds out that the L1 of her near-native speakers still affects the way they conceptualise and hence verbalise events. Moreover, she concludes in accordance with Perdue (1993b) that the most difficult task for the very advanced learner is to reorganise his / her conceptualisation of events according to the target language principles.

4.2.2. Further developments: the *advanced varieties* (Bartning 1997; Bartning 2009a; Bartning 2009b; Bartning & Schlyter 2004; Labeau & Myles 2009)

In their article «*Itinéraires acquisitionnels et stades de développement en français L2* », Bartning & Schlyter (2004) propose, inspired by many studies notably those related to the ESF programme, studies on grammaticalisation processes and the processability theory (Pienemann 2005a; Pienemann 2005b; Pienemann 2007), six acquisitional stages in French L2 after studying the developmental sequences of about 20-25 criteria and observing many linguistic phenomena in two separate corpora of spontaneous speech produced by Swedish learners of French. These phenomena are verbal morphology and agreement, tense aspect and modality (TAM), negation, object pronouns, genre; and subordination. They summarise the logic behind the acquisitional

development they propose as follows:

« La première tâche de l'apprenant est de construire des énoncés. Pour ce faire elle/il se sert des structurations d'énoncés différentes : nominale, verbale non fléchie et fléchie ; l'apprenant met graduellement en grammaire ces formes verbales et développe l'accord verbal. Simultanément il a besoin de référer au temps passé, au temps futur etc. ; ainsi il développe un système TMA. Un autre système nécessaire et précoce est la négation : il a besoin de réfuter, de nuancer son discours. Pour la fonction référentielle l'apprenant a recours aux entités exprimées par les SN, les déterminants (définitude, actuel/virtuel), les adjectifs (les propriétés) ainsi que leur morphologie propre au français. L'apprenant acquiert de plus en plus de lexèmes, ce qui l'aide à distinguer les formes différentes et ainsi à segmenter la morphologie. Très tôt, l'apprenant a besoin de nuancer, d'expliquer, de complexifier sa pensée et son argumentation (il s'agit d'adultes dont les structures cognitives sont déjà en place), et il le fait par le biais de la subordination et des connecteurs. Pour la construction des énoncés, aussi pour les énoncés complexes (la subordination), l'apprenant a recours, presque dès le début, à la prédication en c'est. L'apprenant s'en sert tôt et fréquemment. Plus tard dans le développement, la structuration en c'est est liée à la subordination par le biais des clivées, des pseudo-clivées etc. Tous ces phénomènes se reflètent de façon parallèle dans les deux corpus. » (Bartning & Schlyter 2004, p.297)

The six acquisitional stages proposed can be summarised as follows (Bartning & Schlyter 2004, pp.293-296):

1) *The initial stage*: This stage is similar to the *pre-basic variety* described above. It also incorporates the transition to the *basic variety*. It is characterised by nominal structuring of utterances, lack of mastery of inflection, use of negation as Neg X such as (*non grand-lit*), rare use of the past tense *passé composé* forms but not necessarily in its appropriate contexts.

2) *The post-initial stage*: This stage partially compares to the *basic variety*. It is characterised by Bartning & Schlyter (2004, p.295) as follows:

« Ce stade est caractérisé par l'apparition de quelques phénomènes grammaticaux, mais encore très variables. La subordination simple introduite par quand, parce que et qui, que apparaît. Il y a apparition de la négation préverbale ne sans pas, à côté de la négation postverbale.

*L'apprenant commence à utiliser des formes verbales modales (suivies d'infinitif) et le futur périphrastique. Son emploi du PC est devenu plus productif. Ainsi on voit que certains morphèmes grammaticaux libres apparaissent tôt. Quelques apprenants guidés utilisent parfois l'imparfait sous forme de *était* et *avait*. Les formes verbales non-finies dans un contexte fini sont encore fréquentes mais le nombre de 'formes finies courtes' augmente. L'accord sujet-verbe est marqué par l'opposition entre la 1^{ère} et 2^{ème} personne au singulier pour les verbes non-thématiques être, avoir ainsi que par nous V-ons en alternance avec nous V, sans désinence. Les pronoms objet sont généralement postposés. L'apprenant à ce stade recourt fréquemment à *c'est en tant que* constructeur d'énoncés et de structure passe-partout (Bartning, 1997b). Une comparaison avec le projet ESF suggère que ce niveau correspond en partie à la variété basique : la plupart des énoncés contiennent un verbe, mais la morphologie de ces verbes est loin d'être établie.»*

In other words, the post-initial stage is characterised by the use of verbs but with an unstable morphology. Furthermore, what separates it from the previous stage is the evolution of some grammatical phenomena such as the emergence of subordination with *quand*, *parce que* et *qui*, *que*, and of verbal negation with *ne* without *pas*. The *passé composé* is used more productively, at the same time, non-finite verbal forms are still found in finite contexts. The presentative *c'est* is frequently used as an utterance constructor.

3) *The intermediate stage*: The learner variety at this stage manifests more features that are regular even though it remains very different from the target language. The learner has a better grasp of negation, uses the past tense in almost all past contexts. He / she also makes use of the periphrastic future. In addition, causal, temporal, relative, completive and interrogative subordinate clauses as well as the first stances of subjunctive emerge.

4) *The lower advanced stage* (stade avancé bas): More complex structures appear at this stage (e.g., *conditionnel*, *plus-que parfait*, and the *subjonctif*). Furthermore, more complex devices of negation emerge and are correctly used, such as *rien*, *jamais* and *personne*.

5) *The medium advanced stage* (stade avancé moyen): This stage is characterised by the development of verbal morphology, more productive use of the *subjonctif* and the appearance of the *gérondif*.

6) *The higher advanced stage* (le stade avancé supérieur): Only at this stage does verbal morphology get stabilised. The use of complex structures and of the connectors *enfin* and *donc* is native-like.

Bartning (2009b, pp.14-15) provides a discussion of the features of the different morpho-syntactic categories, which distinguish the advanced varieties. These features are of two types: target-like features and idiosyncratic features. Target-like features, such as TAM, develop with variable speed and gain in complexity. Some of them are present in learner varieties from the beginning, such as *Je (ne) sais pas*. Idiosyncratic features include non-targetlike forms, and what is called *transitory* features, those that are used then disappear, for example, the verb forms ending in /e/, called *Ve* in Perdue (1993b), used as a default form for many functions and forms (-é; -ais, -ai, -ez, -er...), and *c'est*, which is used in first stages to replace other structures (**c'est chaud*). Furthermore, Bartning (2009b, pp.20-26) goes into deeper details regarding the characteristics of advanced varieties, reviewing the literature on this matter. She suggests a seventh stage, which would distinguish the advanced stages 4-6 and the near-native competence. She highlights the following specificities about advanced stages that further confirm the existence of discriminating factors between advanced varieties and near-native speakers of L2 French:

- The acquisition of the *plus-que-parfait*
- The influence of L1 on the conceptualisation of temporal system of the L2 as discussed.
- The mastery of the third person plural morphology
- Choice of perspectives, which is also influenced by the speakers' L1
- Reference to person in discourse relying on grammaticalised devices such as zero pronouns and clitics.
- Semi-negation (omission of *ne*), appearance of *rien*, *personne* as subjects and objects, as well as *aucun*, *ne...que*, *ne...plus* and *ne pas* +infinitive, *ne...plus*, *ne...personne*, *personne ne...*

- Integration of the scope particles (*aussi, encore...*) in the utterance structures, the last ones emerging being the temporal *encore* and *déjà*.
- Use of sequences like *du coup, en fait, en tant que, par rapport à*, etc.
- Increase in fluency.

The characteristics of the *near-native variety* are presented as follows by Bartning (1997, p.20)

« Traits caractéristiques : lexicque et grammaire en principe sans fautes; intuition grammatical différente de celle des natifs; organisation discursive non-native. »

Bartning (2009a) exposes the preliminary results of a pilot study, which attempts to distinguish between the advanced varieties and the near-native varieties. She argues that the difference between the two profiles is that learners at advanced stages are not perceived as native speakers by the natives of the language in question, whereas, near-native speakers are. These latter however, preserve some non-native characteristics, a certain “*parfum d'étrangeté*” (Leclercq 2007).

Conclusion

As outlined in the research studies reviewed above, the post-basic stage of language acquisition as put by Perdue (1993b) is a vast variety that is composed of many stages called the *advanced stages* with no sharp boundaries. As we are interested in perspective taking in retelling simultaneous situations, we attempt to summarise the main characteristics of the three advanced varieties and the near-native variety as far as the expression of tense and aspect as well as discourse connectors are concerned.

Table 8. General tendencies of advanced and near-native varieties

		Tense and Aspect	Discourse connectors
Bartning & Schlyter (2004) Corpus of Lund Corpus InterFra, Stockholm	Initial stage	Nominal structuring inappropriate use of <i>PC</i>	Use of connectors <i>et, mais</i> and <i>puis</i> .
	Post-initial stage	Unstable morphology More productive use of <i>PC</i>	Emergence of subordination <i>quand, parce que et qui, que</i> Use of <i>c'est</i> for as an utterance organiser
	Intermediate stage	Appropriate use of past tenses Use of periphrastic future Emergence of subjunctive Temporal subordinate clauses	Development of subordination (causal, temporal, relative...)
	Advanced low stage	Appearance of more complex structures: <i>conditional, plus-que- parfait</i> , and the <i>subjonctif</i>	Diversification of connectors overuse of <i>parce que</i> and <i>mais</i>
	Advanced medium stage	Inflectional morphology still developing	Relatives with <i>dont</i> Appearance of <i>gérondif</i>
	Advanced high stage	Stabilised inflectional morphology, appropriate use of forms	Native-like use of <i>enfin</i> and <i>donc</i> Capacity to manage many informational levels in an utterance Native-like use of macro- structural relatives
	Bartning (2009a) Pilot Study	Very advanced / Near-native variety	Influence of L1 in conceptualisation of temporal distinctions

By so doing, we are more importantly interested in establishing the acquisitional stages of each one of our informants based on their oral productions. In fact, as argued by Bartning & Schlyter (2004, p.297), the acquisitional itineraries suggested in their framework are very useful to determine the profile of a second language learner. We indeed use this framework in combination with the three acquisitional stages identified by the ESF studies to determine the profile of each of our French L2 informants. It is worth noting however that the analysis of the development of tense, aspect and modality focuses on past tenses, future tenses, modality, and the subjunctive. Nothing is mentioned about the emergence and development of the on-goingness marker «*en train de*».

4.3. Learners' expression of simultaneity

The groundbreaking studies on the expression of simultaneity by learners are certainly those by Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim (1994); Leclercq (2007) and Schmiedtová (2004).

In her PhD work, Schmiedtová (2004, p.187) investigates and compares the expression of *Sim* by different groups: German and English learners of Czech. As a reminder, she distinguishes between explicit temporal devices (e.g., aspectual marking, temporal adverbials, etc.) and atemporal means (e.g., spatial means and perception verbs) for expressing *Sim*.

She hypothesises that learners would be different from native speakers regarding the way they mark *Sim*. In fact, she emphasises that native speakers would be more successful in marking *Sim*, and that learners would be more inclined to express sequentiality of events instead. Her results confirm this hypothesis, that learners' marking of *Sim* is different from native speakers'. In fact, both groups of learners produce a comparable number of "failures", which means here "no marking" of *Sim* where there should be. Schmiedtová (2004, p.174) concludes that the learners' behaviour on the task is generally different from that of native speakers. Furthermore, she finds out that the two groups of learners use atemporal devices in the same way to express *Sim*.

«English and German subjects employ more explicit atemporal means than Czech subjects in their respective source language as well as in the target language. In addition, German native speakers speaking German use atemporal means more frequently than English native speakers speaking English. English and German learners of Czech, by contrast, show a different trend: they do not differ in their use of atemporal means. This finding suggests that learners, irrespective of their source language, follow the same path when expressing simultaneity via explicit atemporal means. » (Schmiedtová 2004, p.175)

This means that learners use a similar alternative strategy to express the relation of *Sim* to compensate in case they experience a "failure".

However, L2 learners show a different behaviour when it comes to the use of temporal means to express *Sim*. This difference is explained in the following:

«As far as temporal devices are concerned, Czech native speakers use them more often than any learner group. English subjects employ an equal number of temporal means in their retellings in the source as well as in the target language. German learners, on the other hand, use temporal devices more often in the target than in the source language. The only noteworthy difference regarding the usage of temporal devices can be found when comparing the Czech native group to any other - learner or native - group. This finding is mainly due to the very reduced use of atemporal devices by Czech native speakers. This, in turn, raises the question of why Czech speakers strongly prefer temporal over atemporal means. The answer can be found in the dominance of aspectual marking employed most of the time when simultaneity is expressed in Czech. Further, aspectual marking is classified in the present study as one of the explicit temporal simultaneity markers. Consequently, temporal devices are employed more frequently than atemporal devices. In the source language German, aspectual marking is completely absent. German native speakers counteract this by using more atemporal means for marking simultaneity. English has both options: to use aspectual marking and to employ atemporal means when expressing simultaneity. The fact that atemporal means are employed more often by English than by Czech native speakers indicates that when expressing simultaneity, English native speakers rely on aspectual marking less than Czech native speakers.» (Schmiedtová 2004, pp.178-179)

As Schmiedtová (2004) demonstrates, the temporal marking of simultaneity in a L2 is highly influenced by the specificities of the speakers' L1. According to Leclercq (2007, p.295), L1 affects only the use of adverbials by her French speakers of L2 English (our addition is between parentheses):

«Les apprenants continuent parfois à les employer (adverbes temporels) de manière francophone (clip Hotdog), alors que dans d'autres circonstances (clip Canal+), les choix des apprenants divergent de ceux des deux groupes de locuteurs natifs. »

In fact, as far as the use of aspectual marking is concerned, she finds out that very advanced learners' productions differ from their L1 pattern. This brings us to the following section where we deal with the use of aspectual marking in more detail.

4.4. L2 learners' use of aspect to express simultaneity

Some studies show that the way learners use aspectual marking to express *Sim* is to a certain extent affected by the properties of their mother languages. For instance, in her work, (Schmiedtová 2004, p.179) tried to find out the way learners with diverse language backgrounds mark simultaneity in Czech: whether they make different choices and mark *Sim* like they do it in their source language; or in a similar way irrespective of the marking preference in their source language. She observes that English learners rely on aspectual devices to express *Sim*. In fact, they use what she calls a *stronger aspectual style* (use of aspectual contrast or juxtaposition). German learners of Czech favour the *adverbial style* (use of temporal adverbials only) even if they master aspectual distinctions in the target language. She explains the differences between the two groups as follows:

«The differences in aspect use by learners in the target language appear to be motivated by the system of the respective source language: English learners of Czech use derived imperfectives mainly because English has a complete grammatical marked form for the expression of the imperfective aspect –the suffix *-ing*. German learners, on the other hand, go for the derivation of the perfective aspect by means of prefixation in Czech because German has a wide range of verbal prefixes that, like Czech prefixes, change the lexical meaning of a verb and can also have a perfective meaning.» (Schmiedtová 2004, pp.261-262)

Schmiedtová (2004, p.262) explains that the differences she observes between L2 learner productions by language-driven differences. In fact, they use aspect differently due to the language specificities of their L1. However, she points out that the learners know how to make use of aspect in a target-like manner.

The influence of the L1 on the use of aspect in L2 is not always attested though. For instance, Leclercq (2007; 2008; 2009) observes, on the contrary, that her French L2 learners of English do not at all follow the way aspectual contrast of forms is used in their native languages. Instead, they use the pattern of English native speakers. She summarises this finding as follows:

«*Les apprenants suivent de très près le schéma de marquage aspectuel des anglophones (...). Dans tous les cas, les apprenants s'écartent*

largement de la norme des locuteurs francophones natifs, qui sont très sensibles au caractère duratif d'un évènement, et utilisent le contraste aspectuel de manière très similaire aux anglophones. Notre groupe d'apprenants quasi-natifs semble non influencé par les usages de FrL1 pour le marquage du progressif. » (Leclercq 2007, pp.292-293)

Two studies on two different languages give way to different results: L1 specificities affect the way speakers of a L2 use aspect to mark *Sim*, in the study by Schmiedtová (2004), or L1 does not seem to affect the learners' use of aspect. The difference between the studies also lies in the profile of the learners included. While Schmiedtová (2004, p.112) investigates L2 learners belonging to three proficiency levels: basic, medium and advanced levels, Leclercq (2007) deals with near-native L2 speakers. One might therefore hypothesise that while L1 specificities intervene in aspectual marking of *Sim* in an L2 at basic, medium and advanced levels, it might not exert such a prominent role at a very advanced (near-native) stage, when only macro-structural influence can be observed (e.g., the way adverbials are used by French near native speakers of English in Leclercq's (2007) study).

In the next chapter, we narrow down our review to focus on the use of on-goingness devices in the expression of *Sim*.

**CHAPTER 5. ROLE OF PROGRESSIVE MARKING IN
EXPRESSING SIMULTANEITY**

5.0. Introduction

In this chapter, we focus on the concept of semantic on-goingness, and what is known as “the progressive aspect”. We start with an attempt to define the semantic notion, then we move on to provide an overview of the expression of this notion in different languages in order to set the background for the languages we are investigating. We finish the chapter with a description of the possible devices according to the literature to express the aspectual value of on-goingness in the two languages, Tunisian Arabic and French. Within the part concerning Tunisian Arabic as a First Language (henceforth TAL1), we attempt to give a broader description of the temporal system of this language, which is still relatively obscure in the research field of linguistics.

5.1. Notion of on-goingness

Any investigation of the on-goingness of a situation has to distinguish firmly between the semantic notion, i.e. of a situation in progress at a certain reference time, and its formal manifestation, that is to say, the linguistic devices employed to express it (designated henceforth by PRG markers). In fact, while semantic on-goingness is a universal concept, its expression differs from language to language. It is not necessarily overtly marked by a distinct morphology or form. Only few languages have the PRG category, as reported in the Dahl's (1985) survey. Many others do not code PRG on the verb, but have lexical entities expressing the semantic notion of on-goingness, e.g. French with «*en train de*» (Bertinetto *et al.* 2000; Carroll *et al.* 2004).

The predicate type and the inherent temporal properties of the lexical content in an utterance play a significant role in the use and meaning of the progressive form (Bardovi-Harlig 2008; Vendler 1967b). Vendler's (1967b) description of predicate types shows how the English progressive can occur with certain lexical contents only. In fact, his description of the continuous meaning in English verbs, expressed by the progressive form *V-ing* in comparison to non-continuous meaning, highlights the notion of phases of an on-going process and the progressive form highlights one of those phases. He proposes that stative verbs such as *love* and *know* do not have progressive forms because of the “internal contradiction between the stativity of the verb and the

non-stativity which is an essential feature of the progressive”. The progressive is said to be predominantly associated with the verbs belonging to the Vendlerian classes of activities and accomplishments.

Activities and accomplishments constitute the prototype verbs for the use of the progressive (Bardovi-Harlig 2008). Whether the class of achievement¹⁴ verbs can admit the progressive or not is subject to discussion (c.f. Vlach 1981, pp.277-278). According to Dowty (1979)¹⁵, achievement verbs force a repeated meaning and they are separated from the verbs that admit the progressive. Binnick (1991), Bertinetto (2000) as well as Klein (1994) attest the possibility of the occurrence of PRG with achievement verbs despite their punctual instantaneous character. In fact, the use of PRG “durativises” achievement verbs, which become "gradual completion verbs" e.g., ‘increase’, ‘get fatter’ (Bertinetto 2000, p.579). Klein (1994, pp.34-35) also shows the compatibility of durative adverbials such as *for five minutes* with an utterance like *he opened the window*. Klein's (1994, p.9) definition of the progressive accounts for its relation to the lexical aspect, for it is based on the notion of state, and change of state. He states for the English language that

« With the progressive form, the TT is properly contained in the first state of the situation (which is the only one for 1-state situations and which has no TT-contrast for 0-state situations) ».

Furthermore, in a recent article, von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009, p.204) make the distinction between the use of the progressive marking in ‘Brutus was killing Caesar’ and the use of the simple past in English in “Brutus killed Caesar”. The following quotation summarises their description of both aspectual values:

¹⁴ Achievement verbs such as “recognise”, “win (the race)” capture the beginning or the climax of an event. Unlike accomplishments, they cannot last a long temporal interval (Mourelatos 1981, p.192). In Klein's (1994) framework, the durativity / punctuality criteria are not part of the lexical content but world knowledge. For example, he illustrates explaining the difference between <find a nugget> and <find a bucket of nuggets> does not depend on the lexical aspect of the verb to find, but on the conceptualisation of the object found (see for a discussion Klein (1994, pp.85-90)).

¹⁵ Cited in Bardovi-Harlig (1998).

«In *Brutus was killing Caesar*, this time must overlap with the time of Brutus' activity, but not the time at which Caesar is dead – the end state of the second argument. In *Brutus killed Caesar* the time at issue must overlap with the time of Brutus' activity as well as the two other time spans –the time at which Caesar was alive (you cannot kill a dead man) and the time at which he was dead. In both cases the verb meaning of to kill included an end state – a temporal of “Caesar be dead”; but in saying *Brutus was killing Caesar*, the speaker is not committed to the claim that this end state is reached; in *Brutus killed Caesar* he is committed to such a claim. »

As outlined by the examples taken from Klein (1994) and von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009), the focus is on the expression of the progressive in English. Furthermore, the marker of the progressive in English is not equivalent to a marker of the same aspectual value in another language. Nevertheless, we use the following examples from English, a language where the category is highly grammaticalised, to schematise the use of the progressive aspect and illustrate its interaction with the lexical aspect. The square brackets [.] below represent the topic of time, -- - represents the source state, +++ represents the target state, and === represents the only one state of situations.

Paul was opening the window -----[-----]-----+++++

Paul was running =====[===]=====

Some studies based on the Heidelberg project focused on the contexts of use of the progressive marking in retelling different types of situations. The main findings that inform our study of the expression of on-goingness stipulate that causative events involving a qualitative change of an affected object such as (*knitting a scarf* or *making an airplane*) represent a prototypical context for expressing on-goingness. In fact, in the languages where the progressive marking is absent (for example, German) or not systematically used as it is not fully grammaticalised (for example, Dutch); the selection of an “aspectual perspective” is higher with causative events presenting a contrast between the source state of an event and the target / end state von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009). This finding about the relevance of endpoints in taking an aspectual perspective is supported and approved by many research studies on different languages (Carroll & von

Stutterheim 2003; Carroll *et al.* 2004; Leclercq 2007; Leclercq 2008; von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2002; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2003; von Stutterheim *et al.* 2009).

5.2. Degree of grammaticalisation of the notion of on-goingness

We have argued above that the expression of on-goingness in language had close affinities with the temporal properties of lexical contents. We point out here, following the research on the expression of on-goingness in different languages that, unlike the perfective or imperfective aspects for instance, the progressive shows “less grammaticalisation of form” (Bybee & Dahl 1989, p.56). In fact, languages have distinct morphosyntactic means for expressing on-goingness (Bertinetto *et al.* 2000). In what follows, we explain what the concept of grammaticalisation means, and then we move on to give a general overview about the possible markers of on-goingness in different languages.

First, let us explain the concept of grammaticalisation as it was defined in the literature. It is the process of development of lexical entities into items that fulfill grammatical functions in language, i.e., into grammatical markers.

«Out of lexical material by a gradual generalisation of meaning which is paralleled by a gradual reduction in form and fusion with the head (in this case the verb). Perfect and progressive are less grammaticized, less general meanings, and thus show less grammaticization of form. »
(Bybee & Dahl 1989, p.56)

Moreover, it designates the development of grammaticalised items into more grammaticalised ones. The term grammaticalisation was originally coined by Meillet to mean “the attribution of a grammatical character to a formerly autonomous word” (Hopper 1996, p.218). Hopper (1996) points out that the change from lexical categories to grammatical ones is principled. Moreover, he posits five “principles of grammaticalisation”: ‘layering’, ‘divergence’ ‘specialisation’, ‘persistence’ and ‘de-categorialisation’. Layering denotes that grammaticalisation of a form does not result in the elimination of old forms. Indeed, when a new layer emerges in a broad functional domain, the older ones do not disappear but remain and even interact with the newer ones. Divergence signifies that when one form develops in a clitic or an affix, the original lexical

form may continue to exist and function as an autonomous lexical category. Specialisation is a fundamental aspect of grammaticalisation. The development of a form into a function as a grammatical category narrows down the wide range of possibilities available in a language to express the desired grammatical function. Persistence means that some lexical traces of a grammaticalised form in a language continue to exist and to constrain its grammatical distribution. Finally, the de-categorialisation principle is the “loss of categoriality”. In fact, categories of Noun or Verb would develop into another category, such as adverb, auxiliary or preposition and not the opposite (Hopper 1996, pp.230-231). This principle is open to discussion given some existent examples, such as “the ups and downs of life” in English or “*le pour et le contre*” in French.

To sum up, the process of lexical items developing into a grammatical category is accompanied by many changes: “semantic impoverishment”, i.e., loss in semantic complexity and expressive value, loss in pragmatic significance, loss in phonetic substance, reduction of the members to the same morphosyntactic paradigm and the acquisition of a fixed syntactic position (Heine & Reh, 1984:67)¹⁶.

As far as markers of progressive aspect in different languages are concerned, they have common origins as pointed out in the following,

«Putting aside the exceptions represented by French and Albanian, the original meaning of most PROG (progressive) devices must have been that of a stative construction, expressing the idea of “being (i. e., finding oneself/ itself) in a state”, as is especially clear with the forerunners of Romance and English PROG constructions, as noted above in relation to examples (25). The purely dynamic (or processual) meaning, which is particularly salient in the focalised type, is in most cases a later development, attained at the end of a rather lengthy grammaticalisation process. In other words, it appears that most PROG constructions started out as “actional” periphrases, rather than truly “aspectual” ones. The complete attainment of the latter status corresponds to the stage of full

¹⁶ Cited in Hopper (1979, pp.222-224)

grammaticalisation. » (Bertinetto *et al.* 2000, p.539)

When the tools used are the only ones available to express the notion of on-goingness, we speak of devices that reached a status of complete grammaticalisation (e.g., English, Icelandic, Maltese) (*ibid.*, p.527). According to Bybee & Dahl (1989), the progressive, “usually” has “a periphrastic expression” in languages. It is “less grammaticized” and therefore shows “less grammaticization of form” compared to the imperfective or perfective aspects (Bybee & Dahl 1989, p.56). When the PRG markers are not fully grammaticalised, there exist more than one lexicalised devices or constructions, which compete in linguistic usage; such as the case for French and Albanian (Bertinetto *et al.* 2000).

Due to its various realisations in different languages, the question of whether PRG has to be considered an aspect on its own right has also been asked (*ibid.*, p.517). For example, comparing the progressive in English and in French, Veters (1996) considers PRG as an aspect in English due to its obligatory character, as it cannot be replaced by any other form; while in French it belongs to the lexical domain as its use is optional and can be replaced, for instance by the *imparfait*.

5.3. Marking on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic and in French

In this research, we look at the following languages: TAL1, French L1 and French L2 by Tunisian Arabic learners. We start this overview with TAL1, and we linger on the description of its temporal system, because, unlike the French temporal system, which has received much attention and various descriptions, virtually nothing is really known about how the temporal system works in TAL1.

This section is therefore based on the findings of the few studies on TAL1, which, as we will see, date back to long ago, and on the data of this study.

5.3.1. Tunisian Arabic

5.3.1.1. Introduction

What we generally refer to as ‘Arabic language’ is in reality a very complex entity. Arabic is multiple, as there are many Arabic languages spoken in 25 countries by about 250 million speakers (Holes 2004, p.1). The books of Versteegh (2001) and Holes (2004) give an interesting historical overview of the emergence and development of ‘Arabic’ since the settlement of the Arab tribes in the Arabian Peninsula. Before those conquests that followed the death of the prophet Mohammed in 623 AD, knowledge of what happened in the Arabian Peninsula is very limited, as Versteegh (2001) points out.

Currently, spoken Arabic languages (SAL) co-exist with a formal variety called Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) taught at school and used in any type of formal communication. The following description of the linguistic situation in Arab countries by Kirchhoff *et al.* (2006, p.590) is quite informative:

«Arabic is part of the Semitic language family and serves as the official language in more than 22 countries. Rather than being a single homogeneous language, however, it is more properly described as a collection of different dialects or varieties. The most widely encountered variety is Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), which is used for written as well as formal oral communication (e.g., in news broadcasts, official speeches, etc.) and is understood by educated speakers throughout the Arabic-speaking world. Everyday informal communication, by contrast, is carried out in a local dialect. The differences among local dialects are considerable and affect pronunciation, phonology, vocabulary, morphology, and syntax. Widely differing dialects (e.g., Moroccan Arabic and the Iraqi dialect) may hinder communication to the extent that speakers choose to use MSA as a common language (...). Only MSA has a universally agreed-upon writing standard; Arabic dialects are spoken rather than written varieties. If speakers do attempt to write dialectal speech, the MSA writing system is typically used, which consists of 28 letters (25 consonants and three long vowels). »

No speech community speaks MSA (Al-Ansary 2004; Farghali 2004; Wickens 1980), and it is therefore learnt like a second language, while the SALs are generally treated as dialects¹⁷ in a ‘diglossic’ context¹⁸. Only a few of SALs have a written form¹⁹.

The relationship between the different language classes, MSA, SALs and Classical Arabic (CA), the language of the religious book *Al Quran*, remains unclear. For example, it is generally believed that SALs as well as MSA are derived from CA. Yet, to our knowledge, no research has systematically compared the three varieties and provided empirical evidence of their proximity. On the contrary, Versteegh (2001) provides evidence of what separates SALs and CA as well as of some differences between SALs themselves.

Some researchers assume that all SALs have some common grounds that need to be identified and described. For example, Farghali (2004, p.29) justifies this assumption as follows:

«Arabic native speakers shift from the high variety to the low variety and vice versa in well defined contexts. This indicates that native speakers not only have grammars of both varieties but that they also internalise the rules that govern the switch from one variety to the other. »

We believe that mastery of MSA highly depends on the educational profile. Furthermore, the communicative contexts outside the educational institutions where Arabic speakers have to switch to MSA are rare. In many cases, the interaction of two Arabic speakers of two different countries results in the emergence of a blend of the two speakers’ L1 rather than in a switch to MSA. However, all these points need to be checked and supported by empirical research and

¹⁷ We believe that considering spoken Arabic languages as dialects (or variations of one language) generates many problems. First, these Arabic languages are not always intelligible to all Arab communities (see Holes 2004, p.3). Furthermore, there is little empirical evidence about what the common ‘mother’ language would be. In addition, the different spoken languages have developed grammatical features that are only specific to them in contrast to the written Arabic language, for instance, the progressive markers that exist in the spoken languages but not in Standard Arabic. This debate is obviously beyond the scope of this study, but for the above reasons, we chose to consider and call TAL1 in this project a fully-fledged ‘language’.

¹⁸ A ‘diglossic’ context is where a particular community uses two media or languages: the first one is the vernacular used for everyday communication and the second one is used in formal communication.

¹⁹ It is generally the case of most Arabic languages spoken all over the world, except Egyptian Arabic that started to be used in the literature, and is therefore written since the 16th century, as opposed to other spoken Arabic languages which started to receive attention and written forms starting from the 19th century (Versteegh 2001, p.132).

they are beyond the scope of this present project.

We are investigating a SAL, which is considered a difficult task. Versteegh (2001, p.132) explains the difficulty of studying a SAL as follows (he treats SALs as dialects):

«In the modern period, it remains difficult in the Arab world to arouse interest in the dialects as a serious object of study. Many speakers of Arabic still feel that the dialect is a variety of language without a grammar, a variety used by children and women, and even in universities, there is a certain reluctance to accept dialect studies as a dissertation subject. This is a certain reluctance to accept dialect studies as a dissertation subject. This is not to say that there are no Arab dialectologists. Many Arab linguists have applied their expertise to their native dialect, and some of the best dialect monographs have been written by Arabic linguists. But on the whole, one may say that the study of dialectology still suffers from the drawbacks mentioned here.»

Our SAL is spoken in Tunisia, a country of the Maghreb, in North Africa by approximately 10 million speakers. Generally called *al 'a:mmija* or *a(d)da:rja*, or else *e(t)tu:nsi*; Tunisian Arabic co-existed with MSA in the pre-colonisation era. Starting from 1881, the date of the French colonisation of the country, French language displaced Arabic languages, a situation that was shared by the countries of the Maghreb, as Dobie (2003, p.33) argues:

«With the colonial occupation of Algeria (from 1830), Tunisia (1881), and Morocco (1912), Arabic was systematically displaced by French, which became the sole language of government, administration and (secular) education, and thus the language of the literate elites. The process of linguistic deculturation was most pronounced in Algeria, where from 1938 to 1961 Arabic was classified by law as a foreign language. With independence (for Morocco and Tunisia in 1956, for Algeria in 1962) standard Arabic, a modernized version of classical Arabic, was quickly and often heavy-handedly imposed as the national language, particularly in the spheres of public administration and primary education. As the sociologist Gilbert Grandguillaume observes, the policy of arabicisation was devised to remedy the almost total absence of public discourse in Arabic in the wake of colonial rule. As such, it required radical measures such as the recruitment of school teachers from Egypt and other Middle Eastern nations to counteract the shortage of indigenous speakers of classical Arabic, a policy that at least in the short term had a negative impact on educational standards because the

differences between Egyptian and Maghrebian dialects rendered communication between students and teachers difficult.»

Despite the attempts at Arabisation following independence, the French language persisted and is widely embraced despite the ideological and religious conflicts that it raises as Dobie (2003) points out in her article. Currently, TAL1 is spoken by the wide majority of Tunisians. French is also widely spoken mainly among educated people and nearly half of the Tunisian newspapers are in French. Furthermore, codeswitching i.e., the alternation of two codes when speaking, between spoken Arabic and French, is a very strong characteristic of TAL1 (Lawson & Sachdev 2000).

We focus in what follows on the expression of temporality in general in TAL1 before turning to the discussion of the expression of on-goingness later on.

5.3.1.2. Overview of the temporal system of Tunisian Arabic

Descriptions of the grammars of CA and MSA are numerous and available (e.g., Ryding 2005; Schulz et al. 2000). The description of SALs, however, has received much less attention. Investigations of a number of features of some SALs exist (e.g., investigations of Al Nasser (1991) of Kuwaiti Arabic; Audebert (1994) of Egyptian Arabic; Caubet (1992) of Moroccan Arabic; Cuvalay (1991) and Cuvalay-Haak (1997) of spoken languages, in Fes, Tunis and Damas and Hamdani Kadri (2006) of spoken Arabic in the city of Alger). Despite these attempts to describe some of its features, (e.g., the investigation of demonstratives by Khalfaoui (2009)), no conclusive or exhaustive account of TAL1 based on empirical work exists. Virtually no detailed account on the temporal and aspectual system of TAL1 has been provided. Therefore, for this theoretical review, we are faced with the following complexities: the lack of research on temporality in TAL1, a gap that we would like to fill with this work, and the necessity and at the same time the intricacy of using existent research findings on different SALs to support our own investigation. We attempt to provide an overview of how time is expressed in TAL1 from those findings.

Different devices interact within the discourse to convey temporo-aspectual values. Investigating

combinations generated and illustrate them with examples, giving the temporal relations that they express in Table 11 below.

5.3.1.2.1. Prefixed and suffixed verb forms

TAL1 has only two types of verb inflection, generating two possible verb forms: the prefixed verb form (PV) and the suffixed verb form (SV). Both forms are composed of affixes added to the verb root as follows

PV: *prefix-root*

SV: *root-suffix*

As most studies agree, the root is composed of a limited number - three or four – of consonants associated with a rather vague semantic notion (Beeston 1970; Bulos & Carrol 1965; Cuvalay-Haak 1997; Fleisch 1975; Hamdani Kadri 2006; Holes 2004; Kurylowicz 1973; Versteegh 2001). The root constitutes the least analysable element of the verb and would be interpreted as its non-finite form,²⁰ which serves as an entry in the Arabic dictionary. Bulos & Carroll (1965) explain the derivational process from the root as follows:

«A purely consonantal root of three radicals (sometimes four radicals) with which a general idea such as writing, or drinking, etc. is associated, serves as a sort of framework or loom within which vowels, moving like shuttles, create new verb derivatives (...), with specified meanings as they cross the consonant threads. » (Bulos & Carrol 1965, p.3).

Some researchers have challenged the assumption that the template expresses the derivational relation and that the input to word formation is the consonantal root (Benmamoun 2003; Bentin & Frost 2001; Farghali 2004). In fact, lexical relations involve more than just the root but vowel length and derivational morphemes, just like in the other languages (Benmamoun 2003, p.111). The consonantal root achieves its concrete meaning in combination with one of the

²⁰ The infinitive equivalent however would be, as we will see later on the suffixed verb form.

morphological patterns described in Table 9 (Cuvalay-Haak 1997). Furthermore, part of their understanding is dependent on the context of realisation, the proposition and the discourse.

The following table (Table 9) presents the prefix set and the suffix set of the verb *katab* (he wrote)²¹ in TAL1. The root of the verb used here is composed of the 3 radicals *k,t,b*. Their combination with vowels gives way to very stable patterns of verb forms as follows.²²

Table 9. Prefix set and suffix set in Tunisian Arabic

		Personal pronoun	Suffix set	Prefix set	Active participles
Singular	1st	<i>Ena</i>	<i>ktib-t</i>	<i>ni-ktib</i>	<i>Ka:tib (Masc.)</i> <i>Ka:tba (Fem.)</i>
	2nd Masc.	<i>Inti/Inta</i>	<i>ktib-t</i>	<i>ti-ktib</i>	<i>ka:tib</i>
	2nd Fem.	<i>Inti</i>	<i>ktib-t(i)</i>	<i>ti-ktib/ti-ktbi:</i>	<i>ka:tba</i>
	3rd Masc.	<i>Huwa</i>	<i>ktib- Ø</i>	<i>yi-ktib</i>	<i>ka:tib</i>
	3rd Fem.	<i>Hiya</i>	<i>kitb-it</i>	<i>ti-ktib</i>	<i>ka:tba</i>
Plural	1st	<i>Ihna</i>	<i>ktib-na:</i>	<i>ni-ktb-u:</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	2nd Masc.	<i>Intu:ma</i>	<i>ktib-tu:</i>	<i>ti-ktb-u:</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	2nd Fem.	<i>Intu:ma</i>	<i>ktib-tu:</i>	<i>ti-ktb-u:</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	3rd Masc.	<i>Hu:ma</i>	<i>kitb-u:</i>	<i>yi-ktb-u:</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	3rd Fem.	<i>Hu:ma</i>	<i>kitb-u:</i>	<i>yi-ktb-u:</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>

Note: in the plural, the PV has both a prefix and a suffix (a circumfix)

The two verb forms are the basic elements of the verb predication in Arabic, as Hamdani Kadri (2006, p.183) puts it (she calls the prefixed verb the *Parfait* (PARF) and the prefixed one *Imparfait* (IMP): «*L'opposition dichotomique PARF/IMP constitue le système de base des formes verbales*». The two verbal paradigms are illustrated in (14) and (15). Affix boundaries

²¹ The root is generally believed to be the three consonants making up the inflected forms (Bulos & Carrol 1965; Fleisch 1975; Mitchell 1962). The consonantal root serves as a tool to make entries in the dictionaries of Modern Standard Arabic for example. In the case of *q'ad* (he sat), the consonantal root is composed of the three letters q, ' and d. The masculine singular suffixed form of verbs generally stand as the entry of any verb in the dictionaries. It is therefore translated in this thesis as inflected in the masculine singular in the past tense.

²² The forms displayed here are mainly used in the northern regions of the country and in the capital Tunis. There is noticeable phonological and lexical variation in the speech of Tunisians from different regions (e.g. North and South, coastal and interior regions...etc.)

are indicated with a (-).

(14)
Ktib-t *jweb*
Write-PS1 letter
I wrote a letter

(15)
Ni-ktib *jweb*
PS1-write letter
We write a letter

The PV and SV paradigm received many different names in the literature according to the type of interpretation they were equated with. Among the different names, we find perfective / imperfective (Benmamoun 2003), “parfait / imparfait” (Hamdani Kadri 2006), “*accompli / inaccompli*” (Blachère 1975)²³, or else perfect / imperfect (Al Nasser 1991; Cuvalay 1991). Traditionally, they were associated to an aspectual paradigm with a perfective / imperfective interpretation. This distinction conferred no time-distinction between the two verb forms but only an aspectual one of whether the action is, in the mind of speaker, completed or uncompleted. Advocates of the aspectual opposition in Arabic admit no time-distinctions inherent to the verb forms. They classified Arabic languages as well as other Semitic languages, like Hebrew, just like Slavic languages as aspectual, i.e. as based on a purely aspectual distinction articulated as perfect / imperfect (Wright 1977). Some other theories, known as ‘absolute tense theories’, gave, on the contrary, a purely temporal interpretation to the two verb forms. Just as the aspectual theories may have resulted from identification with the Slavic aspectual system, these theories may have been the result of “(...) an uncritical acceptance of Western grammatical models on the part of the Semitic scholars” (Binnick 1991, p.436).

There are also ‘mixed aspect / tense theories’ that stipulate that the two verb forms incorporate both aspect and (relative) tense; i.e. the suffixed form indicates both a completed action and relative past time reference, while the prefixed form indicates everything else: uncompleted

²³ Cited in Hamdani Kadri (2006)

actions, and relative non-past tense. Comrie (1976, p.78), for example, describes the Arabic verbal system as one expressing a «combined tense / aspect opposition». Another advocate of these theories is Blachère (1975) who assumes that the distinction between *accompli* and *inaccompli* is an aspectual one that is combined with temporal values. Another set of theories are known as ‘relative tense theories’. They attribute primary meanings and secondary functions to the binary system of verbs. The primary meaning of the prefixed form would be simultaneity with the moment of speaking, while that of the suffixed form would be anteriority with the moment of speaking. For Kurylowicz (1973, p.118), the two forms may adopt secondary functions that are context conditioned and also tertiary functions (imperfective preterite, imperfective future / perfective preterite, perfective future), that he lists giving sufficient explanations or examples to illustrate his point.

The plethora of these rather traditional theories and interpretations of the verbal paradigm in Arabic languages is a proof that the debate about the temporal values of the two forms is far from being established or exhaustive. Some other studies, however, consider that the temporal and aspectual information is not only the property of the two verb forms. For instance, Anghelcsu (1988) argues that the different temporo-aspectual values can be carried by different markers in discourse, and the Arabic language has a plethora of ways to express different aspectual categories: lexicon, verb inflexion, full periphrastic expressions, auxiliaries, and other different means (Anghelcsu 1988, p.344). More recently, Hamdani Kadri (2006) who studied the SAL of the city of Alger provides an interesting description of the system of temporality. She considers the two inflected verb forms to be the temporal and aspectual “*système de base*”, and she distinguishes them from the composed forms, that, she argues after Cohen (1924), emerged and developed to enrich a system where the expression of tense was a secondary function.

«On pourrait conclure que le système de base de l’arabe repose sur une dichotomie passé (PARF) / non-passé (IMP), à la différence du français, par exemple, dont le système repose sur une catégorisation ternaire : passé, présent, futur. Cette distinction première (ou primaire), passé / non-passé, se dédouble dans le cas du non passé (IMP) d’une deuxième distinction temporelle entre la simultanéité au moment de l’énonciation et la postériorité par rapport au moment de l’énonciation. (...) les interprétations aspectuo-temporelles des énoncés résultent des valeurs de

ces deux formes verbales, PARF / IMP, en combinaison (et aussi en conflit) avec les autres marqueurs aspectuo-temporels du contexte : lexème verbal, circonstanciel, adverbe, subordination temporelle.»
 (Hamdani Kadri 2006, pp.183-4)

Though we agree with Hamdani Kadri (2006) that the two verb forms receive their aspectual and temporal values in the context of occurrence, i.e. in their combination with other markers of different types, we believe that in TAL1 these two verb forms are only one type of carrier of temporality. Furthermore, used alone, they have very restricted possible temporal meanings. We justify our belief as follows: First, the AP has a very important role in TAL1, as it plays a verb-like function in addition to the fact that verbless clauses have temporal and aspectual anchorage. Second, the suffixed verb form has a perfective, sometimes perfect, past reference meaning, whereas, the prefixed form can only express simultaneity with the TU, and cannot express future time reference unless it occurs with a future tense marker. As we will see in Table 11, used alone, the prefixed form expresses with many lexical contents an on-going eventuality.

5.3.1.2.2. Active participle

The third predicate constituent that has not received as much attention as the verb forms is the active participle. Actually, participles in Arabic languages are of two types: active and passive participles.

«Participles have two varieties matching the two kinds of Arabic verbs: active and passive. The active participle pattern *ka:tib* matches the finite active verb *aktub* "he writes" and has the meaning "a person who writes/ a writer"; the passive participle pattern *maktu:b* matches the finite passive verb *yuktab* "somebody writes it / it is written" and has the meaning "a thing which somebody writes/ something in writing"»
 (Kinberg 2001, pp.155-156)

They are derived from verbs. The derivation follows more or less stable and predictable patterns as Table 10 below shows.

Table 10. Active participles from the verb *ktib* in Tunisian Arabic

	Personal pronoun	Active participles
--	------------------	--------------------

Singular	1st	<i>Ena</i>	<i>Ka:tib (Masc.)</i> <i>Ka:tba (Fem.)</i>
	2nd Masc.	<i>Inti/Inta</i>	<i>ka:tib</i>
	2nd Fem.	<i>Inti</i>	<i>ka:tba</i>
	3rd Masc.	<i>Huwa</i>	<i>ka:tib</i>
	3rd Fem.	<i>Hiya</i>	<i>ka:tba</i>
Plural	1st	<i>Ihna</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	2nd Masc.	<i>Intu:ma</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	2nd Fem.	<i>Intu:ma</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	3rd Masc.	<i>Hu:ma</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>
	3rd Fem.	<i>Hu:ma</i>	<i>Ka:tbi:n</i>

As argued in the literature, active participles (henceforth APs) express many temporal and aspectual values in different language contexts. Some studies report that they convey temporal values of tense and aspect, and they use English “tenses” to designate the possible meanings. APs can refer to the past and a perfective situation, to the present and a simultaneous situation and to the future (Mitchell 1952; Piamenta 1966; Kinberg 2001; Mughazy 2005). For example, in his study of “participial structures”, Kinberg (2001) argues that APs primarily express a time that is simultaneous with the point of reference, an “imperfective simultaneous relative tense”. In addition to that, they can express past and future time reference because of implicature. In fact,

«Arabic participial structure covers two types of imperfective present (or simultaneity): unbounded imperfectives; and semi-imperfectives. Unbounded imperfectives are restricted to atelic events, mainly states, and marginally iteratives or progressives. Semi-imperfective participial structures in Arabic express a state by means of its bounding (retrospective or prospective) edge. The participial lexeme refers to the dynamic event which bounds one edge of the present state, while the participial form refers to the semi-imperfective, present state. Retrospective or prospective bounding of the present state is left as a contextual implicature. » (Kinberg 2001, p.178)

Similarly, Mughazy (2005, p.139) reports that in Egyptian Arabic, APs can express present progressive (16), *présent de l'indicatif*, present perfect (17), present perfect progressive, past simple and future. He illustrates the difference in the following examples:

(16) Nadir **ma:shi** hinaak `aho

Nadir walk&AP&PS3M there right now
 Nadir is walking over there right now

- (17) Mona lissa mixallasa el-wa:gib
 Mona just finish&AP&PS3F the-homework
 Mona has just finished the homework

Some other studies attribute more distinctive aspectual values to APs, such as the resultant perfect meaning (Piamenta 1966, Henkin 1985), prospective (Caubet 1989) and progressive (Caubet 1989; Henkin 1985)²⁴. Furthermore, active participles are reported to be aspectually open according to the speaker's attitude and to have a modal value (Caubet 1989)²⁵. Finally, many researchers agree that the aspectual properties of a given verb determine the interpretations of the active participle derived from it (Kinberg 2001; Mughazy 2005; McCarus 1976).

5.3.1.2.3. Preverbs and auxiliaries

As their name indicates, preverbs are entities that precede the verb, but not necessarily immediately, and then modify it, or add to its values. They can be auxiliaries, active participles or verbs preceding the main verb or active participle. Auxiliaries are verbs with auxiliary functions, that were traditionally classified by Arab grammarians as *al-af'a:lu an-na:qisa* (defective or incomplete verbs). The group contains many auxiliaries, but which are less used than *ka:n: la'alla* (may be), *mezzel* (still is), *sbah* (he became), *bda:* (he began) etc. In TAL1, and in other Arabic languages, *ka:n* as well as the other preverbs preceding a main verb or participle is inflected for person, number and gender. *Ka:n* is a past tense marker, as the following examples show ((18) and (19)):

- (18) *ka:n* *yi-l'ab* *fi-j-jni:na*
 AUX-PS3M PS3M-jouer dans-the-garden
 He was playing in the garden

- (19) *kont* *ma:shi* *li-l-kolliya*
 AUX-PS1 go&AP&PS3M to-the-university

²⁴ Cited in Kinberg (2001, p.157)

²⁵ Cited in (Kinberg 2001)

I was going to the university

To sum up, verb forms and active participles can combine with many types of preverbs, which can have aspectual functions, and add aspectual values to the lexical content in an utterance, as we shall see in the following sections. Preverbs are varied and some of them have a different behavior in TAL1. For instance, *mezzel* (still be) seems to have undergone a process of grammaticalisation. It lost the prefixed inflexion as it has only the suffixed paradigm. Furthermore, any verb can function as a preverb in certain contexts.

Among other linguistic markers of tense and aspect in TAL1, we have what we call particles. This is what we explore in the following part.

5.3.1.2.4. Particles

Many particles in TAL1 convey aspectual and temporal values in predicates. For example, the particle *fī*, used after a prefixed transitive verb form, expresses an on-going event. Compare (20), where the aspect expressed is the progressive aspect, with (21) where the aspectual relation expressed is the imperfective habitual, as reinforced by the adverbial *koll yu:m* (every day)

(20) *Niktiblu:* *fī* *jweb*
PS1-write-to-him PRG letter
I am writing him a letter

(21) *Koll yu:m niktiblu:* *jweb*
Each day PS1-write-to-him letter
Every day, I write him a letter

Therefore, the construction «PV + DOC» (direct object complement) and «PV + *fī* + DOC» present an aspectual contrast. In the former, TT includes TSit, presenting the event from the outside, whereas in the latter, TT is included in TSit, which, in other words, means that the event is represented from the inside due to the use of the marker *fī*.

Another very important particle in TAL1 is *bish*, which can be considered as the equivalent of *sa-*, and *sawfa* in MSA denoting future time reference and prospective aspect, as in (22) below:

- (22) *Bish niktiblu: jweb*
 FUT PS1-write-to-him letter
 We will write him a letter

5.3.1.2.5. Adverbials

As we have seen in (20) or (21) above, adverbials help express the temporal relations, and help thus with the interpretation of the verb forms in an utterance. Some recent research has shown how temporal information in Arabic is mainly conveyed by the combination of different means, which are essentially lexical, among them adverbials (Véronique 2000, p.35).

Some argue that the category of adverbs as it is understood in the Indo-European languages does not exist for Arabic (Hmidani 2010, pp.101-102). For instance, Beeston (1970, pp.87-89) explains that in Arabic there is no word class that corresponds to the English adverbs of the *-ly* type. He says:

«The term ‘adverbial’ is strictly inappropriate for Arabic, because the function which one needs to describe is that of amplifying a predicate, irrespective of whether the latter be expressed with or without a verb. But if this is allowed for, the latter has a practical usefulness in distinguishing two kinds of amplification, the ‘object’ and the ‘adverbial’. » (*ibid.*, p.87)

Furthermore, according to Grand’Henry (2000) for instance, Arabic has an “adverbial function expressed by derivations from the verb or nouns put in the accusative case” (Hmidani 2010, p.102). This idea is based on a traditional way of classifying adverbials in Arabic into the categories of the grammatical structures of *al-maf’u:l al-muṭlaq*²⁶, *a(l)tamyi:z*²⁷ or *al-ḥa:l*²⁸.

The above-cited ideas are mainly based on studies of examples of MSA. There is no reason to

²⁶ *al-maf’u:l al-muṭlaq* translated as “the accusative of specification” “is an elegant way of emphasising or enhancing a previous statement by deriving a verbal noun from the main verb or predicate” (Ryding 2005, p.285). No equivalent for the accusative of specification exists in English but it can be translatable into “a great deal”. So when I say *kassartu taksi:r*, it means that I broke a great deal.

²⁷ Translated as “the accusative of specification” *a(l)tamyi:z* is used to label, identify or specify the nature of something previously referred to in the sentence possibly answering the question “in what terms?” (Ryding 2005, p.295). It is therefore comparable to the category adverbials of manner.

²⁸ *al-ḥa:l* is a “circumstantial construction” that indicates the circumstances under which an event takes place. (Ryding 2005, p.283). *al-ḥa:l* is therefore comparable to the category adverbials of manner.

consider the category of adverbials in Tunisian Arabic to be different from that in other languages such as French or English. In fact, TAL1 speakers use adverbials of different types as set out in the examples below:

(i) Temporal adverbials: they can be single words, such as *tawa* (now), *el-berah* (yesterday) or compound, like *min ba'd* (then), *fi-l uwil* (first);

(ii) Spatial adverbials, *l-gha:di* (there), *hu:ni* (here), *'al imi:n* (on the right), *l-teli* (behind);

(iii) Adverbials of degree, *kahaw* (only), *barsha* (a lot), *yessir* (too much);

(vi) Adverbials of manner, like *bi-(s)syessa* (gently), *bi-(z)zarba* (quickly), *fissa'* (in a hurry)

To sum up what we have seen regarding the possible components of predicates in TAL1, the investigation of only the two verb forms and the AP is far from being sufficient to understand how the temporo-aspectual system in TAL1 works. The speakers combine many other linguistic markers to express time.

It is essential to point out however that without any verbal or adjectival entity, a proposition can still exist as a complete and full predication, in which case the TT can only be included in the time of the utterance, and TSit is simultaneous with the TT. Using a different terminology, Mughazy (2005, p.140) expresses this as follows:

«Verbless sentences including those with active participle predicates have only present tense semantics and their predicates denote states that hold of the subjects at speech time or longer intervals that include speech time regardless of the aspectual properties of the verbs the predicates are derived from. »

We illustrate the different combinations made with verb forms, AP or a zero element (Ø) as well as their temporal meanings in the following table.

Table 11. Possible predicate combinations in TAL1 and their temporal interpretation following Klein's (1994) framework

	Predicate possible combinations	Examples	Temporal relations and representation of the aspectual information	The relation between the TT [.] and the TSit ----
∅	-	<i>Sa:rra fi-l kuji:na</i> Sa:rra is in the garden	TU includes TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
with AP	AP	<i>ra:qid</i> He is asleep	TU includes TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
	Preverb + AP	<i>kont ra:qid</i> I was asleep	TU after TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
	<i>qa:'id</i> + AP	<i>qa:'id ra:qid</i> He is still sleeping	TU includes TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
with SV	SV	<i>Rqad</i> <i>He slept</i>	TU after TT TT at TSit	[-----]
	Preverb + SV	<i>Walla rqad</i> He went back to sleep	TU after TT TT at TSit	[-----]
with PV	PV _(intransitive)	<i>yiktib</i> He is writing	TU incl TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
	PV _(transitive)	<i>yiktib jweb</i> he writes a letter	TU includes TT TT includes TSit	[-----]
	PV _(transitive) + <i>fi</i>	<i>yiktib fi jweb</i> He is writing a letter	TU includes TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
	<i>Ka:n</i> + PV _(intransitive)	<i>ka:n yiktib</i> He was writing	TU after TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
	<i>qa:'id</i> + PV _(intransitive)	<i>qa:'id yiktib</i> He is writing	TU includes TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
	<i>ma:shi</i> + PV	<i>ma:shi yil'ab</i> He is going to play	TU before TT TT before TSit	[]-----
	<i>bish</i> + PV	<i>bish yil'ab</i> He will play	TU before TT TT before TSit	[]-----
	Preverb + <i>bish</i> + PV	<i>Ka:n bish yil'ab</i> He was planning to play	TU after TT TT before TSit	[]-----
	<i>qa:'id</i> + PV _(transitive) + <i>fi</i>	<i>qa:'id yiktib fi jweb</i> He is writing a letter	TU includes TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----
	Preverb + <i>qa:'id</i> + PV + <i>fi</i>	<i>ka:n qa:'id yiktib fi jweb</i> He was writing a	TU after TT TT is included in TSit	-----[-----]-----

	Predicate possible combinations	Examples	Temporal relations and representation of the aspectual information	The relation between the TT [.] and the TSit ----
		letter		
	Preverb + <i>ma:shi</i> + PV	<i>ka:n ma:shi yil'ab</i> He was going to play	TU after TT TT <i>before</i> TSit	[]-----

As we can see from Table 11, the different means to express temporality are polysemous. The device that appears to be more productive than the others, i.e., that allows for many possible combinations with other lexical means is the prefixed form of the verb, PV. Linked to different other means, PV can occur in a predicate that expresses present, past and future tenses. Nevertheless, for most of its uses, it expresses simultaneity between TSit and TT. This is particularly relevant to our investigation as this aspectual relation would be exploited to describe the simultaneous situations in the videos used.

In the next section, we discuss in more details all the linguistic possibilities other than PV that can be used to express on-goingness.

5.3.1.3. Expression of on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic

The expression of on-goingness in SALs has not been very enthusiastically addressed. Some studies have nevertheless mentioned the existence of emergent but not fully grammaticalised markers in many SALs (Al Nasser 1991; Cuvalay 1991). Those markers compete with other lexical markers used for the same aspectual value, namely with a bare prefixed verb form of the verb (PV). Consider for example, the affixal markers *bi-* in Egyptian Arabic (Mitchell 1962), *ka-* in the SAL of Fes, and the preverbal markers *qa:'id* in the SAL of the city Tunis (Cuvalay 1991, p.143) and *ga:'id* in Kuwaiti Arabic (Al Nasser 1991) and in “Gulf Colloquial Arabic” (Hmidani 2010).

An insightful contribution based on examples taken from different oral and written sources is made by Cuvalay (1991) who compares progressive markers in four SALs in four cities: Fez, Tunis, Damascus and Cairo. For the SAL of the city of Tunis, she summarises the progressive expression as follows (our added explanations are put between [.]):

«The preverbal progressive marker *qa:'id* in the dialect of Tunis is not obligatory, in the sense that its use is required only in the absence of time adverbials or a specific context to indicate unambiguously that reference is made to an on-going action (Singer 1984:301). With verbs belonging to the special verbs [of motion and attitude], progressive aspect is designated by the AP [Active participle]. For all the values that are not expressed by the SF [suffixed verb form], the AP, or the PF [the prefixed verb form] with the future marker, the PF is used in its 'bare' form, i.e. without additional PM [Preverbal Marker]. » (Cuvalay 1991, p.148)

Furthermore, the prefixed verb form is attested to express on-goingness without carrying any special morphology to express the aspectual value.

«Putting aside the mood endings in Standard Arabic, in all dialects, the imperfective form occurs in the following contexts. First, in the context of verbs with present tense interpretation (progressive and habitual)
ya-drusu
PS3M-study
He studies. » (Benmamoun 2000, p.30)

Furthermore, based on some of the studies cited above, we can attribute a progressive reading to the AP (e.g., Kinberg 2001; McCarus 1976; Wightwick & Gaafar 2007). For example, Wightwick & Gaafar (2007, p.90) wrote:

«An active participle is the equivalent of the English "-ing", as in "I went along the road, whistling a tune" (i.e. I was whistling) (...) The active participle is formed by taking the root letters and putting them into the pattern *faa'il*.»

Descriptions of the TAL1 progressive are very limited. From our table above, we have seen that the progressive meaning is possibly expressed using the following combinations:

AP

preverb + AP

qa:'id + AP

PV (intransitive)

PV_(transitive) + *fi*

Ka:n + PV

qa:'id + PV_(intransitive)

qa:'id + PV_(transitive) + ***fi***

preverb + ***qa:'id*** + PV_(transitive) + ***fi***

We believe that while the combinations are numerous, the markers (in bold font) properly used only for conveying on-goingness are limited. These are the preverbal marker *qa:'id*, and the postverbal one *fi*. We treat each one separately using examples that are either our creation or taken from the data of this project.

5.3.1.2.1. The preverbal marker *qa:'id*:

qa:'id literally means “sitter”. It is the masculine singular active participle (AP) form of the verb *q'ad*. This AP can be used alone in a predicate ((23):

- (23) Qa:'id fi(j)jarda
sit&AP&PS3M²⁹ in-the-garden
He is sitting in the garden

In a preverbal position, *qa:'id* is a progressive marker (PRG). It is inflected for number and gender as example ((24) and shows.

- (24) A4, *Soup*
wehid qa:'id ye-kol
One PRG PS3M-eat
Somebody is eating.

It generally precedes a PV and possibly another AP. This use is very rare in our data and there

²⁹ The '&' symbol in glosses is used to indicate that the affixes merge with the root of the word, '- ' is used when they can be separated.

are only two instances of “*qa:’id* + AP” which are limited to the verb *rqad* (he slept). We illustrate this by example ((25) (the sound /g/ is an allophone of the sound /q/ produced in some regions in Tunisia).

- (25) A11, *Wakeup*
 ra:jil ga:’id ra:gid .
 man PRG sleep&AP&PS3M
 A man is sleeping

We hypothesise that the PM cannot precede the PVs conveying a static position such as *rqad* (he slept). It is rather the AP that is used instead.

As such, we cannot say

- (26) *qa:’id yo-rqod
 PRG PS3M-sleep
 He is sleeping

To sum up, *qa:’id* plays a purely aspectual role in progressive contexts. It is a preverbal PRG marker that is still in a process of grammaticalisation as it did not completely lose its semantic value and it is still inflected for gender and number, contrary to Cuvalay’s (1991) remark. Furthermore, it is not used systematically when a situation is described as on-going at a certain time, like the case of *V-ing* in English. Its lexical source is a verb of posture (to sit), which indicates a static position. Therefore, the formation of this PRG marker in TAL1 is not a new one; it is also the case of PRG markers of Italian and Spanish languages. This PRG marker has been investigated in the literature as highlighted above. Our main contribution to the debate about marking on-goingness in TAL1 is the interesting case of the post-verbal marker *fi*.

5.3.1.2.2. Post verbal marker *fi*

The marker *fi* is originally a preposition of location, which means ‘in’ (Kirchhoff et al. 2006; Wightwick & Gaafar 2007). *Fi* obligatorily follows a verb which needs a direct object complement in an utterance that expresses that a situation is in progress (see ((27)). *fi* in that position is exclusively used to express on-goingness. Its use in contexts expressing a different aspectual value makes the utterance unacceptable (consider example ((28) which describes a

bounded finished event with the use of the suffixed verb form *kla* (he ate)).

In example ((27) below, *fi* is employed together with the preverbal PRG marker *qa:’id*. When this latter is removed, the utterance keeps its progressive reading (see ((29)). However, when *fi* is removed, the utterance becomes unacceptable (Example (30)). When *fi* is the only PRG marker in an utterance, removing it changes the progressive value into another aspectual one. In example (31) where we have a narrative sequence, the use of the PV *yekil* conveys a bounded event.

(27)
 A9, Soup
 e(l)-ra:jil qa:’id ye-kil fi ftu:r e(l)-sbeh.
 The-man PRG PS3M-eat PRG meal the-morning
 The man is having breakfast

(28)
 * e(l)-ra:jil kla-Ø fi ftu:r e(l)-sbeh.
 The-man eat-PS3M PRG meal the-morning

(29)
 e(l)-ra:jil ye-kil fi ftu:r e(l)-sbeh.
 The-man PS3M-eat PRG meal the-morning
 The man is having breakfast

(30)
 *e(l)-ra:jil qa:’id ye-kil ftu:r e(l)-sbeh.
 The-man PRG PS3M-eat meal the-morning

(31)
 e(l)-ra:jil ye-kil ftu:r e(s)sbeh.
 The-man PS3M-eat meal the-morning

Min ba’d yi-mshi yi-xdim.
 from then PS3M-go PS3M-work
 The man eats breakfast then he goes to work.

In their article, Hopper & Thompson (1980) postulate that languages possess morphosyntactic structures that reflect the degree of transitivity of a clause. They also discuss the relationship between transitivity and aspect. They wrote:

«Aspect is systematically correlated with the degree of Transitivity of the verb: if the Aspect is perfective, the interpretation - other things being equal - has properties allowing the clause to be classified as more transitive; but if the Aspect is imperfective, the clause can be shown on independent grounds to be less transitive. » (*ibid*, p.271)

Given this correlation between aspect and transitivity, the example (29) above is less transitive than (31) given the features of each clause. In (29) there is reference to an action directed towards a goal (that of finishing breakfast), while in (31) the reference is to an action that is construed as successfully completed, i.e. it presents a conceptual boundary. We can hypothesise based on the notion of Transitivity as developed by Hopper & Thompson (1980) that (29) is less transitive than (31). Example (29) could be interpreted as an intransitive clause-type. Given the difference between both clauses, i.e., the presence of *fi*, we can assume that this marker detransitivises the clause. It could therefore be considered as a detransitivising marker.

To conclude, *fi* is obligatorily used when the event is represented in progress and when the utterance contains a direct complement, in other words when the verb is transitive. In this respect, transitivity plays a crucial role in contrasting aspectual forms («PV» and «PV + *fi*»). However, the use of the preverbal PRG marker *qa:'id* shows more optionality as with certain verbs, removing it from the utterance does not change its progressive reading. We can safely hypothesise that the grammaticalisation of *fi* as a PRG marker is more advanced than that of the preverbal PRG *qa:'id*. In fact, *fi* is systematically used in particular progressive contexts. Furthermore, in a question, it will be used as an affix to the interrogative word as the following example (32) shows:

(32)
F-esh ta-'mal?
PRG-what PS2-do
What are you doing?

na-'mal	fi	krep
PS1-do	PRG	pancake
I am making a pancake.		

As we will see in the following section, the PRG marker in French has been scrutinised in some studies. We therefore exclusively rely on their findings.

5.3.2. Marking on-goingness in French: «*en train de*»

In this section, we focus on the expression of on-goingness in the French language. Unlike the English language which has one marker of on-goingness, the *V-ing* form, used by default to express the progressive aspect (Ayoun & Salaberry 2008; Bardovi-Harlig 2008; Bonomi 1997; Leclercq 2007), explicit marking of on-goingness in French is optional (Bertinetto 2000; Dahl 1985; Leclercq 2007).

Undeniably, native speakers of French have more than one way of expressing that a particular event is in progress, or on-going, at a particular reference time. Among those means, they can use the periphrasis «*en train de*» or the simple form, i.e., the *présent simple* (Lachaux 2005; Leclercq 2007; Mortier 2005). As Mortier (2005, p.84) argues, the present tense in French can very well express that an event is in progress:

« Le recours à des verbes ou à des périphrases verbales spécifiques n'est en effet pas obligatoire, ni en néerlandais ni en français : les temps simples, surtout l'indicatif présent et imparfait, suffisent en général pour marquer qu'un événement est en cours à un moment donné »

Throughout history, the means for expressing ongoingness have changed and undergone different processes of grammaticalisation and degrammaticalisation as pointed out by Schøsler (2007, p.92)

«*Le français se distingue des autres langues romanes par le fait que les constructions progressives disparaissent pendant la période dite «classique» (après 1600). Les périphrases disparaissent sans se faire immédiatement remplacer par une nouvelle construction ayant le même sens, car c'est la forme simple du présent ou de l'imparfait Pierre chante / chantait qui a toujours alterné avec les périphrases progressives qui finissent par exprimer seules le sens progressif. C'est seulement plus*

tard, au cours du 19ème siècle, qu'une nouvelle périphrase progressive du type Pierre est en train de chanter se grammaticalise dans le sens progressif. Il y a ainsi lieu de se demander quelles sont les raisons pour cet écart entre la disparition des périphrases et l'apparition de la nouvelle périphrase progressive.»

In fact, (*s'en aller* (to go) + present participle' is the only surviving periphrasis yet rarely used in oral speech that expresses on-goingness in addition to the periphrasis «*être en train de*» (Ayoun & Salaberry 2008; Mortier 2005). The latter has eclipsed many other periphrases that used to co-exist in old and medieval French listed as follows:

- *Être* Present participle
- (*S'en aller* GER (to go + Gerund)
- *Être après* (à) INF (to be after / at)
- *Être à* INF (to be at)

The many possibilities available to French to express that an event is in progress has brought some researchers (Borillo 2005; Vettters 1996) to question the status and type of marking in French; whether it is aspectual or lexical; given that it is more often attached to the lexical domain. Similarly, Bertinetto (2000, p.561) considers progressive marking in French to be “a marginal type” compared to other languages he investigates. This controversy is very much generated by terminological problems and inconclusive descriptions (Pusch 2003) as we will see below.

«*En train de*» is considered the “marked” form used for expressing on-goingness in French (Leclercq 2007; Leclercq 2009). It is employed as a whole in its canonical, “idiomatic” form to express the aspectual value of on-goingness (Ayoun & Salaberry 2008, p.559).

In what follows, we look at the composition of «*être en train de*» etymologically speaking and then we discuss the process of its grammaticalisation. We close this section with an overview of research findings on the use of «*en train de*» in the context of discourse and its connection with

the different aspectual classes of *Aktionsarten*.

5.3.2.1. Composition of *être + en + train + de*

The composition of the periphrasis is controversial. According to Lachaux (2005, pp.119-121), it is made of four elements.

1) *Être* is a verb, which expresses a «static situation». Nevertheless, it is according to Lachaux (2005) metalinguistically dynamic «*métalinguistiquement dynamique*». This means that it is a grammatical operator, which relates the speaker to the interlocutor.

2) *En* is a preposition, which can introduce many types of complements such as location, duration or manner.

3) *Train* is the main element of the periphrasis that conveys progression and the sense of chaining «*enchaînement*». According to Bloch-Von Wartburg, (1950 : 613)³⁰, the etymology of the word *train* has undergone a semantic evolution. It started on an abstract meaning; «*action de traîner* » (action of dragging) and developed into a more concrete meaning, «*objet qu'on traîne* » (object that we drag) and finally to more abstract meanings, «*manière d'aller* » (manner of going) and «*allure* » (pace) or «*mouvement* » (movement) (Mortier 2005, p.85).

4) *De* is a preposition translatable as “of” in English in most of the cases.

As we can see, the main element of the periphrasis *train* signifies directionality and movement (Mortier 2005; Squartini 1998):

“What is interesting is that even if the French construction ends up performing the function of progressive marker, just like the Italian *stare* periphrasis, it has a different history. Its progressive meaning has a different origin, deriving from the modal sense of intention and volition, and does not pass through a durative stage. (...) The French form, which

³⁰ As cited by Mortier (2005).

is created with different semantic tools, has a completely different path of grammaticalisation, thus providing an example that the different semantic origin can determine different grammaticalisation paths for an aspectual marker." (Squartini 1998, p.127)

Mortier (2005, p.86) explains the different origin of the periphrasis as follows:

«Tout comme le « train-objet » est une succession de wagons en mouvement, le « train-marqueur du progressif » exprime des moments successifs dans le temps. Au moment où train prend donc le sens de «mouvement » ou d' «allure », il semble se déchaîner une évolution métaphorique (...). La perte du sens locatif de train en faveur d'une valeur temporelle est révélatrice d'une désémantisation qui a affecté aussi les autres composantes de la périphrase : le verbe être issu d'un mélange des verbes locatifs latins STARE et ESSE et la préposition en qui maintient un peu plus de son contenu locatif originel en marquant l'absorption totale dans l'action (Il est en colère signifie Il est absorbé par la colère »

The periphrasis *être «en train de»* is always followed by a verb in the infinitive form. Some researchers acknowledge *être* (to be) to be part of the verbal periphrasis (Lachaux 2005; Mortier 2005; Rousseau 2005). They believe that *être* plays an important role. For instance, Lachaux (2005) insists that with *être*, the periphrasis focuses on a state and not an action in progress, separating therefore between the linguistic level (state of progression) and the “real” world where actions are in progress. Similarly, Franckel (1983:122) as cited by Lachaux (2005, p.123) argues that the periphrasis *«être en train de»* in the example *Ne le dérange pas : il est en train d'écrire*, compared to *Ne le dérange pas : il écrit*, corresponds to a state of change. According to Franckel (1983), *«être en train de»* corresponds to :

« Une mise en coïncidence d'un point repéré comme acquis du changement d'état commencer à et d'un autre point repéré pas encore fini : processus ou inaccompli, qui « marque non pas un changement d'état mais l'état d'un changement. » (Lachaux 2005, p.123)

However, Leclercq (2007) rejects the idea that *être* is part of the periphrasis, arguing that the auxiliary does not convey the progressive value, as removing it would not hinder its expression:

“L'absence ou l'ellipse de l'auxiliaire “être” n'empêche aucunement la

lecture progressive. » (Leclercq 2007, p.101)

The position of Leclercq (2007) is convincing for us. As she demonstrates, a speaker can use «*en train de*» omitting *être* and still be able to express on-goingness. To illustrate, here is an example from the data of Leclercq (2007, p.101):

(33) *Un monsieur en train de peindre.*

To conclude, the delimitation of the periphrasis is a matter of disagreement among researchers, which shows that a lot of work still needs to be done to shed light on its nature the values it expresses and the way it is used in discourse rather than other linguistic means. Research into the process of grammaticalisation and dessemanticisation of the periphrasis has nevertheless provided valuable insights into its development. This is what we explore in the following section.

5.3.2.2. Grammaticalisation and diachronic development of «*en train de*»

As we have seen earlier, grammaticalisation is the gradual development of “grams” (grammatical morphemes) out of lexical material undergoing loss of semantic meaning and autonomy (desemanticisation) (Bybee & Dahl 1989, p.56).

Pusch (2003) and Squartini (1998) provide an insightful description of the diachronic development of the periphrasis «*en train de*», which serves in contemporary French as a progressive marker. They both refer to the review by Gougenheim (1929) who points out that Old and Medieval French used to have many periphrases containing the verb *être*. The periphrasis *être* «*en train de*» is the only survivor of those periphrases with the exception of «*aller + gérondif*» which is rarely used for the progressive in contemporary French. It is also as Pusch (2003, p.501) puts it, the last periphrasis to evolve around the 18th century.

«La périphrase prépositionnelle «être en train de» + infinitif, aujourd’hui la seule à survivre dans l’usage courant européen, est la dernière née des expressions progressives française à base copulative être. Les dictionnaires situent sa genèse au milieu du 18e siècle.»

According to Gougenheim cited by Squartini (1998, pp.126-127), at the beginning of its

grammaticalisation, the periphrasis was used with a modal meaning denoting the intention of the subject to be engaged in a given situation. Indeed, in the 17th and 18th centuries, «être en train de» used to mean «être en humeur de» (be in the mood for) and «être en disposition de» (be willing to). Only in the 18th century did it start to have a progressive meaning. As the example taken from Gougenheim (1929, p.63) shows, the periphrasis could be used independently from the auxiliary être:

(34) *Enfin te voilà en train de faire ta fortune* (A.R. Le Sage, Turcaret, 1709)

Only in the 19th century did the progressive start to be registered by the *Académie*'s grammar. The periphrasis was entered to mean not only the intentional meaning («être en humeur de», be in the mood for) but also the progressive one (be in the process of). Furthermore, (Pusch 2003, p.501) argues that in the middle of the 19th century the periphrasis had lost its modal volitional value and became a purely progressive marker:

«La construction être en train de subit une dé-modalisation pour devenir courante, dans sa lecture progressive, vers le milieu du 19^e siècle. »

The grammaticalisation of the progressive periphrasis in French «en train de» is interesting, as it constitutes according to Pusch (2003, p.501) a “marginal” case. Indeed, many studies explain that the grammaticalisation of «en train de» compared to progressive periphrases in other Romance languages has had a different developmental path (Bertinetto 2000; Mortier 2005; Pusch 2003; Squartini 1998). They agree that «en train de» bypassed the durative stage of grammaticalisation (Stage III in the table below adopted from Bertinetto (2000, p.576)) and was never recorded in durative contexts. To explain further the status of «en train de», the following table displays the five developmental stages of progressive, from lexical entities to imperfective meaning.

Table 12. Grammaticalisation stages according to Bertinetto (2000, p. 576)



Bertinetto (2000, p.577) explains the case of French in the following (The contents in square brackets represents our addition):

«As to present day French PROG [progressive marker], its status is fairly similar to that of Italian St-PROG-GER, although the story is quite different. The original Old French PROG periphrases were morphologically identical to the ones exhibited by Italian and the Ibero-Romance languages. However, their usage declined in the course of time, so that by the end of the 16th century they had virtually disappeared (Gougenheim 1929; Werner 1980). The "*être «en train de» + INF*" periphrasis, which in Table 1 is listed under the label "marginal type", was registered by the grammarians in its current progressive meaning only at the beginning of the 19th century, replacing the original modal (namely intentional) meaning (...). Thus apparently, this device entered directly at stage (iv), bypassing all previous stages. If this claim is correct, the French case is interesting both in itself, and for what it tells about the general evolutionary picture. Although it is easy to construct a locative meaning in French PROG, it is possible that this feature did not play the same role as with the other PROG devices we are considering here. It certainly was not conducive to the purely durative stage (iii). »

«*En train de*» is here claimed to be used only in focalised meanings and never in durative ones. Before that, Foullioux & De Vicente (1995, pp.120-121) asserted that the periphrasis could

convey durativity, as explained here:

« *Le système du français nous permet d'exprimer soit des durées longues, soit des durées brèves. Les durées longues sont marquées soit par des constructions périphrastiques comportant un semi-auxiliaire suivi d'un infinitif, soit par des marques adverbiales: être en train de, être en rôle de, être après à, être après + infinitif. (...) Il est à remarquer que la construction être en voie de + infinitif, dans la mesure où elle exprime la modification de l'action dans un sens déterminé, peut être considérée comme point intermédiaire entre l'aspect purement duratif et l'aspect progressif. Quand je l'ai rencontré, Salamano était en train d'insulter son chien (A. Camus). La plaie est en voie de se cicatriser. (...) Il existe aussi certains adverbes qui servent à marquer l'aspect duratif: Il mange lentement. Nous avons parlé pendant des heures. Constructions périphrastiques et adverbes peuvent s'accumuler pour marquer d'une façon redondante l'aspect duratif: Il est «en train de» manger lentement. Les durées brèves ne peuvent être marquées que par des adverbes du genre: brusquement, en un clin d'oeil, en un instant, subitement, soudain, ... etc. »*

Nevertheless, Bertinetto's (2000) claim that «*en train de*» focuses only focalised meaning is highly supported by Squartini (1998, p.121) who says:

«As for the other French constructions, their distribution is quite interesting here since it confirms the hypothesis on the difference between pure on-goingness and durativity. As a matter of fact in French, the construction *être «en train de»* + infinitive is only used for pure progressive contexts, namely when the situation is viewed as on-going at a given contextually relevant time. In this respect, French can be grouped together with Italian as having a verb periphrasis whose usage is restricted to pure progressive imperfective contexts and not admitted in purely durative cases. On the other hand the two remaining constructions (*être à* + infinitive and *être après* + infinitive), whose usage is quite restricted nowadays, are documented as occurring both in progressive contexts and durative contexts, thus behaving like the Ibero-Romance form. *Être «en train de»* + infinitive (...) like the other Romance Progressives, is not compatible with states, but what is more interesting is its pure progressive character, demonstrated by the non-compatibility with a perfective marker such as the Simple Past / Present Perfect: **il fut «en train de» boire / *Il a été «en train de» boire* 'He was (SP) drinking / He has been drinking'. These data correspond to the incompatibility of the Italian form with the perfective marker (**Sette bevendo/*E stato bevendo* 'He was (SP) drinking / He has been drinking') and contrast with

the Spanish data. »

The difference of developmental path of the progressive marker in French and that of the markers of other Romance languages is explained by the lexical origin of the periphrasis as described above (Mortier 2005; Squartini 1998).

Recently, distinguishing between two types of verbs; durative and punctual (put in Klein's (1994) classification of lexical contents under the same Two-State category), Leclercq (2007) found that «*en train de*» showed affinities with lexical contents which indicate durativity. This could constitute a new avenue for investigation of «*en train de*», whether or not it focalises durativity.

5.3.2.3. Use of the periphrasis and its values in discourse

To start with, the nature of «*en train de*» is a matter of disagreement between researchers. Indeed, the terminology used to describe it is very varied in the literature. For instance, while Borillo (2005) treats it as an aspectual auxiliary “*auxiliaire aspectuel*”, many other researchers treat it as a periphrasis. Pusch (2003) considers it as a prepositional periphrasis “*préposition aspectuelle*”, Gougenheim (1929) as a verbal periphrasis, whereas Leclercq (2007) uses the terms *locution* or *périphrase aspectuelle* (Leclercq 2007, pp.99-109). This abundance of terms reveals a lack of convergence among the studies devoted to «*en train de*». More importantly, researchers tend to only agree to a limited extent on its value in speech. For instance, most specialists of aspect agree that *être* «*en train de*» is an explicit aspectual marker of on-goingness (Bertinetto 2000; Borillo 2005; Dahl 1985; Lachaux 2005; Leclercq 2007; Mortier 2005). According to Foullioux & De Vicente (1995) however, *être* «*en train de*» is a marker of durative aspect, while the progressive aspect is expressed by the periphrasis (*s'en*) *aller* + *participe présent* or by the use of adverbials. They provide definitions of the two aspects *progressif* and *duratif*. The progressive aspect expresses graduality of on-goingness of an action (Foullioux & De Vicente 1995, p.122). However, the durative aspect expresses long or short duration of time.

«L'aspect duratif exprime une action qui est considérée comme se déroulant –plus ou moins- dans le temps; le système du français nous permet d'exprimer soit des durées longues, soit des durées brèves. Les durées longues sont marquées soit par des constructions périphrastiques

comportant un semi-auxiliaire suivi d'un infinitif, soit par des marques adverbiales. » (ibid., p.120)

With their claim that *être «en train de»* conveys durativity, they show very strong divergence from the research into the stages of grammaticalisation of the periphrasis that insists that this marker of French bypassed the durativity stage and that at no stage it served to indicate durativity (Bertinetto 2000; Mortier 2005). Moreover, Lachaux (2005) hypothesises that *être «en train de»* does not only convey an aspectual value, but also a modal one. The periphrasis plays a role in co-enunciation. It allows the enunciator to correct some sort of presuppositions of the co-enunciator about some facts, thus to build a bridge between what “real” representations and linguistic representations. She explains its modal function as follows:

« Le recours à la périphrase être «en train de» dépasse la problématique de la temporalité, et marque avant tout un jugement qualitatif de la part de l'énonciateur, avec remise en cause d'un présupposé positif ou négatif. Nous ferons les remarques suivantes : - sur le plan sémique, la périphrase n'est pas référentielle, elle ne pose aucune information nouvelle 11, la notion de « train » ne renvoyant pas systématiquement à une activité « en déroulement » dans le réel - métalinguistiquement, être «en train de» souligne une relation d'équivalence (« être ») entre le groupe nominal sujet et un « train », avec marqueur de présélection de la complémentation verbale (« de ») - sur le plan pragmatique, l'énonciateur argumente et préoriente la réception de son message : il s'appuie pour cela sur une pseudo-anaphore, étayée par des arguments spatio-temporels, consistant principalement à signaler au coénonciateur qu'il lui manque un « chaînon » (ou « wagon »), une étape essentielle dans la construction de l'énoncé, pour en apprécier la valeur référentielle. La périphrase, ayant pour fonction de figer le dynamisme notionnel, est incompatible avec des verbes « déjà » statifs, ou procès non bornés (il est en train d'être [...] / de savoir [...]), et sera associée à des processus faisant référence à une activité soit mentale, liée au dire ou à la cognition (dire, raconter, faire des révélations, se rendre compte [...]), soit physique (s'habiller, réparer [...])» (Lachaux 2005, p.133)*

She further argues that the periphrasis expresses more modal than aspectual values. When it expresses an aspectual value, it always does so in combination with a modal value.

« La valeur purement aspectuelle de la périphrase, lorsqu'elle apparaît, n'apparaît jamais seule, pour elle-même, mais fait l'objet d'un

réinvestissement modal et communicationnel à visée persuasive de la part de l'énonciateur, sous couvert de délimitation spatio-temporelle. » (ibid., p.138)

She also points out that

«Être «en train de» est une périphrase liée à la co-énonciation : elle apparaît pour corriger une première impression, pour rétablir une 'vérité', pour répondre à une mise en doute éventuelle, non par le biais d'une simple contradiction, mais par une rhétorique persuasive. Avec être «en train de», il y a présupposition, anticipation d'une non-évidence pour le co-énonciateur, qu'il y ait ou non déroulement du procès dans le réel donné comme référent : l'énonciateur s'attend à ce que le co-énonciateur n'adhère pas aux implications pragmatiques qu'il convient de tirer de la reconnaissance du procès en cours, et il cherche donc à pré-orienter la réception de son message en présentant ses assertions (ce qu'il présente linguistiquement du monde réel comme vrai) à l'aide d'une structuration complexe. Le référent du sujet devient objet de discours, de « son » discours, toute intentionnalité apparente étant assujettie à l'intention de communication de l'énonciateur. » (ibid., p.137)

In this project, we consider «*en train de*» as an aspectual periphrasis that marks the aspectual value of on-goingness of an event at a certain reference time. Like Leclercq (2007) we do not consider the auxiliary *être* to be a constituent of the marker in order for it to express an aspectual value. We justify our choice given the following possibilities in native speech:

- (i) «*En train de*» can be used without *être* e.g. *Je l'ai surpris en train de voler une baguette.*
- (ii) «*En train de*» can be used with other verbs such as *voir* (to see) e.g. *Je le vois en train de faire ses devoirs.*
- (iii) «*En train de*» can be separated from the main verb used in the proposition e.g. *Il était allongé en train de lire un livre.*

Our focus on «*en train de*» without including *être* would give us more possibilities to account for the use of the periphrasis in learner varieties, even at earlier stages given the fact that the auxiliary being a difficult element to use in early L2 acquisition.

5.3.2.4. Use of «*en train de*» by FrL2 learners

As mentioned before, the research of how «*en train de*» is actually used by FrL2 learners at different stages of acquisition is very limited. A few years ago, Leclercq (2007) investigated the use of the periphrasis focusing only on English advanced and near-native learners of French. So virtually not much has been said about the use of «*en train de*» in earlier stages of acquisition. The range of learner profiles we investigate in our project aims at filling this real gap. Is «*en train de*» learned and used in early stages of second French language acquisition? If so, how is it used by learners at the different stages?

We nevertheless have a detailed picture of the emerging forms expressing temporal values in FrL2 acquisition based on a number of studies, namely Bartning & Schlyter (2004); Bhardwaj et al. (1988); Dietrich et al. (1995); Klein & Perdue (1997); Noyau (2002) and (Perdue 1993b). Earlier stages show the alternation between the bare verb, V-Ø, and the V-e form. Bardovi-Harlig (2000, pp.115-116) reports on the findings of some studies on French second language acquisition describing the following developmental sequence:

«Noyau, Houdaifa, et al. have observed that the V-e form may become either an infinitive or a participle. One adult learner in their longitudinal study was able to use Aux + V-e (*the passé composé*), but the learners in the study did not acquire the contrast in grammatical aspect between the *passé composé* and the *imparfait*. In contrast, learners studied by Schlyter (1990) did require the contrast. Schlyter compared the acquisition of L2 French by two tutored adult learners (L1 Swedish) with the bilingual (L1) acquisition of French by German-French children. One adult learner was recorded after 9 months residence in France, the other after 11. Schlyter also drew on a larger, unpublished, cross-sectional study of seven adult learners and additional longitudinal data from the two learners and posited an acquisitional order. She posited the following order for French L1 and adult French L2 acquisition (1990, p. 305): 1. one or two basic forms with variable use. 2. "*passé composé*" (in certain cases, not yet entirely productive). 3. *veux* + infinitive or *va* + infinitive (to refer to the future). 4. clear cases of *imparfait* : first "*était, avait,*" and modals. 5. pluperfect, "*conditionnel*", "*subjonctif*".»

The developmental sequence reported and widely supported in the literature does not give any indication about the emergence of the sequence «*en train de*». We know nevertheless that the

development and use of auxiliaries happen quite late in the acquisitional process.

Another field of related research about formulaic constructions offers insightful findings to our investigation. In fact, recent research studies on what was called “prefabs” or “formulaic sequences” (Bartning & Forsberg 2006; Forsberg 2006; Wray 2002) help us build hypotheses regarding the periphrasis and its use in second language acquisition. In fact, in her PhD thesis about formulaic language in French, Forsberg (2006) classifies (*être*) «*en train de*» as what she calls “*séquence préfabriquée*”; meaning a formulaic sequence. A formulaic sequence, to borrow the definition of Bartning & Forsberg (2006), is (words between [...] are our additions):

« [Une] suite de plusieurs mots qui sont stockés en tant qu'unités holistiques et qui ne sont pas générées par la grammaire ou le lexique au moment de l'énonciation. Les SP [séquences préfabriquées] en français peuvent être aussi bien des collocations comme « regarder de haut » que des marqueurs discursifs comme « c'est vrai que » ».

According to Forsberg (2006) there are two types of sequences: idiomatic constructions and non-analysed units, schematised as follows:

Figure 3. The two types of formulaic sequences (Forsberg 2006, p.7)



The characterisation of «*en train de*» as a formulaic sequence might help us analyse the use of the marked form in FrL2 for the reasons highlighted in the following quote:

«It has been shown that a user's knowledge of formulaic sequences impacts heavily on language proficiency and idiomaticity. Because these sequences follow neither grammatical nor lexical rules, they constitute the last threshold for advanced L2 learners. In second language

acquisition, the term *formulaic sequence* not only applies to strict idiomatic constructions, but it is also used to refer to sequences that appear to be acquired in a holistic manner during the first phases of acquisition...Situational and Idiosyncratic prefabs are found to characterise the early phases of acquisition, while Lexical prefabs are mastered later and are a major difficulty for L2 learners. Only very advanced learners who have spent considerable time in France produce the same proportion of Lexical prefabs as native speakers. Discourse prefabs constitute the most important category for all groups, including both natives and non-natives. It can therefore be postulated that the main function of formulaic sequences in spoken French is that of discourse structuring and speech management. Although this category is present already at the beginning stages of acquisition, it is the only one where slight differences in late-stage L2 users are found, e.g. some learners overuse this category. The development and use of formulaic language is explained within a framework of *Frequency Effects*. Coupled with other factors, frequency can account for why Lexical prefabs are so hard to acquire and also why formulaic sequences take such a long time to master. » (*ibid.*, p.6)

Different types of formulaic sequences are used and mastered at different stages of language acquisition. Indeed, she argues that there exists an acquisitional sequence according to which learners move from using non-analysed sequences to a system of more creatively applied rules.

« Les unités non-analysées se rapportent aux étapes initiales de l'acquisition d'une langue (et présupposent une décomposition), alors que la maîtrise des séquences préfabriquées idiomatiques survient assez tardivement (...) En L2, la situation est entièrement renversée, vu que l'apprenant part d'une perspective analytique, tout à fait conscient de l'unité mot, et, il doit, successivement, apprendre la combinatoire des mots. Ce n'est que pendant la toute première période d'acquisition que l'apprenant L2 applique un mode holistique, mais il passe rapidement à un mode analytique. L'acquisition L2 est donc un processus qui évolue plutôt vers un mode holistique. » (ibid., p.7)

What is generally claimed in the literature is that the full mastery of formulaic expressions is achieved very late in the acquisitional process. Wray (2002, p.182) believes however that the late mastery of formulaic sequences is explained by the frequency of the input and it is subject to individual variation.

«Despite the apparent ease with which formulaic sequences seem to be

picked up in early stages of learning, by the time the learner has achieved a reasonable command of L2 lexicon and grammar, the formulaic sequences appear to be lagging behind. This could be just an impression. Native speakers can tend to take for granted that certain expressions are so common as to be elementary, whereas, in fact, because they often have idiosyncratic grammar or vocabulary, learners cannot know them unless they have actually encountered them before and that at a point in their learning when they have a chance of making sense of them. »

She also highlights that the differences between learners result in a dissimilar use of formulaic sequences at various stages of acquisition.

«It seems clear that there are some fundamental differences between different types of learner, and that, in particular, part of the well organised contrast between the success of adults and young children in second language learning may reside in the maintenance of two crucial balances. One is the balance between the two central functions of formulaic sequences, namely, the achieving of successful interactional events and the saving of processing entailed in actually identifying features to be learned. The second balance, (...) is also linked to acquisition, is that between formulaicity and creativity.» (*ibid.*, p.198)

Going back to «*en train de*» which is our focus here, Forsberg (2006) argues based on Wray's (2002) research and the Heteromorphic Model of lexicon (*Ibid.*, p.263), that lexical units in language are of three types: the morpheme, the polymorphemic word, and the formulaic sequence. The three units are distributed into five notional types of lexicons: grammatical (Lexicon I), referential (Lexicon II), interactional (Lexicon III), memorized (Lexicon IV), and reflexive (Lexicon V). *En train de* belongs to the grammatical lexicon, and is a grammatical formulaic sequence. Forsberg (2006, p.55) defines grammatical formulaic sequences as follows :

« Les SP Grammaticales ont pour principale caractéristique de ne pas avoir de contenu extralinguistique. Nous sommes consciente qu'il est toujours délicat de faire une division trop rigide entre mots de contenu et mots fonctionnels, en parlant de référence extra- ou intralinguistique. Nous en parlons néanmoins ici afin de simplifier et de rendre plus claires les différences principales entre nos catégories. Le sens des SP Grammaticales est procédural, à l'opposé des SP Lexicales. On peut également caractériser les SP Grammaticales par une intension sémantique très restreinte. Il s'agit donc de formes figées qui ont très peu de polysémie et dont la fonction communicative n'est pas

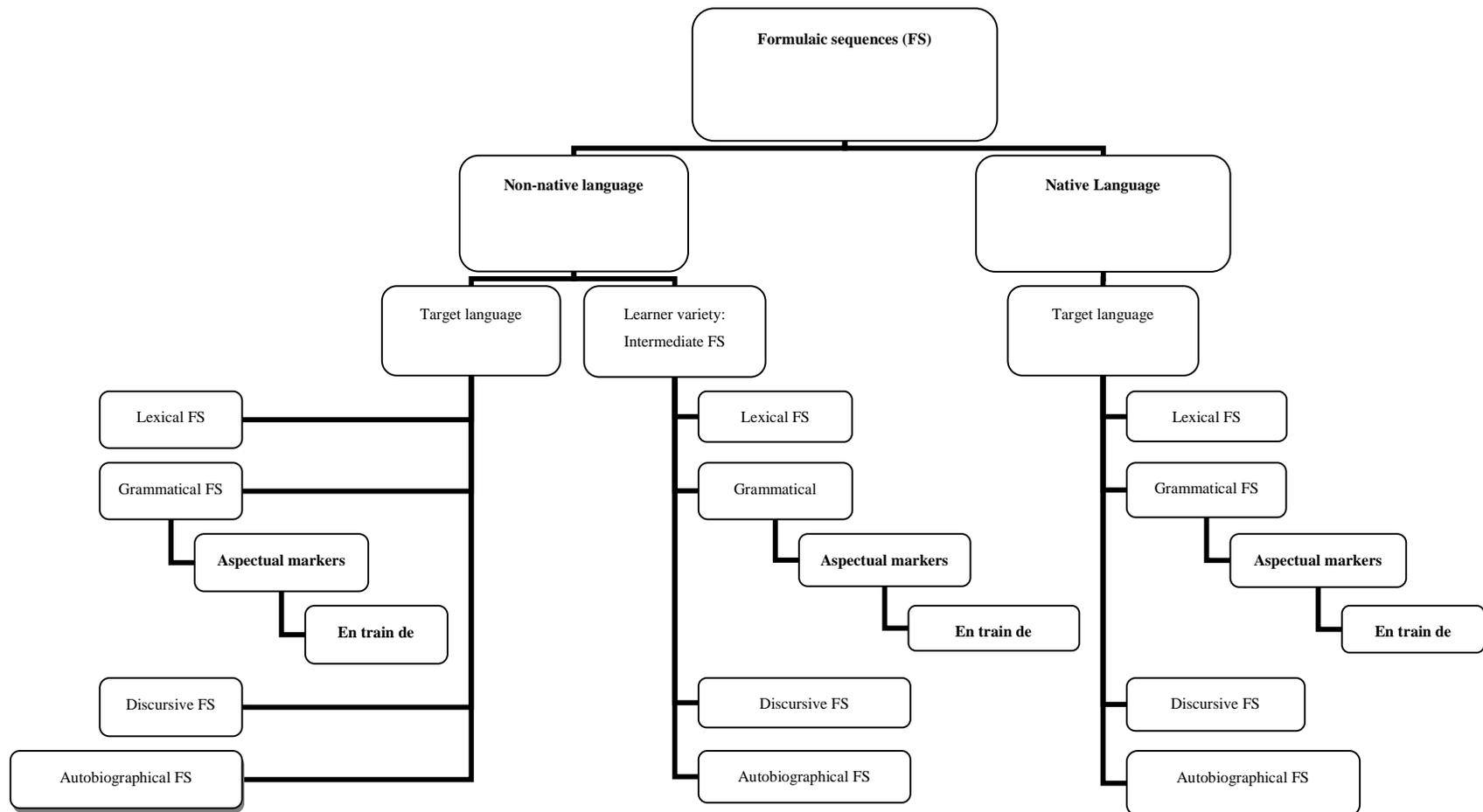
propositionnelle / référentielle, mais elles sont utilisées pour quantifier et déterminer les unités référentielles et de les insérer dans un cadre aspectuo-temporel. Ces séquences opèrent donc au niveau du syntagme. »

Within the grammatical formulaic sequences category, «*en train de*» belongs to the sub-category of aspectual markers.³¹

The figure below accounts for the distribution of «*en train de*». It is inspired by the descriptions of formulaic sequences provided by Bartning & Forsberg (2006) and Forsberg (2006).

³¹ The three other sub-categories are : determinants (eg. *une sorte de*); expressions of quantity (eg. *un petit peu, la plupart, pas du tout, beaucoup plus*) and definite pronouns (such as, *les uns les autres, quelque chose*).

Figure 4. Classification of «en train de» as a formulaic sequence in native and non-native speech



In other words, «*en train de*» belongs to the category of aspectual markers which in turn belongs to grammatical formulaic sequences which is part of formulaic sequences in the target language and learner variety.

According to the findings of Bartning & Forsberg's (2006) study, the grammatical category of formulaic sequences is the only category that does not manifest a clear evolution, i.e., does not grow in number across acquisitional stages. They explain this by the fact that this category contains limited expressions belonging to *classes fermées*.

In the light of all this, and based on the categorisation of the periphrasis as a formulaic sequence, we expect that the use of «*en train de*» across the range of acquisitional profiles we have will manifest changes according to the amount of input each learner is exposed to and also according to the learner's communicative style.

In this chapter, we have reviewed the main studies that deal with the role of progressive marking in the expression of simultaneity. We have introduced the notion of on-goingness and its grammaticalisation in different languages, and then we focused on our languages TAL1 and FrL1. We started with giving the state of the art on research on Tunisian Arabic in general then we narrowed the scope of the overview to focus only on the expression of on-goingness. We focused afterwards on the expression of on-goingness in French. We concluded that in the literature, there are two attested markers for expressing that an event is in progress, *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» in TAL1 and FrL1 respectively. In Tunisian Arabic, there is evidence that PV only could also express the same aspectual value. In French, we have also proof that «*en train de*» is not fully grammaticalised like English *-ing* form for example (Leclercq 2007). We have therefore at hand comparable ways of expressing on-goingness in our two languages, despite the presence of one more systematic marker in TAL1, which is the post-verbal marker *fī*.

In the following chapter, we deal with the acquisitional dimension of this project with more details, tackling the notion of perspective-taking in solving a complex verbal task.

CHAPTER 6. OUR CONTRIBUTION

In this chapter, we remind the reader of our research objectives and questions. We will reconsider the questions we presented in the introduction, in light of the key theoretical concepts we have discussed above and the research we have reviewed.

As the above literature review shows, the key area that attracts attention from the research community relates to the issue of how simultaneity is expressed at the utterance level. This encompasses the role of aspectual marking in expressing that two events share a temporal stretch at a certain interval of reference. Furthermore, the interest is also oriented towards the construction of the simultaneous events at the discourse level. In fact, one area of extreme importance is the investigation of the temporal perspectives under which the speakers present the simultaneous events in discourse.

Nevertheless, the available research on this topic is very limited and clearly inconclusive. In fact, the *Sim* relation has only been investigated in some languages with limited groups of learners. Those languages include Czech L1, German L1, English L1 and Czech L2 by English and German basic, intermediate and advanced learners (Schmiedtová 2004), English L1, French L1, and English L2 by French near-native speakers (Leclercq 2007; 2008; 2009), and Turkish L1 and German L1 (Acsu-Koç & von Stutterheim 1994).

The range of languages investigated has clearly been limited to date. One of the valuable contributions of this study is to give insights into how simultaneous events are expressed via aspectual marking in a different typological group. Our project intends to give a clearer picture of progressive markers in TAL1. At the same time, our data constitute an unprecedented corpus of oral productions in TAL1, which could create a solid basis for the investigation of temporality in this spoken language. Furthermore, we intend to compare two languages that are generally reported to be very different as far as temporality is concerned. The studies which have examined FrL2 by Arabic learners have done so without analysing the L1 in question based on empirical data.

In addition, some research questions dealing with French L1 need further deepening. These include the use of the on-goingness marker «*en train de*» interchangeably with the simple form

for expressing on-goingness (Leclercq 2007). The work on this area to date has focused only on the inclusion type of *Sim*. Moreover, the investigations so far have exclusively relied on retellings of commercials to elicit the expression of *Sim*. We aim to enlarge the field of investigation to include stimuli, which show perfectly simultaneous situations. We also intend to compare this type with inclusion. As such, we diversified the material used so that it encompasses different types of stories (movie extracts, commercials, etc. as we will see in part two). With these more diversified tools, we hope to gain more insights into how two simultaneous events are construed in a story, and how the use of «*en train de*» versus simple forms in retelling simultaneous situations is seen as a stimulus material.

As the review above shows, we have at hand two languages, TAL1 and FrL1 whose main markers of on-goingness (mainly *qa:'id* in TAL1 and «*en train de*» in French) are not completely grammaticalised. Our comparison intends therefore to verify whether this common feature would result in similar behaviours of the speakers of each language on the same verbal task.

Additionally, we intend to look at the use of the progressive marking at the utterance level and at the discourse level. We hope that our analysis will contribute to a better understanding of the use of aspect in discourse in general. In fact, the study of discourse as a whole with focus on simultaneous events would provide additional findings about discourse organisation, which would challenge the still rigid ideas about the use of aspect to structure the narrative discourse mainly based on the study of sequential events.

To summarise, our project/our PhD investigates the temporal perspectives under which the speakers present simultaneous events in discourse in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 by Tunisian learners. It focuses on the use of progressive marking in expressing two types of simultaneity, perfect simultaneity and inclusion.

Given the plethora of possibilities to split the sample examined, we have decided to focus our attention on two different groups in each source language: a group comparable to the immigrant adult learners involved in the ESF project, and an advanced group with a high educational

background. This allows us to highlight the key differences between the samples. Indeed, linguistic variation within one language is very well attested.

«It must be described how linguistic variation correlates with extralinguistic factors. These include, for example, social class, geographical distribution, the specific communicative situation, the medium (written or spoken), or development over time, be it of an individual (>language acquisition) or a speech community (>historical change).» (Klein 2005, p.1164)

Other earlier research has not always considered diversifying informants' profiles in studying a particular L1. The fact that we diversify the sample in each L1 is pioneering. Many possible other splits constitute an avenue for further research. Just like the signalling model³² in economics points out, the educational profile of the informants mirrors and shapes many other features of groups, such as profession, abilities, interests and social environment.

Our project intends to examine how TAL1, FrL1 and FRL2 informants relate simultaneous events in discourse using on-goingness devices. It aims at bringing answers to a number of research questions. We detail our questions that we stated in the introduction, in light of the key concepts discussed in the literature above, as follows:

- (1) What happens if we have the two types of progressive markers within one language; one fully grammaticalised and one in an on-going process of grammaticalisation, which is the case of TAL1; and what are the contexts of use of the on-going less fully grammaticalised one?
- (2) If both FrL1 and TAL1 code on-goingness lexically, will that result in similar aspectual perspectives taken on events in the verbal task of expressing simultaneity?
- (3) Does the educational background of informants in the respective L1s affect the way they complete the task?
- (4) Does the L1 of Tunisian learners of FrL2 influence the way they use aspectual marking in

³² Spence (2002)

retelling simultaneous situations?

PART TWO: THE STUDY

Introduction

The second part of this dissertation is devoted to our study of the use of progressive marking in expressing simultaneous situations. The first chapter is devoted to the research methodology adopted in this project. It presents the informants who participated in the study as well as the task that was used to collect the data. In addition, it explains the data collection procedure and presents the visual stimuli designed and used to elicit the oral productions. The second chapter describes the methodology of data coding and the different tools used for the data analysis. Chapter 3 details the major findings of the data analyses. The last chapter is devoted to a discussion of the research findings, and a presentation of the limitations of this research. This second part terminates with a reconsideration of our initial research questions, and a summary of the results with reference to them.

**CHAPTER 1. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA
COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

1.0. Introduction

In order to dig up the issues of how simultaneity is expressed in the languages we are investigating, we had to elicit a corpus of oral productions. Indeed,

«Contextually embedded language (text) production has to be analysed in order to get a hold on processes of conceptualisation» (von Stutterheim & Nüse 2003, p.852)

Our investigation is therefore based on the analysis of oral productions. In this chapter, we present the data that we gathered. More specifically, we present how the data was gathered, explaining the task procedure and the stimuli used for the data collection as well as the informants' profiles.

1.1. Pilot study

A pilot study including 27 participants was conducted in France and in Tunisia: 10 Tunisian learners of FrL2 and 5 speakers of FrL1 were recorded in France and 12 Tunisians were recorded in Tunisia on the same task in TAL1: retelling 5 video clips we have adopted from the work of Schmiedtová (2004).

The pilot study made us aware of certain methodological problems, which gave us new insights and ideas to develop our methodological tools for the main study. One of the problems was the elicitation question used. In fact, the participants were sometimes asked a question in the past tense; and at some other times in the present tense. The data showed that oral productions were in the present or the past regardless of the tense employed in elicitation question. Yet, to maximize the homogeneity and validity of the data we have decided to use an invariable question in the past tense with all the participants in TAL1 and in FrL1 and FrL2 for all the retells.

Furthermore, having a group of Tunisian learners for FrL2 and another group of Tunisians for TAL1 makes it difficult to study the transfer phenomena, if there are any. In any case, it makes the comparison of the oral productions in the source and target languages tricky. Therefore, for the main study we have decided to conduct the experiment in FrL2 and TAL1 with the same

participants.

Moreover, even though the stimulus material used has proved to be effective for eliciting the temporal relation of *Sim*, our interest in its expression and marking in the narrative discourse made us think and work on other different visual methodological tools of various types in order to elicit retells. We will expose the new material designed in the third part below.

1.2. Informants: profiles and groups

Thirty informants were selected to participate in this study: One group of Tunisians and one control group of native speakers of French. Each of the groups was composed of two sub-groups according to their educational background and professional profiles. Table 13 gives details about the number of participants in each group:

Table 13. Number of participants

	Low education	High education
Tunisian informants (n = 19)	13	6
Control group (n = 11)	6	5

1.2.2. Tunisian informants

The Tunisians who participated in this study belong to two different groups. In each group, they were chosen according to certain educational, professional and personal criteria. Table 13 provides detailed information about every participant: the date and place of recording, age, occupation, education, and duration of stay in France).

1.2.2.1. Low educated informants (henceforth L-educated)

They are Tunisians aged from 24 to 40 (average age: 32) who have immigrated to France for employment purposes and who received very little education in their country of origin. They did not study French at all at school, or they did it for a very short period of time in their primary

education³³. In fact, all the informants in this group have received 2 to 5 years of primary education only. Given their city of origin, these informants did not speak French in Tunisia in their daily communication³⁴. All of them have started using French only in France in order to cope with everyday communication needs in society, and sometimes at work. As far as their professional occupations are concerned, they are manual workers on building sites or artisans (hairdressers, waiters in Arab cafés or plumbers). At the time of the data collection, 11 of these participants had stayed in France from 2 months to 4.5 years. For the two others, they have had a longer duration of residence in France: 8 years and 10 years.

1.2.2.2. Highly educated informants (H-educated)

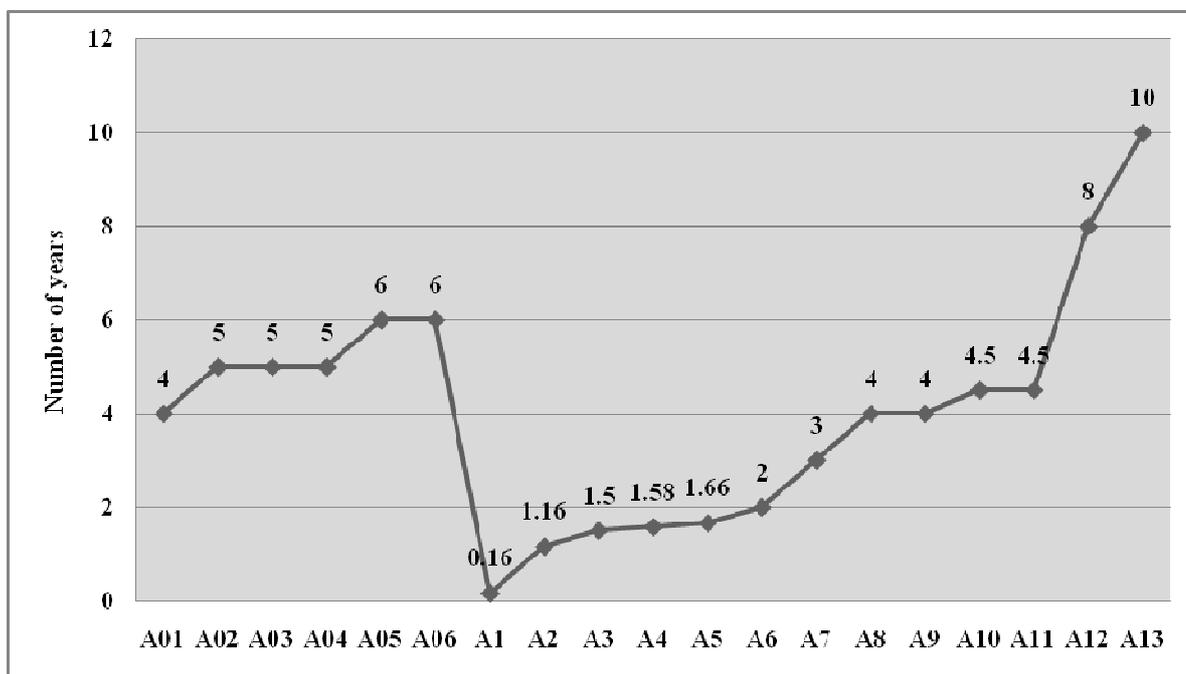
These participants were selected for their advanced level in French. In fact, the six participants, aged from 24 to 33 (average age: 28.5), have high educational qualifications as they have finished their post-graduate studies. They have been living in France for 4 to 6 years. They hold high professional positions that require an advanced level of French. Some of these participants were recorded at home or in public places.

The following graph displays the informants in both groups detailing their length of residence in France. A01 to A06 are the codes attributed to the H-educated Tunisian informants and A1 to A13 are the codes given to the L-educated informants.

³³ In Tunisia, French instruction starts from the 4th year in primary school. Generally, during the first years, it does not involve much grammar, but elementary notions and songs.

³⁴ French use in everyday communication and bilingualism (TAL1-Fr) is a phenomenon that can generally be observed in only some Tunisian environments especially in the big Northern and coastal cities.

Figure 5. Tunisian speakers' duration of residence in France at the time of the recording



1.2.3. French native speakers

Native speakers of French also belong to two groups as they have two different profiles that are comparable to the Tunisian informants'.

1.2.3.1. FrL1 L-educated informants

These participants, aged between 44 and 60 (average age: 52), have received very little education, and are manual workers or artisans (waiters, cashiers, etc.). They were recorded on their worksites or in a café.

1.2.3.2. FrL1 H-educated informants

These are highly educated native speakers, aged from 26 to 44 (average age: 35), who work as consultants in new technologies for the French telecommunication company; *France Télécom*. All of them were recorded in their offices in *Sofrecom*, a *France Télécom*'s subsidiary company.

All our participants have completed an oral questionnaire. The questions that the learners

answered concerned their age, city of origin, education, civil status, origin of their partners if applicable, date of arrival in France and profession. They were also asked if they had completed any linguistic training in France and to what extent they used French in their everyday communication, at home, at work or in their social life.

1.3. Visual stimuli

As von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009, p.199) point out, constraining the verbal task by carefully choosing or designing the visual stimuli used for the data collection is a major step for analysing the process from perception to verbalisation.

«This elicitation technique allows for the manipulation and analysis of the different steps involved between the perception of a particular visual stimulus on the one end and the utterance of a speech signal on the other.»

We have elicited our data using eight different visual stimuli: Three video commercials of the five used in the pilot study were selected and used in the main study. We called these videos *Fire*, *Salmon* and *Soup*. They show two situations that overlap during an interval of time, involving two entities; animate or inanimate, considered as the protagonists of the situations involved.

In addition to the three commercial video clips, five video extracts from different types and genres were included in the stimulus material used. These five videos were extracted from different sources. Two scenes *Breakfast* and *Wake up* were selected from the long movie *Noi Albinoi* (2003) by Dagur Kári. *Birds* was taken from a musical clip of Bob Marley's song *Three Little Birds*. *Earthsea* was extracted from the animation movie *Tales from the Earthsea* (2006) by Gorō Miyazaki. *Kabaret* was chosen from the play *Drunkard* by the Polish troop *Potem*.

All the videos used show simultaneous situations. In other words, they involve two situations that share a value on the time axis. These latter show different types of overlap due to the properties of the situations they present. The videos are classified into two main categories: videos in the first category involve on-going parallel activities and perfect simultaneity. Those in

the second category manifest an “inclusion” type of *Sim*, which means that one situation is interlocked in the course of the other. The former type manifests no progression on the time line while the latter one is composed of successive bounded activities that are chronologically ordered, hence showing progression on the time line. We assume that in relating the simultaneous in discourse with the aim of building up a narrative, the perfect *Sim* type of videos would present more constraints to the speaker than the inclusion type of videos. In other words, the absence of progression on the time line in the perfect *Sim* videos would be a constraining feature compared to the inclusion type presenting progression and presenting therefore a facilitating component to build up a narrative.

Table 14. The two types of simultaneity in the videos

Type	Properties of situations	Schematic representation	Video
1: Perfect Simultaneity (Perfect <i>Sim</i>)	S1: durative, unbounded S2: durative, unbounded	S1-----[!] S2-----	Breakfast 1'14''
Two parallel situations	S1: durative homogeneous atelic activity S2: durative homogeneous atelic activity with a left boundary	S1----- S2 -----	Birds 28''
			Earthsea 1'09''
2. Inclusion / Emboîtement	S1: durative homogeneous activity	S1----- S2 ----- ----- ----- S _{2,1} S _{2,2} S _{2,3}	Kabaret 2'30''
One durative situation simultaneous with a sequence of bounded situations	S2: bounded events, with observable left and right boundaries, presented in a sequence		Wakeup 1'08''
			Salmon 26''
			Fire 29''
			Soup 16''

The two situations in the videos *Breakfast*, *Birds* and *Earthsea* that constitute the first type have the same type of simultaneity: perfect simultaneity Schmiedtová (2004). Secondly, they involve two situations that do not present progression over the time line. The video *Breakfast* involves an on-going activity that is non-homogeneous and presents an inferable change of state, which is simultaneous with a homogeneous activity. In fact, the first situation <a young man preparing

pancakes> can be analysed into many sub-phases that are not similar or equal in length. The visual stimulus shows some of these sub-phases <tossing the pancakes on both sides>, <spreading the batter in the pan>, not all of them. Yet the common shared knowledge of preparing pancakes would allow the informant to infer the sub-phases not shown on the support, such as <putting the batter in the pan> etc; and also to infer the term of the activity, its ultimate result which can be described as <having the pancake cooked and ready to eat>. This inferable telicity is represented by the symbol [!] in Table 14. Retelling what happened in the scene would require making choices that vary from representing the activity as a whole and / or segmenting it into the observed parts of the activity. The non-homogeneous activity is perfectly simultaneous with a homogeneous activity <an old lady dancing>. This activity cannot be segmented, as any of its sub-phases are similar and share equal properties.

As for the videos *Birds* and *Earthsea*, they involve two homogeneous and atelic situations, which do not present any visible or inferable endpoint. In *Birds*, <a man playing the guitar> is simultaneous with <a girl dancing>. In *Earthsea*, the two situations are <a girl singing> and <a boy crying>. Both of them have another particularity: the second situation starts slightly after the first one, the temporal interval being only a matter of seconds. Starting from that left boundary of the second situation, the two situations continue to overlap during the video. This property might affect the choices of lexical contents by the informants to retell the scenes.

The other five videos, *Kabaret*, *Wakeup*, *Fire*, *Salmon* and *Soup* show a different type of simultaneity: One situation consists of a series of bounded and successive events that are “framed” or “included” in the other situation. As such, Schmiedtová (2004) calls this type of simultaneity “inclusion”, and Leclercq (2007), “*emboîtement de situations*” (S2 being put in a box or framed by S1). Videos classified under this type however show the following differences:

(i) The first difference concerns the type of bounded events paralleling S1. In three videos, namely *Kabaret*, *Fire*, and *Wakeup*, events of S2 performed by the second protagonist are different from one another. For example, in *Fire*, a man performs this series of successive activities: <walk towards the track>, <open the door of the track>, <take a journal from the track> <close the door of the track> <walk away>. In the two others, *Soup* and *Salmon*, the same

event is seen or understood to be repeated or iterated a number of times. In *Soup*, for example, a man talks repeating many times <quiet please> or in *Salmon*, a cat is understood to repeatedly <steal slices of fish>.

(ii) The second difference has to do with the relationship of one situation to another. In fact, in *Kabaret* and *Wakeup*, the events of S2 are seen to affect the course of S1. Also, S2 affects S1 to the extent that it brings it to an end. For example, in *Kabaret*, the woman who is seen to be <sitting on a chair reading a newspaper>, <stop reading> and <fall from the chair> as a drunken man <push the woman from the chairs>. In *Salmon*, *Soup* and *Fire*, however, events constituting S2 do not interfere with the course of the events presented. In *Soup*, the iterated event of the man <saying repeatedly quiet please> happening in parallel with S1 <a young man eating soup>, is understood to affect S1, but this interference does not stop the event itself from happening <eat soup>, but affects the manner in which it is happening <eat soup silently>.

Consequently, the first difference explained above is less relevant to our classification as far as our main investigation is concerned: studying aspect and its role in the structuring of the discourse. The second difference is more relevant as a basis for distinction between the videos, as the interaction between S1 and S2 is expected to affect the aspectual choices made to retell the situations watched. The iterativity of the event in S2 in *Salmon* and *Soup* is also considered to represent a series of bounded events, the one differentiated from the other as it occurs in another time span on the time axis. As such, the iterated situation can be represented as follows: S_{t1} , S_{t2} , S_{t3} ..., etc. It is also worth noting that S1 in the videos showing inclusion is on-going and durative. It is homogeneous in *Soup* <eat soup> and *Fire* <burning>, *Kabaret* <reading newspaper> and *Wakeup* <sleeping>. In *Salmon*, however, it is non-homogeneous <prepare a meal>, so the retelling of the story might involve making choices: either pointing out the global activity of preparing the meal and / or paying attention to its sub-phases such as <wash vegetables>, <season>.

Finally, it is definitely worth noting that in all the videos selected for the verbal task, the situations share a relation of temporal *Sim* and they also share space. Understanding that the two situations occur in the same space is facilitated by some elements. For instance, in *Breakfast*, it is

possible for the informants to grasp that two protagonists are in two neighbouring areas, the kitchen and the living room, given the shared music. In *Birds*, we see both protagonists in front of a house. In *Earthsea*, the shared space is the green field on which the two situations take place. In *Kabaret*, the proximity of the two protagonists is visible on stage to the spectator. In *Fire*, the common space is the screen split in two halves. In *Wakeup*, there is an interaction between the two protagonists in the same space (the room of the young man sleeping). In *Salmon and Soup*, there is an interaction between S1 and S2 that happens in one shared space. In *Salmon* both the cook and the cat are in the kitchen, whereas, in *Soup*, the voice (protagonist 2) comes from the television which is in the room, where protagonist 1 is.

Conclusions

The videos used as visual stimuli for the elicitation of data show different characteristics as they present two distinct types of simultaneity, and the situations they present show individual properties. These distinctions are summarised in Table 15:

Table 15. Properties of the situations involved in the eight videos

	Perfect simultaneity	Inclusion or “ <i>emboîtement</i> ”	Series of bounded events in S2	S2 affects the course of S1	S2 puts an end to S1	Iteration of one event in S2
Birds	+	-	-	-	-	-
Earthsea	+	-	-	-	-	-
Breakfast	+	-	-	-	-	-
Wakeup	-	+	+	+	+	-
Kabaret	-	+	+	+	+	-
Soup	-	+	+	+	-	+
Salmon	-	+	+	-	-	+
Fire	-	+	+	-	-	-

The videos are mainly classified into two categories, each one into 2 sub-categories according to the following criteria:

(i) Perfect simultaneity or overlap of S1 and S2; where we distinguish between two types:

- S1 and S2 share the same interval on the time axis (*Breakfast*)
- S2 starts slightly after, and perfectly parallels S1 (*Birds, Earthsea*)

(ii) Inclusion or “*emboîtement*”; where we distinguish between two types:

- S2 does not interfere with S1 (*Salmon, Fire, Soup*)
- S2 interferes with S1 at a certain point and puts an end to it (*Kabaret, Wakeup*).

The diversification of the stimulus material used for the data collection is motivated by our interest in studying the role of aspect in retelling the scenes presented. In fact, we are interested in investigating the aspectual forms selected to retell each of the types presented above along with the types of lexical contents chosen with each form. We assume that the properties of each situation would motivate the aspectual values expressed. In fact, the properties of situations described above would influence the choice of aspect used. Furthermore, conceptualising the situation influences the choice of the lexical contents attached to the aspectual forms used (Carroll *et al.* 2004; Herweg 1991; Kozłowska 1998b; Leclercq 2007; Starren & Natale 2008). Our classification helps us therefore to deal with the specificities of each video, to bring answers to our questions.

1.4. Task procedure

All the participants, native speakers as well as learners, were presented with the eight short video scenes in the same order on a computer screen. Each scene was presented as many times as the participants needed. After making sure they had watched the scene enough times to do the task, the computer was put on pause, and the participants were asked to retell what happened in the scene. They were all asked the same question in the past tense. Native French informants as well as Tunisian learners on the ask in FrL2 were asked “*Qu’est-ce qui s’est passé dans cette scène?*” (What happened in this scene?). For the TAL1 data, the informants were asked “*Snuwa sa:r fi elmashhad hed^ha?*” Each informant in FrL1, TAL1 and FrL2 repeated the same procedure for all eight videos. The narratives were recorded using a digital recorder and a microphone.

The French native speakers were asked to produce oral narrations in their L1, while the Tunisian informants were asked to do the task in FrL2 and in TAL1. When they were contacted for the

experiment, they were not told that they would be producing narratives in their first language. It was after completing the task in FrL2, and a short break of about 10 to 15 minutes, that the participants were asked to retell the scenes in TAL1. In so doing, we have minimized the interference between L1 and L2 in the completion of the verbal task. Actually, they were not made aware from the start that the investigator spoke TAL1.

In the second stage of data collection (TAL1), very few of the informants needed to watch the scenes more than once for they had already watched them at the first stage (collection of FrL1 retellings).

1.5. Ethical dimension

The data collection procedure and elicitation task do not raise serious ethical issues. In fact, the participants were recorded retelling stories about videos that were extracted from different visual stimuli. Furthermore, they were not asked to give their names, and the questions that they have answered concerned their stay in France, and linguistic profiles including their use of French in everyday communication. More importantly, the data are made anonymous, each participant is assigned a code number. Nevertheless, the fact that we needed to record the data was an issue for some of the subjects. These subjects were free to give their consent or not to participate in the data collection. In order to meet the ethical requirements, we made sure at the first encounter with every participant, without of course revealing our research questions, that he/she understood all the relevant details about the research: the scientific character of the work, the final objective behind our data collection, the way we were planning to work on them and that we would exploit them only for scientific research purposes. We also explained to them that the data would be made anonymous before any treatment or publishing of any results. The participants who were recorded were the ones who gave their total consent and signed therefore the consent form. This form stipulates that the participant gives his / her consent for taking part in the research and being recorded for the purpose of exploiting the data for the sole purpose of research.

1.6. Conclusions on the methodology and data collection

We believe that a corpus analysis is the only viable way to achieve our objectives. The originality of our work lies in the fact that it includes empirical data on TAL1 gathered under similar circumstances as FrL1 and FrL2 data. In addition, what constitutes a real contribution is that we maximized the comparability of our groups of data. In fact, in each L1 we have tried to find participants with comparable profiles across languages. In addition, we are able to examine FrL2 productions and compare them to the productions of the same informants in their L1. In the following chapter, we explain how we are going to analyse and code our data for the purposes of this research project.

CHAPTER 2. DATA ANALYSIS

2.0. Introduction

The data on which our research is based consist of 392 retellings gathered from 30 participants. The details are supplied in Table 16. :

Table 16. Presentation of the data

	H-educated		L-educated		Total n° of retellings
	N° of participants	N° of retellings	N° of participants	N° of retellings	
TAL1	6	48	13	104	152
FrL1	5	40	6	48	88
FrL2	6	48	13	104	152
Total					392

2.1. Transcription conventions

All the data were recorded, digitized and transcribed in CHAT format using the programme Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES), freely accessible on Internet³⁵.

The transcription follows the rules set by the programme and the software CHAT. It allows chunking the utterances into propositions. An utterance is a natural unit of talk bounded by breaths or pauses (speaker's silence). In many of our retellings, an utterance corresponds to the whole retelling of a video. Utterances are divided in our transcripts into 'propositions'. We define a proposition as the smallest unit of speech containing an event, process or state, organised according to the topic-focus distribution. The main element of each proposition is a visible or non-visible verbal element. Here, by non-visible verbal element we mean any element that can replace a verb (V0 or AP in TAL1).

Mainly orthographic transcription is used in FrL1 narratives and in FrL2 of advanced participants (H-educated). In the FrL2 retellings produced by learners at earlier stages of acquisition, both orthographic and phonetic transcriptions are used. Phonetic transcription is

³⁵ <http://childes.psy.cmu.edu>

mainly used to avoid over interpreting the verb forms such as those that end with [e] and that could be either interpreted to mean the infinitive, *imparfait* or *passé composé* past tenses in French. As for the TAL1 narratives, they were transcribed using the Arabic transcription conventions³⁶ set for the CHILDES programme (see Table 1 and Table 2 above).

2.3. Coding

In this empirical fieldwork, we have manipulated six independent variables and coded another one for classification purposes:

(i) The stimulus material: the scenes were carefully chosen according to the different types of *Sim* they present. Each video used for eliciting the data was analysed into scenes using a software called *Subtitle Workshop*³⁷. Thanks to this tool, each piece of the videos was described and coded in terms of the situations it involves and the time that each one of the situations takes. This gave a clear view of the types of simultaneous situations each video presented, as well as the differences and similarities of the videos used with respect to the type of *Sim* they show

(ii) The source language of the informants TAL1, and FrL1 and the target language of learners (TAL1, FrL2).

(iii) The education and profiles of the participants (see next point).

(vi) The order of presentation of the scenes that was kept unchanged for all the participants in TAL1 and in French.

(v) The elicitation question was consciously formulated and kept invariably in the past (i.e. TT before TU) in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2.

(vi) The order of retelling for Tunisian learners: FrL2 first then TAL1.

³⁶For more details about the transcription conventions, visit <http://semtalk.talkbank.org/arabictranscription.htm>

³⁷ <http://www.softpedia.com/get/Multimedia/Video/Other-VIDEO-Tools/Subtitle-Workshop.shtml>

(vii) The seventh independent variable that was coded to classify the data is the duration of stay of the learners in France.

All the retellings were segmented into propositional units: they correspond in most of the cases to the formal unit of a clause. They correlate with events at the conceptual level or states (for descriptions).

As for the dependent variables, they are listed in the following:

(i) Coding of grammatical aspect used in every proposition (Perfective, imperfective, progressive, perfect, prospective (see Table 5 above for the definitions))

(ii) Coding of all the devices used to express on-goingness: marked forms and unmarked forms

(iii) Coding of lexical content in every proposition (0-State, 1-State or 2-State contents)

(iv) Coding of the main structure and the side structure utterances in each retelling.

(v) Coding of the type of temporal relation expressed:

→ Presence / absence of *Sim* explicit markers

→ Presence / absence of Sequentiality marker

(vi) Classification of retellings according to their types: descriptive accounts or narrations.

2.2. Determining informants' learner varieties

As mentioned before, we have selected for our data collection two groups of informants. The first group (L-educated) is composed of speakers whose acquisition of French is untutored, as it has taken place in a non-guided context without previous instruction. The second one (H-educated), is composed of advanced learners who have learned FrL2 first through instruction, then have been exposed to input in spontaneous context of learning when they immigrated to work or study in France. The following criteria give an overview of the two profile groups.

Table 17. Profiles of group informants

Characteristics	H-educated	L-educated
- Guided acquisition, input provided through instruction	+	-
- Non-guided acquisition, input provided in natural context)	+	+
- Metalinguistic knowledge	+	-
- Education (primary level)	+	+
- Education (university level)	+	-

Notes: «+» means that the characteristic applies, «-» means that it does not

Nevertheless, this classification into two distinct groups does not inform about the learner varieties of our informants. In each informant group, they share many characteristics and conditions of acquisition of the language, but further analyses on their actual productions are needed in order to establish the different learner varieties to which each one of them belongs.

For these analyses, we use the different descriptions of learner varieties which are complementary and which give a clear sketch of the main L2 acquisitional stages. The first description is the one that resulted from the ESF project, and was reported in many studies (Bhardwaj et al. 1988; Dietrich et al. 1995; Klein & Perdue 1992; Klein & Perdue 1997; Perdue 1993a; Perdue 1993b). We also use the description of the intermediate, advanced and near native varieties made to enrich the description of the acquisitional stages beyond the basic variety (Bartning 1997; Bartning 2009; Bartning 2009; Bartning & Schlyter 2004). Table 7 and Table 8 summarised in Table 18 below present in detail the general tendencies of learner varieties at each stage, pre-basic variety, basic variety, intermediate variety, and low advanced variety, medium advanced, high advanced and near-native varieties. The table provides a checklist against which all the productions by each informant were carefully examined in two stages: First, we have examined the expression of temporality, then discourse organisation.

Table 18. Checklist for general tendencies of learner varieties

	Temporal marking	Discourse organisation
Stage 1 Pre-basic varieties	Nominal structuring	“Calendric” noun phrases
	No verbal morphology	
	No inflexion	
Stage 2 Basic variety	Infinite utterance organisation	“Calendric” devices
	Verbs: 'base' forms, i.e., verb forms used with no verb inflection or unclear morphology as an unchanged form	Variety of adverbials
	No tense / aspect marking	Principle of Natural Order
Stage 3 Intermediate Stage	Appropriate use of past tenses	Development of subordination (causal, temporal, relative...)
	Use of periphrastic future	
	Subjunctive	
	Temporal subordinate clauses	
Stage 4 Advanced low stage	Appearance of more complex structures: <i>conditionnel</i> , <i>plus-que-parfait</i> , and <i>subjonctif</i>	Diversification of connectors
		Overuse of <i>parce que</i> and <i>mais</i>
Stage 5 Advanced medium stage	Inflectional morphology still developing	Relatives with <i>dont</i>
		Appearance of <i>gérondif</i>
Stage 6 Advanced high stage	Stabilised inflectional morphology, appropriate use of forms	Native-like use of <i>enfin</i> and <i>donc</i>
		Capacity to manage many informational levels in an utterance
		Native-like use of macro-structural relatives
Stage 7 Very advanced / Near - native variety	Influence of L1 in conceptualisation of temporal distinctions	Native-like use of discourse connectors

All the informants’ productions were assessed with relation to the criteria from the checklist. The analyses were based on the frequency of forms. For instance, in Table 19 and Table 20 below the symbols used mean the following information: / - /suggests that the specific feature does not

occur in any of the productions. / ± / means that the feature appears but its frequency is feeble and noticeably unstable. For example, the symbol / ± / for tense / aspect marking indicates that some temporal and aspectual marking is used but not consistently, as some other verbs are found in a '*base*'- like form, without inflection. The symbol / + / is used when a feature is present and stable in the informants' productions. The results of the analyses are displayed in the tables below.

Table 19. Detailed analysis of the informants' use of devices to express temporality

	A8	A3	A1	A4	A5	A6	A2	A12	A11	A10	A13	A7	A9	A01	A04	A02	A03	A05	A06
Nominal structuring	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
'base' forms , no verb inflection	+	±	±	+	+	-	±	-	-	-	±	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Verbal morphology	±	±	±	±	±	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Tense / aspect marking	-	±	±	±	±	+	±	±	+	+	±	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Appropriate use of past tenses	-	±	-	-	-	-	±	±	±	+	±	+	+	±	+	+	+	+	+
Use of periphrastic future	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	+
Subjunctive	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
Temporal subordinate clauses	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	±	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Complex structures: <i>conditionnel, plus-que parfait, and subjonctif</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
Stabilised inflectional morphology, appropriate use of forms	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+
Correct use of grammar but zones of clear difference from natives (choice, use of forms...)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	±	±	+	+	+	+
Acquisitional stage	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	6-7	6-7

Table 20. Detailed analysis of the informants' use of connectors and discourse organisation devices

	L-educated													H-educated					
	A8	A3	A4	A5	A10	A11	A12	A13	A1	A2	A6	A7	A9	A01	A04	A02	A03	A05	A06
Calendaric noun phrases	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Use of a variety of adverbials	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Reliance on PNO	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	±	±	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Use of subordination (causal, temporal, relative...)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	±	±	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Diversification of connectors	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Overuse of <i>parce que</i> and <i>mais</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Relatives with <i>dont</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
Use of <i>Gérondif</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
native-like use of <i>enfin</i> and <i>donc</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Capacity to manage many informational levels in an utterance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	±	+	+	+	+	+
Native-like use of macro-structural relatives	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+
Native-like use of discourse connectors	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+

Table 19 reveals that some features indicate the informants' actual acquisitional stage. The analyses corroborate the information about the educational profiles. In fact, regarding their acquisitional stages, the informants belonging to L-educated and H-educated groups could be placed on a continuum where the most advanced of L-educated group (A9) belongs to Stage 4 (Low advanced stage in Bartning & Schlyter's (2004) classification; whereas, the least advanced informants in H-educated group (A01 and A04) belong to Stage 5 (Medium advanced stage).

Three of our L-educated informants' variety is the *basic variety* as described in the ESF project or somewhere in the beginning of the *post initial stage* as described in Bartning & Schlyter (2004).

What separates the *basic variety* from the subsequent learner varieties is finiteness (Klein 2006; Klein & Perdue 1992; Klein & Perdue 1997), or the presence of the finiteness category as put by Klein (2006, p.250)

«The Basic Variety is a remarkably efficient communicative system which exploits the lexical content of verbs and adopts a simple constraint of information structure. What is completely absent; however, are 'finite' verb forms. These are developed by only two thirds of the forty learners investigated in the project, and this development is very complex and varies from language pair to language pair. It is not just a matter of inflectional morphology: the acquisition of finiteness also leads to a major restructuring of learner language. »

Finiteness (FIN) carries assertion and tense as defined by Klein (2006, p.265):

«Finiteness serves (a) to mark that the sentence base is assertion-marked (with positive polarity), and (b) to mark how the topic time is related to the time of utterance. »

The production of A8, A1 and A5 share common traits, though they differ with respect to the lexicon, thus showing some individual variation. Indeed, A8's variety is more 'basic' than the other two informants'. The latter seem about to go beyond the basic variety to a subsequent stage, as they manifest attempts to use more productive means, such as compound predicates and subordination. We illustrate the differences between the three informants in Stage 2 by a

comparative table of all verbal forms used by A8, A1 and A5:

Table 21. Inventory of all verb forms used by A8, A1 and A5 in FrL2

Infinitive in the TL	A8	A1	A5
<i>aller</i> (to go)	va		
<i>asseoir(s')</i> (to sit)	asie, azite		
<i>attendre</i> (to wait)		atě	
<i>boire</i> (to drink)		bwa	trã + bwa
<i>chanter</i> (to sing)	Sât leSât	Sât	
<i>couper</i> (to cut)	kupe	lekupe	
<i>danser</i> (to dance)	dās ledāse ledās	dās	dāse dās
<i>dire</i> (to say)	di		
<i>donner</i> (to give)	fe-done ledale		
<i>dormir</i> (to sleep)	dormi		dor
<i>écouter</i> (to listen)			lekut
<i>entendre</i> (to hear)		mātā	
<i>faire</i> (to do)	fet	fe fet lfet	fet
<i>lire</i> (to read)	li	li	
<i>manger</i> (to eat)	lemāZ	māZ	larete-māZe
<i>monter</i> (to go up)		mo~te	
<i>ouvrir</i> (to open)	liuvr		
<i>partir</i> (to leave)	pa:ti		
<i>pleurer</i> (to cry)	eleplər	plør	komāse-plere
<i>pousser</i> (to push)	lepus		
<i>prendre</i> (to take)		prã	prã
<i>preparer</i> (to prepare)			prepare trê-prepare
<i>regarder</i> (to watch)	pa-regarde regard	Ze-rəgarde, lerəgarde rəgarde	rgarde trê--rgarde, komās-rgardE, komāse-a-garde
<i>retourner(se)</i> (to turn)	letur		
<i>réveiller</i> (to wake)			revej lepa-reveje
<i>sonner</i> (to ring)			sason
<i>sortir</i> (to go out)		sorti	

Infinitive in the TL	A8	A1	A5
<i>toucher</i> (to touch)			ãtuSe
<i>venir</i> (to come)	vjě	vjen	vjě
<i>voler</i> (to steal)	levole		
Number of verbs used	18	15	14
Other phenomena	4 nominal sentences	1 nominal proposition + use of onomatopoeia	Presence of compound verbs

As shown in the table, the verb forms used by the three informants present features that point out the fact that A8 speech production shows a more ‘basic’ variety than and A5’s and A1’s. First, four of A8’s propositions are nominal, though the intonation shows the informant’s awareness of the necessity of inserting a verbal element. Here are examples of the ellipses [Ø]:

(35) A8, *Birds*

/&lemadam &dās/.

et le monsieur /&Sāt/ avec le piano et le /&kamãZa/ [violin].

u /&pa:ti/.

++ [Ø] /&kamãZa/.

/&nopa/ [Ø] ++ /&kamãZa/

et /&ledam &ledās/.

(36) A8, *Breakfast*

hm le le monsieur [Ø] dans la cuisine.

hm [Ø] ++ la crêpe /&prěsip/ [en principe].

et et /&lemadam/ &ledāse &ledās/.

/&dās/ avec le musique le piano /&prěsip/.

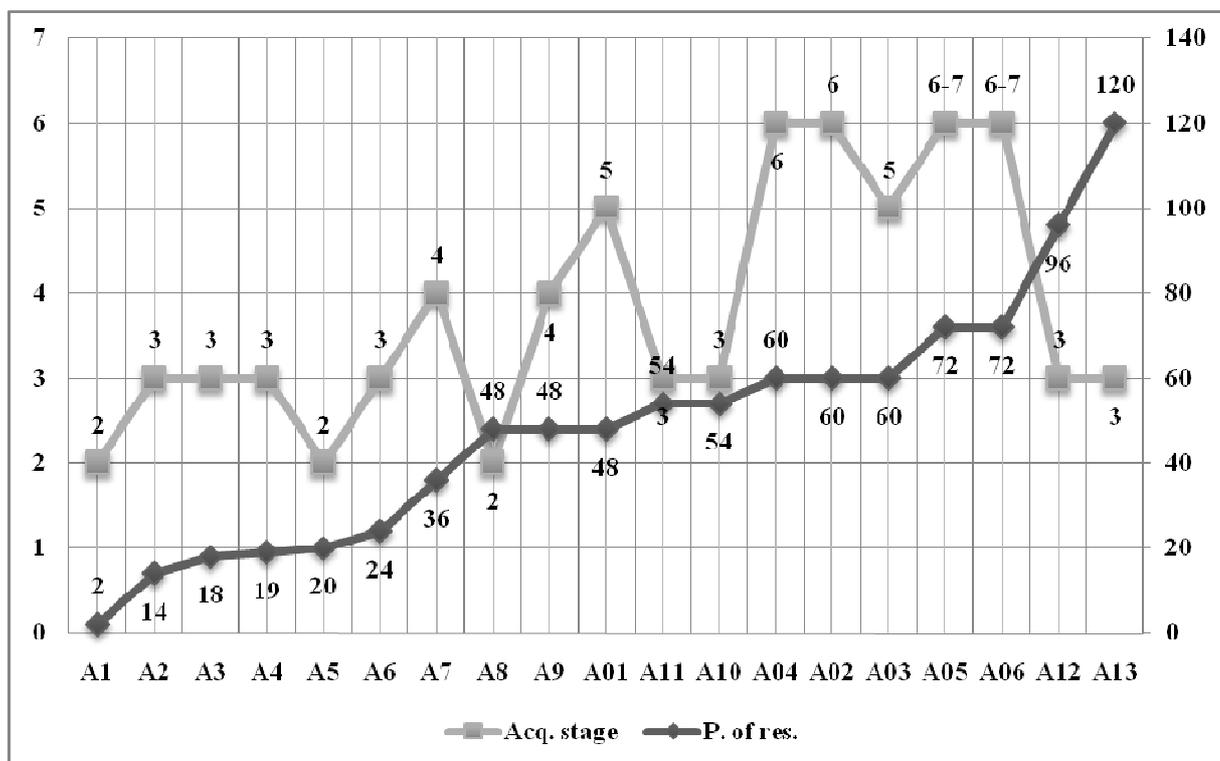
While the proposition «*hm le le monsieur [Ø] dans la cuisine*» and its missing verbal element recalls a possible structure in TAL1 of the verbless clause, the other elliptical elements are marked as the informant expresses hesitation and awareness of a gap she is unable to fill with the desired word. Furthermore, no auxiliary use is recorded in her variety or functional verb inflexion. Indeed, she tries different forms of the same verb (as /dās/, /ledās/, and /ledāse/ in (36)). The variation however is not very strong and concerns a few verbs only. In addition, the form variation concerns both the beginning and end of the form, as it was observed in the productions of Abdelmalek, a Moroccan informant of the ESF project (cf. Perdue (1993b) and Véronique (2000)). Abdelmalek’s form variation was puzzling as compared to the other informants of the project. It presented the same type of variation we find in our informants’ productions in Stage 2.

We observe the attempt of A1 to use most frequently bare stems (V, e.g., /fe/) or the stem with a prefix or a suffix or both (Ve, e.g., /fet/, /lfet/)³⁸. A1 attempts a form comparable to the *passé composé* of the verb *regarder* ‘to watch’. He builds up hypotheses about the use of prefix varying it with /lerəgarde/ or /rəgarde/. Most of the other forms used correspond to the stem form of verbs (V) in Standard French. In his variety, simple subordination with the relative pronoun *qui* is frequently used. A5 attempts complex constructions containing “boundary markers”. They are defined by Perdue (1993b, p.106) as “words, (normally verb forms) marking the beginning and the end of some situation such as start, finish”. A5 uses non-finite forms of verbs to attempt the construction «*commencer à V*» ‘to begin to V’ or *arrêter*, or internal phase with the use of a rote form of «*en train de*».

The majority of our L-informants are in the intermediate stage. Table 20, which displays a detailed account of the use of connecting devices by each informant, supports the stages identified in Table 19. In fact, while the majority of informants in the L-educated group share the same features as far as connectors are concerned, A9 (who is at stage 4 and has therefore a separate profile from the others in his group) shows use of more diversified connectors and of subordination. What is worth noting however is that the period of residence in France does not necessarily reflect the acquisitional stage of a particular informant in either group. The following graph shows that some informants differentiate from the general tendency establishing a connection between the period of residence and the acquisitional stage.

³⁸ The notation is taken from Perdue (1993b, pp.100-101).

Figure 6. Acquisitional stages and length of residence



Abbreviations: Acq. stage = acquisitional stage; P. of res. = period of residence (in months)

The general tendency is disrupted by A5, A8, A11, A12 and A13. Even though A8 had spent 4 years in France at the time of the recordings, she was completely isolated from French-speaking contexts. According to her answer to the informal questionnaire, she hardly went out or made any friends for 4 years due to the linguistic barrier and also to her family circumstances. She had managed around the time of her recording to find a place in a language school for immigrants and had started to take lessons. Consequently, being in France for 4 years prior to the data collection did not correlate with a better fluency in French than the other informants who arrived later in France. As for A12 (8 years of residence) and A13 (10 years of residence), they represent fossilization cases. They are informants who failed to develop their language competence beyond a certain stage (here, the intermediate variety) despite their long residence in France. These informants have common features: they are very little exposed to the L2. They work in Arabic-speaking environments (*Arab salon de thé*) spending most of the day in the same

neighbourhoods (*rue de Couronnes*, Paris). Their use of French is rare in their everyday life.

2.4. Analysing vocabulary diversity

In order to analyse the vocabulary diversity in each retelling and by each informant, we used the *vodc* software. This software is the most recent development to quantify vocabulary diversity (McKee *et al.* 2000). Before that, researchers have long relied on the calculation of the ratio of different words (Types) to total words (Tokens) generally called the *Type-Token Ratio* (TTR). As demonstrated by McKee *et al.* (2000, p.3), the TTR measurement is flawed as the sample size, i.e., the number of words can bias it. Conversely, the *vodc* software gives more reliable results as the vocabulary diversity index is calculated using random sampling from the text under investigation.

«The *vodc* program was developed to overcome these problems as part of the project “A new research tool: mathematical modelling in the measurement of vocabulary diversity”. The approach is based on an analysis of the probability of new vocabulary being introduced into longer and longer samples of speech or writing. This yields a mathematical model of how TTR varies with token size. By comparing the mathematical model with empirical data in a transcript, it provides a new measure of vocabulary diversity that we refer to as D. The measure has three advantages: it is not a function of the number of words in the sample; it uses all the data available; it is more informative because, as opposed to a single value of TTR, it represents how the TTR varies over a range of token size for each speaker or writer (i.e. it is based on the TTR versus token curve calculated from data for the transcript as a whole rather than a particular TTR value on it). D has been shown to be superior to previous measures in both avoiding the inherent flaw in raw TTR with varying sample sizes and in discriminating across a wide range of language learners and users.» (McKee *et al.* 2000, p.3)

We calculated the *vodc* using the CHAT programme.

2.5. Analysing narrative complexity

As for measuring narrative complexity, we have been inspired by a framework recently developed by Petersen *et al.* (2008) to measure the narrative capacities of literate people as

opposed to illiterate people. This framework accounts for a set of criteria that are necessary for building a narrative text. Many of those are strongly inspired by the Labovian narrative structure. We find this framework very relevant to our analyses as it can quantify our retellings in terms of whether they can be considered as narrations or not. Furthermore, it gives details about the main structure and side structures of the narrations (the idea of progression on the time line). Last, it allows for giving details about the core components used to build the oral productions, in terms of which situations of the stimuli were actually included or not. We present the criteria and our adaptation of the model in Table 22 below.

Table 22. Coding narrative complexity: main criteria for assessing narrative complexity adapted from Petersen et al. (2008, pp.122-126)

Narrative element	0 Points	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points
Character	No character	Only one character included	Two characters non-introduced	Two characters both introduced
Setting	No reference	Reference to a general place or time	One or more references to specific places or times	
Initiating event	no initiating event stated	at least one stated event or problem but no response stated	At least one stated event or problem that elicits a response from the character(s)	Two or more stated events or problems that elicit a response from the character(s)
Internal response	No overt statement about psychological state	One overt statement about a character's psychological state	One or more statements about a character's psychological state	
Plan	No overt statement about any plan	One overt statement about a character's psychological state not causally related to an event /problem	Two overt statements about a character's psychological state that might solve an event /problem	Three or more overt statements about a character's psychological state that might solve an event /problem
Action/attempt	No actions taken	Actions taken not directly related to the initiating event	Attempts taken directly related to the initiating event	
Complication	No complication	One complication that prohibits a plan or action from being accomplished	Two distinct complications that prohibit a plan or action from being accomplished	
Consequence	No consequence	One consequence	Two consequences	Three or more
Formulaic markers	No formulaic markers	One	Two or more	

Temporal markers	No temporal markers	One	Two or more	
Causal adverbial clauses	No causal adverbial clauses	One	Two or more	
Knowledge of dialogue	No dialogue	One character makes a comment or statement	Two or more engage in a conversation	
Narrator evaluations	No evaluations	One	Two or more	

These criteria were applied to every oral production we gathered in the data collection. Each one received as a consequence a number that stands for its Index of Narrative Complexity (INC). The higher the index, the richer and the more complex the narrative is. This analysis could help clarify whether or not a certain retelling could be qualified as a narrative. Indeed, the descriptive accounts received the lowest scores on INC analyses.

2.6. Conclusion on data analysis

For our purposes in this study, we tried to gather different tools supporting both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data. Our tools allow us to have a detailed picture of the general tendencies and frequencies of different features of our data, as well as of the individual variations. Different statistical tests were also used to verify our hypothesis. We explain the statistical means together with the results, which is the subject matter of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3. OUR FINDINGS

3.0. Introduction

We report here in detail on our findings. The chapter is organised as follows. The first section presents the results of our quantitative analyses. We account then for the general characteristics of the retellings of simultaneous situations. This includes length, vocabulary diversity and general complexity. In the second section, we tackle in details the use of on-goingness devices in expressing simultaneity. We focus on the devices at the proposition level then the larger discourse level.

**Section 1. Relating simultaneous events:
Quantitative analyses of retellings in TAL1,
FrL1 and FrL2**

3.1.0. Introduction

In this section, we look at the general quantitative characteristics of all the retellings produced by each group of informants regardless of the type of simultaneity in the stimuli. We aim by these quantitative accounts to give the general characteristics of the retellings produced by each group of informants performing the same verbal task: to retell what happened in each video presenting simultaneous situations.

The different analyses conducted for TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 retellings deal with the following features: (1) the length of the retellings produced, (2) the diversity of the lexicon used to complete the retellings and (3) the narrative complexity of the oral productions. We report on the results of the analyses of each feature separately. We start each part with an explanation of the tools used for analysis. We include in our report a comparison of the languages under investigation. We conclude for each language group with an attempt to characterise the retellings generated. For the first languages we study, TAL1, and FrL1, we present our findings for the two groups of informants classified as Low educated and Highly educated with regard to the instruction they had generally received prior to our data collection. As the analysis will reveal, the education variable is discriminating in determining the types of retellings produced. As for our L2 informants, we present the results according to both the profile groups and to the acquisitional stages identified above, i.e., to the learner varieties of the informants. We start our presentation with the overall length of retellings.

3.1.1. Length of the retellings of simultaneous situations

As we mentioned, our informants have different profiles. In order to compare the way they completed the verbal task, we started by examining the length of the productions. For each language group, we calculated the number of propositions produced in each retelling using the *mlt* command in Clan³⁹ software. The presence of a verb in a proposition is not a condition, as our analysis accounts for verbless clauses in TAL1, and in nominal propositions produced by learners in earlier acquisitional stages.

We therefore obtained details about the total number of propositions produced by each informant, and for each video by all informants in a certain group, and allowed therefore the comparison of the overall characteristics of the retellings. The central tendency of length of retellings per informant and per video was also calculated.

3.1.1.1. TAL1

As a reminder, the two H-educated and L-educated TAL1 groups are composed of six and thirteen informants respectively. Table 23 below displays the average number of propositions (\bar{x}) produced by all TAL1 informants for each video. As we can see, the average length of the retellings does not necessarily correspond to the length of the visual stimuli showed to the informants, but with the properties of the situations involved, in particular with the degree of their composition. For example, the informants produce longer retellings for *Kabaret* and *Wakeup*, where bounded short situations successively take place. However, For *Birds* or *Earthsea*, consisting of two on-going situations sharing the same time interval, the retellings produced are shorter.

³⁹ CHILDES programme.

Table 23. Average number of propositions produced by TAL1 informants

Video	Length of the video	\bar{x} of propositions per retelling
Kabaret	2'30"	16.26
Breakfast	1'14"	7.89
Earthsea	1'09"	7.36
Wakeup	1'08"	12.83
Fire	29"	8.15
Birds	28"	5.53
Salmon	26"	9.05
Soup	16"	7.73

Measuring the central tendency of the retelling for each video reveals clear differences between the two groups of informants; L-educated (A1-A13) and H-educated (A01-A06) (see Table 24 below).

Table 24. Length of the TAL1 retellings in terms of number of propositions and words produced by each informant

	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Birds</i>	<i>Earthsea</i>	<i>Kabaret</i>	<i>Wakeup</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>Salmon</i>	<i>Soup</i>	Σ propositions
A01	7	10	11	43	17	15	12	12	127
A02	14	9	10	18	15	14	12	11	103
A03	4	4	5	13	14	8	5	7	60
A04	10	7	8	19	19	10	16	9	98
A05	12	16	15	37	23	15	22	18	158
A06	8	4	7	9	11	5	8	7	59
H- educated \bar{x}	9.17	8.33	9.33	23.17	16.50	11.17	12.50	10.67	100.83
A1	2	3	7	10	15	11	8	10	66
A2	5	5	2	5	8	5	3	7	40
A3	3	3	3	8	6	5	2	1	31
A4	7	6	12	8		6	8	7	54
A5	6	3	5	7	11	4	6	6	48
A6	4	9	11	19	12	7	7	10	79
A7	3	6	5	20	13	8	9	7	71
A8	16	2	8	26	13	10	9	5	89
A9	23	4	7	31	16	10	22	11	124
A10	11	5	7	6	10	3	4	4	50
A11	9	2	9	11	9	8	9	7	64

	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Birds</i>	<i>Earthsea</i>	<i>Kabaret</i>	<i>Wakeup</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>Salmon</i>	<i>Soup</i>	Σ propositions
A12	3	2	6	5	4	5	4	3	32
A13	3	5	2	14	15	6	6	5	56
L- educated \bar{x}	7.31	4.23	6.46	13.08	11.00	6.77	7.46	6.38	61.85

The H-educated group produced longer retellings for each video than the L-educated one. In fact, the \bar{x} of propositions by all H-educated informants is 100.83, that of L-educated informants is 61.85 propositions. Some informants in either group present a clear divergence though. We notice the case of A03 ($\Sigma = 60$) and A06 ($\Sigma = 59$) in H-educated group, and A9 ($\Sigma = 124$) in L-educated one. As we will see later in the analysis of their L2 productions, this divergence reveals interesting cases of individual variation among informants. Nevertheless, it does not make the general tendency of informants in each group less remarkable. In fact, the H-educated group clearly produces longer retellings than the L-educated one even though both groups are speaking in their L1 under similar circumstances. We will see that FrL1 retellings present similar tendencies as far as their length is concerned.

3.1.1.2. FrL1

As a reminder, our FrL1 informants are comparable to our TAL1 ones in the sense that they were chosen to belong to two groups: H-educated group and L-educated group. The former is composed of five informants (coded as F01 \rightarrow F05) who have completed university education in economic and business sectors (BAC + 4, and BAC +5). They all occupy positions of high responsibility working as consultants in *Sofrecom*, a branch of the telecommunication company *France Telecom*. The L-educated group however is composed of six French native speakers (coded as F1 \rightarrow F6) who have had limited schooling and who are manual workers in different sectors, such as catering. **Table 25** gives the average number of propositions (\bar{x}) produced for each video FrL1 retelling. The longer retellings are not necessarily those that retell the longer videos.

Table 25. Average number of propositions produced in FrL1 retellings of each video

Video	Length of the video	\bar{x} of propositions
Kabaret	2'30"	18.82
Breakfast	1'14"	9.77
Earthsea	1'09"	11.43
Wakeup	1'08"	13.7
Fire	29"	8.87
Birds	28"	7.27
Salmon	26"	7.37
Soup	16"	8.25

The difference noted in the average length of the retellings can be explained by the divergence in duration as well as in constituency of the situations of each video of the visual stimuli. Furthermore, when we examine the total number of propositions as well as the total number of words produced by each informant, we notice clear distinctions between the productions of our two groups of informants (See Table 26).

Table 26. Length of the retellings in terms of number of propositions and words by each informant

H-educated	Breakfast	Birds	Earthsea	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Fire	Wakeup	Total
F01	15	7	9	21	13	9	7	14	95
F02	24	10	15	47	17	9	10	23	155
F03	4	6	9	9	4	10	11	8	61
F04	11	10	14	23	13	12	14	15	115
F05	12	8	14	19	5	15	10	17	100
H-educated \bar{x}	13.2	8.2	12.2	23.8	10.4	11	10	15.4	105.2
F1	3	2	7	9	4	4	3	8	40
F2	5	3	6	13	4	4	4	11	50
F3	4	4	4	5	3	3	3	9	35
F4	10	5	17	16	7	8	7	17	87
F5	9	10	7	20	3	8	15	9	81
F6	7	14	23	20	5	6	12	18	105
L-educated \bar{x}	6.33	6.33	10.67	13.83	4.33	5.50	7.33	12.00	66.33

In fact, the average number (\bar{x}) of propositions reveals that the H-educated group produced significantly longer retellings: while the average number of propositions by informant in that group is $\bar{x} = 105.2$, that of L-educated informants is $\bar{x} = 66.33$ propositions.

3.1.1.3. FrL2

FrL2 retellings further confirm that the length of an average retelling depends on the complexity of situations involved in each video.

Table 27. Average number of propositions in FrL2 per video

Video	Length of the video	\bar{x} of propositions
Kabaret	2'30"	13
Breakfast	1'14"	7
Earthsea	1'09"	6
Wakeup	1'08"	13
Fire	29"	8
Birds	28"	5
Salmon	26"	8
Soup	16"	7

Table 28. Length of FrL2 retellings in terms of number of propositions and words

	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Birds</i>	<i>Earthsea</i>	<i>Kabaret</i>	<i>Salmon</i>	<i>Soup</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>Wakeup</i>	Σ propositions
A01	12	8	8	21	13	4	13	11	90
A02	9	10	12	18	16	15	9	19	108
A03	3	5	4	16	9	5	10	19	71
A04	12	6	8	21	10	6	10	17	90
A05	14	11	10	30	11	12	12	27	127
A06	6	4	5	11	11	9	9	12	67
H-educated	9.33	7.33	7.83	19.50	11.67	8.50	10.50	17.50	92.17
A1	3	2	3	8	8	5	8	13	50
A2	6	2	4	5	5	6	6	6	40
A3	2	3	1	5	3	1	4	8	27
A4	5	4	10	10	5	12	5	14	65
A5	3	3	5	6	5	5	5	5	37

	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Birds</i>	<i>Earthsea</i>	<i>Kabaret</i>	<i>Salmon</i>	<i>Soup</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>Wakeup</i>	Σ propositions
A6	7	6	10	18	5	7	7	14	74
A7	3	2	8	9	4	10	9	15	59
A8	4	6	3	6	4	2	8	7	40
A9	10	5	8	21	23	13	8	19	107
A10	13	4	8	7	5	4	5	10	56
A11	4	8	4	12	4	13	11	7	63
A12	6	3	4	7	6	4	6	4	40
A13	5	3	7	12	6	5	6	12	57
L- educated	5.46	3.92	5.77	9.69	6.38	6.69	6.77	10.31	55.00

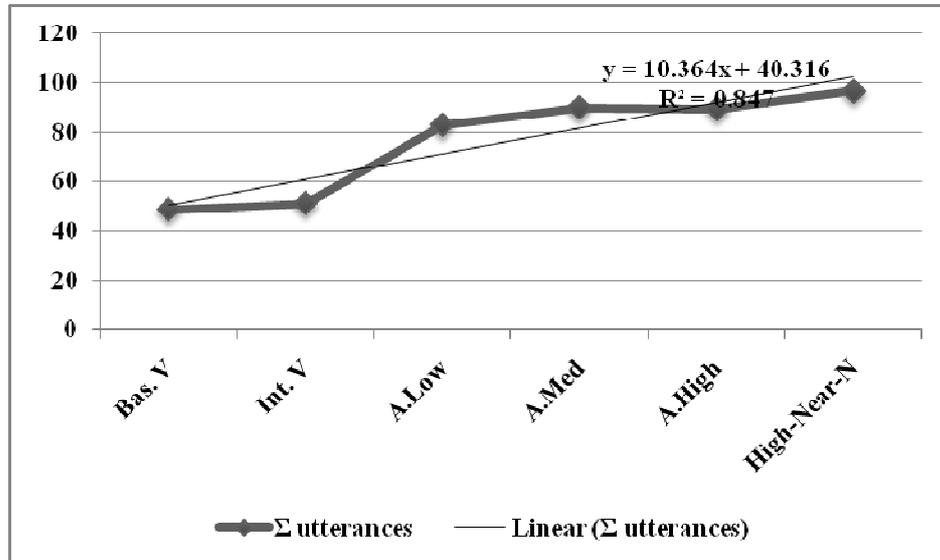
The detailed sketch of the length of FrL2 retellings as provided in Table 28 above shows that L-educated informants generally produced shorter retellings than H-educated informants did. This is not at all surprising or unpredictable given the different learner varieties of the informants in both groups. In Table 29, we calculated the average number of propositions produced at each acquisitional stage:

Table 29. Average Length of FrL2 retellings through the different acquisitional stages

	Breakfast	Birds	Earthsea	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Fire	Wakeup	Σ propositions
\bar{x} Stage 2	4	4	5	9	5	5	6	10	49
\bar{x} Stage 3	7	4	5	9	5	6	7	8	51
\bar{x} Stage 4	7	4	8	15	14	12	9	17	83
\bar{x} Stage 5	12	7	8	21	12	5	12	14	90
\bar{x} Stage 6	6	8	8	17	13	10	10	19	90
\bar{x} Stage 6-7	10	8	8	21	11	11	11	20	97

The informants were classified in terms of the acquisitional stages identified for them as we mentioned above in the data analysis chapter (Part 2, chapter two). An average was calculated for each stage for each video. A summary of the general tendencies is represented in the graph below.

Figure 7. Representation of length of FrL2 retellings across acquisitional stages



Notes: Bas.V = basic variety (Stage 2) / Int.V = intermediate stage (Stage 3) / A.Low = advanced low stage (Stage 4) / A.Med = advanced medium stage (Stage 5) / A.high = advanced high stage (Stage 6) / High-Near-N: high to near-native stage (Stage 6-7)

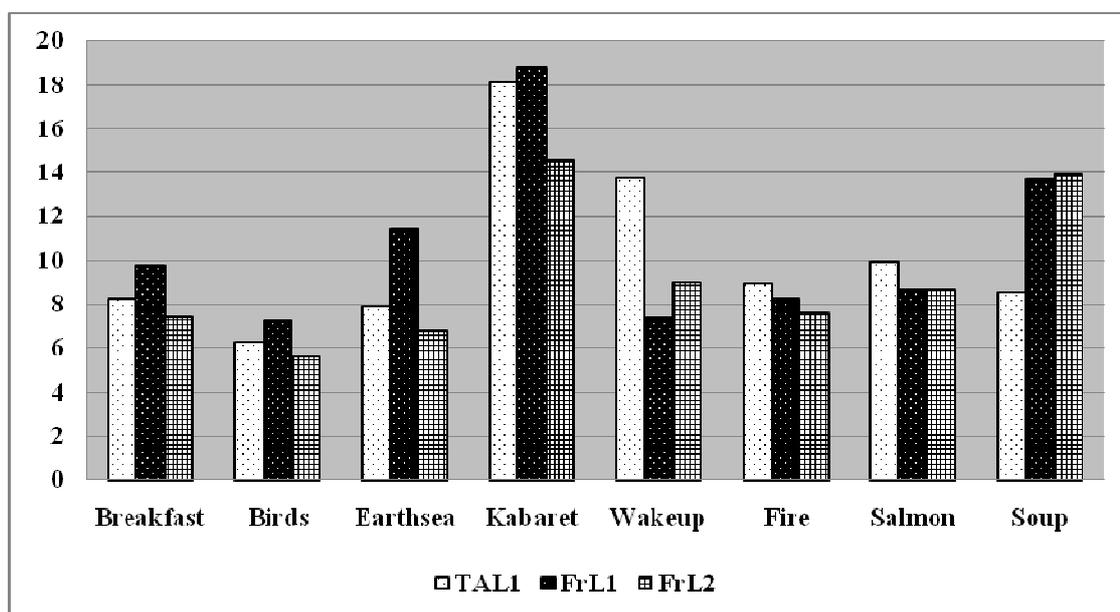
It shows that there is a clear ascending trendline across the acquisitional stages, from the basic variety to the near-native variety. Across these stages, learners use more vocabulary and more propositions to complete a complex verbal task. These claims are further tested by the results of the following quantitative analyses of vocabulary diversity and narrative complexity.

3.1.1.4. Conclusion on the length of retellings in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2

As Figure 8 below shows, the comparison of the average number of propositions produced for each video in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 reveals that the retellings in the three sets differ in length. In the perfect *Sim* videos, FrL1 speakers produce more propositions than Tunisian speakers do in either TAL1 or FrL2. Conversely, French native speakers produce a comparable number or slightly less propositions to construe the videos showing inclusion. In most cases, except in *Soup* retellings, Tunisian speakers produce fewer propositions to complete the task than in their L1 or compared to the native speakers.

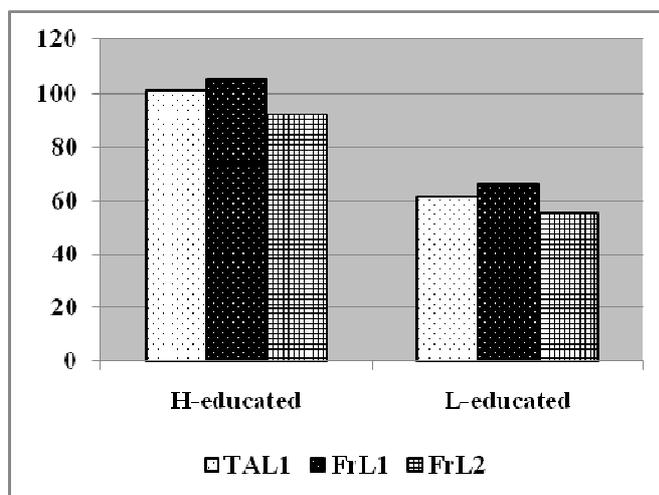
Therefore, we can conclude that the types of simultaneity involved in the videos affect the way speakers go about the task. However there are language-based differences that might explain the differences noted between TAL1 and FrL1 retellings. Furthermore, the shorter number of propositions in FrL2 can be partly explained by the fact that most of our L2 learners are in the basic and intermediate varieties. They are functional in the L2 but with still limited linguistic resources.

Figure 8. Comparison of length of TAL1, FrL2 and FrL1 retellings (average number of propositions)



As the graphs below (Figure 9) shows, the level of education constitutes a discriminating factor as far as the length of the retellings produced is concerned. In fact, regardless of the language, H-educated groups are found to produce longer retellings in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2.

Figure 9. Average number of propositions by H-educated and L-educated groups



We therefore hypothesise that the level of education of informants determines the way they go about retelling simultaneous situations. This hypothesis remains vague for the moment. To refine our hypothesis we turn to reporting on the analyses of the richness of lexicon used in each language.

3.1.2. Analysis of vocabulary diversity (VOCD)

We examine the level of lexical diversity as manifested in native speakers' productions in the L1s and each learner in the two groups (L-educated and H-educated) using the *VOCD* software⁴⁰. We display in our results for each language and learner variety the results of the TTR (Type / Token ratio) measures in addition to the values of the index of the diversity of the lexicon represented by the D parameter (McKee et al. 2000). In fact, we sought to know whether the vocabulary used by L-educated and H-educated to complete the task shows a similar diversity. In order to do this, we compared the means of the two groups in each language and in the learner variety. Therefore, we calculated the central tendency for each group of informants in each language and variety. Furthermore, we tested whether the samples (of the two groups) were significantly different running a t-test. Indeed, this statistical test assesses whether the means of

⁴⁰ The VOCD command can be used on the Clan programme.

two particular groups are statistically different from each other. We did these calculations for three groups of languages under study, TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 respectively.

3.1.2.1. TAL1

Table 30 below summarises the VOCD output, giving the number of tokens, number of types, the TTR and the average VOCD calculated for each informant. The table confirms that measuring VOCD gives a more refined picture of the vocabulary diversity of each informant. Consider for instance, the comparable TTR for A01, A02, or A03, and the different results given when calculating the VOCD.

Table 30. Type Token Ratio and average VOCD of TAL1 informants

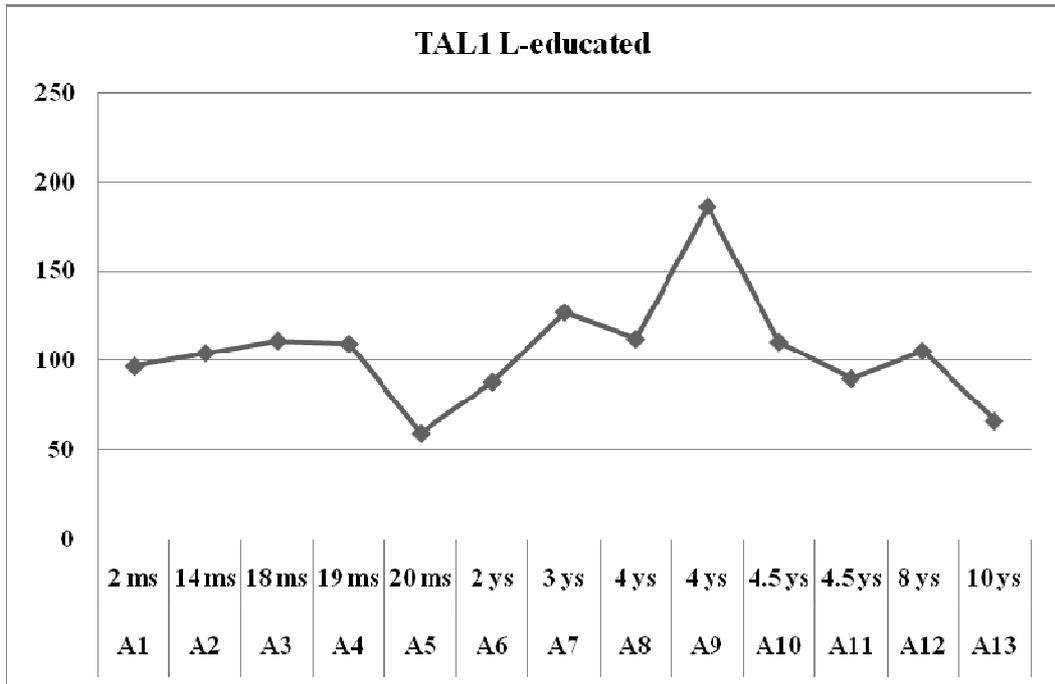
		Types	Tokens	TTR	D optimum average
H-educated	A01	340	510	0.66	215.77
	A02	232	406	0.57	129.34
	A03	134	214	0.62	87.49
	A04	214	395	0.54	103.26
	A05	309	609	0.5	130.74
	A06	143	252	0.56	81.7
	\bar{x}	228.67	397.67	0.58	124.72
L-educated	A1	130	216	0.6	96.48
	A2	103	150	0.68	103.97
	A3	81	112	0.72	110.86
	A4	126	201	0.62	109.21
	A5	107	188	0.56	59.1
	A6	151	257	0.58	87.75
	A7	165	268	0.61	126.79
	A8	182	293	0.62	111.87
	A9	257	437	0.58	186.08
	A10	142	209	0.67	110.15
	A11	167	303	0.55	89.64
	A12	103	147	0.7	105.1
	A13	117	204	0.57	65.86
	\bar{x}	140.85	229.62	0.62	104.84

Overall, the two groups of informants have the following average values of D: 124.72 for H-educated informants and 104.84 for L-educated ones. The average scores indicate that overall,

informants have values generally higher than 100. We wanted to compare the means of the two groups and to assess whether they were statistically different from each other. We therefore administered a t-test, which allows for that. The value of the t-statistic for the t-test was 1.08. This result indicates that the difference between 124.72 and 104.84, the average scores of H and L-educated groups, with standard deviations of 49.08 and 30.85 and sample sizes of 6 and 13, respectively, is not significant at the 5% level (For more a detailed account of results, see Appendix 3).

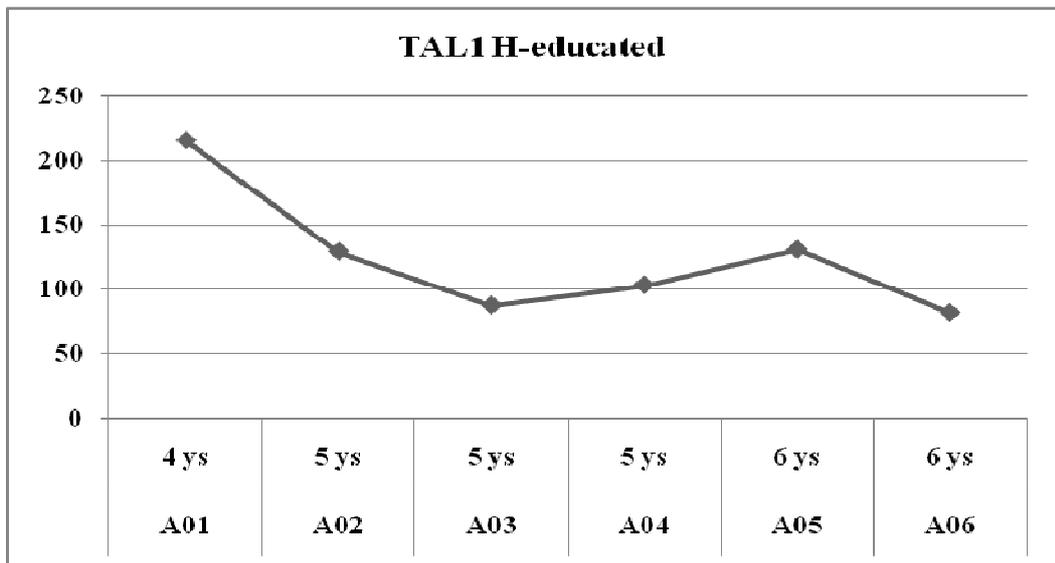
Exceptions however are noteworthy. Consider for instance the case of A03 and A06 in the H-educated group with a D value inferior to 100. It is also the case A13 and A11 in L-educated group. In order to understand why these informants have different scores, we have examined the profile of our informants. What differentiates them is a set of specific features the most important ones for us being: the profession, the period of residence in France, and the contact with and exposure to their mother language. The codes of the informants are assigned according to their period of residence away from their country of origin. We display in the following graph the lexical diversity index as well as the period of residence in France of each informant in the two groups in order to test whether the duration of residence in France could constitute a factor that affects vocabulary diversity.

Figure 10. D values and duration of residence of L-educated TAL1 informants



Notes: ys = years, ms = months

Figure 11. D values and duration of residence of H-educated TAL1 informants



The graphs do not support the hypothesis of a correlation between the period of residence of

informants and the degree of lexical diversity their retellings manifest; neither does it allow seeing any prominent differences in vocabulary diversity between the two groups of informants, despite the clear differences in length of retellings observed earlier.

We hypothesise nevertheless that the lesser contact the informants have with TAL1 could explain their low D scores. For instance, A06 is the informant who has the least or no exposure at all to his mother tongue. He indeed mentioned the lack or inexistence of opportunities for him to get in touch with TAL1 except during the rare and very short holidays he could afford only every other year due to the nature of his job. A03 does not always use TAL1 in everyday conversations with her family or friends⁴¹. Conversely, A01, the informant who has the highest score is a commercial agent who very frequently commutes to Tunisia (nearly every month) to represent her company there.

Despite these individual variations, there is a noticeable overall tendency to have comparable scores among speakers and among groups. It can be therefore concluded that our TAL1 retellings by H-educated and L-educated productions do not differ as far as the lexicon used is concerned in spite of the difference of length noted before. We assume that this can be due to the constraints imposed by the stimuli.

3.1.2.2. FrL1

Similar to the results obtained for TAL1, the VOCD analysis of FrL1 retellings reveals almost no difference between the richness of the lexicon used by H-educated and L-educated groups. Indeed as the average of calculated D values of the L-educated and H-educated groups shows (\bar{x} = 73.67 and 74.24 respectively), the informants use equally diversified vocabulary to complete the verbal task.

⁴¹ A03's original environment in Tunisia is very French-oriented linguistically or culturally. With a mother who teaches French and a father educated in Belgium, the language often used in their house is French.

Table 31. Type Token Ratio and average VOCD of FrL1 informants

Group	Code	Types	Tokens	TTR	VOCD
H-educated	F01	249	679	0.36	74.69
	F02	418	1253	0.33	77.5
	F03	202	445	0.45	89.95
	F04	275	880	0.31	58.22
	F05	260	676	0.38	70.84
	\bar{x}	280.8	786.6	0.366	74.24
L-educated	F1	108	225	0.48	55.75
	F2	158	318	0.49	91.28
	F3	108	224	0.48	66.77
	F4	195	507	0.38	79.39
	F5	204	549	0.37	70.2
	F6	258	724	0.35	78.67
	\bar{x}	171.8333	424.5	0.425	73.67667

The t-value is 0.08. This means that the difference between 74.24 and 73.67 with standard deviations of 11.46554185 and 12.23607399 and sample sizes of 5 and 6, respectively, is not significant at the 5% level (See the detailed results of the t-test in Appendix 3). This confirms that the VOCD analysis reveals no significant difference between the two groups of informants.

3.1.2.3. FrL2

The D-values of FrL2 informants are presented in Table 32. They reveal clear differences between informants belonging to H-educated and L-educated groups. Furthermore, a difference is observed between D-scores across the different acquisitional stages of informants. We present in Table 32 the results of the two groups respectively with details about D-scores of each informant. Then in Figure 12, we calculate average scores for informants in each acquisitional stage, as explained in the methodology section above.

Table 32. Type Token Ratio and average VOCD of FrL2 informants

Group	Code	Types	Tokens	TTR	VOCD
H-educated	A01	233	724	0.32	55.63
	A02	267	855	0.31	76.24
	A03	157	487	0.32	52.41
	A04	199	598	0.33	55.12
	A05	256	991	0.25	58.89
	A06	177	534	0.33	49.66
	\bar{x}	214.83	698.17	0.31	57.99
L-educated	A1	88	231	0.38	33.92
	A2	95	207	0.45	51.96
	A3	83	155	0.53	60.26
	A4	110	419	0.26	31.28
	A5	68	205	0.33	22.88
	A6	103	367	0.28	22.68
	A7	135	399	0.33	42.57
	A8	54	162	0.33	13.48
	A9	217	644	0.33	62.14
	A10	134	403	0.33	47.05
	A11	178	528	0.33	57.54
	A12	117	303	0.38	44.43
	A13	125	364	0.34	36.55
	\bar{x}	115.92	337.46	0.35	40.52

The value of the t-statistic for the t-test is 2.54. This result reveals that the means of L-educated and H-educated groups are statistically different from each other. In fact, the difference between 57.99 and 40.52 with standard deviations of 9.47 and 15.40 based on sample sizes of 6 and 13, respectively, is significant at the 5% level.

Furthermore, the average D score for informants within each learner variety identified before reveals a growth of the lexicon throughout the stages. The details are provided in the following table.

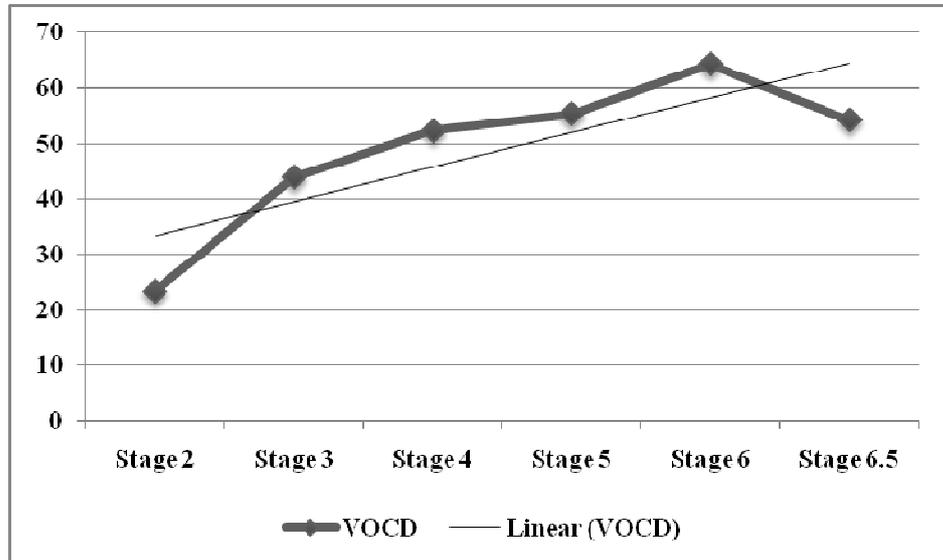
Table 33. D-values in learner varieties

Code	VOCD	Stage	Average
A1	33.92	2	23.42667
A5	22.88		
A8	13.48		
A2	51.96	3	43.96875
A3	60.26		
A4	31.28		
A6	22.68		
A10	47.05		
A11	57.54		
A12	44.43		
A13	36.55	4	52.355
A7	42.57		
A9	62.14	5	55.375
A01	55.63		
A04	55.12	6	64.325
A02	76.24		
A03	52.41	6.5	54.275
A05	58.89		
A06	49.66		

Note: Stage 6.5 stands for the stage between higher advanced and near-native profiles (in between stages 6 and 7)

In Table 33 the FrL2 learners are classified according to their learner varieties identified earlier. At each stage of acquisition identified (from Stage 2 (basic) to Stage 6.5 (the stage between higher advanced variety and near-native profile)), an average D-score was calculated. As Figure 12 below shows, there is a clear growth in the lexicon used in FrL2 across learners at different stages as demonstrated by the ascending trendline in the graph.

Figure 12. VOCD scores across based on the acquisitional profiles identified

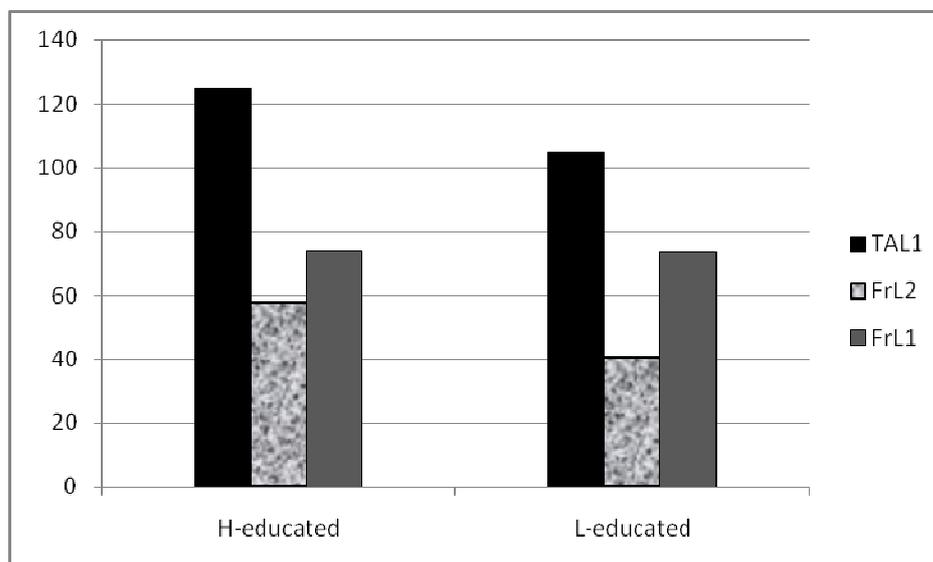


3.1.2.4. Conclusions of VOCD analyses of TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 retellings

The analyses of the vocabulary diversity in each language and learner learner variety do not reveal differences between TAL1 and FrL1 groups regardless of their level of education. However, there is a clear difference of the use of lexicon in L2 learners. This result is quite predictable given the acquisitional stages to which the learners belong.

Comparing the scores of TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 reveals that the TAL1 scores are generally much higher than FrL1 scores. FrL2 productions have lower D-values than TAL1 or FrL1. We furthermore notice that they are closer to FrL1 scores in the H-educated group than in the L-educated one (see Figure 13 below).

Figure 13. VOCD analysis of TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 retellings



To attempt an explanation of this phenomenon, we could hypothesise that Tunisian speakers tend to use more words to tell a story than French native speakers do. We could also assume given the general tendency observed that French could be more synthetic than Tunisian Arabic. The immediate observation that comes to mind is that Tunisian Arabic does not have many verb forms and relies on lexical means to express most of the temporal relations. French, on the contrary has a well-developed morphological system to express temporal values. Furthermore, the connection between the amount and richness of the lexicon used for the task and the cultural traditions our native speakers belong to cannot be disregarded. In fact, it might well explain the differences noted between the three language groups.

The link between speech and culture is generally attested in the literature (Hymes 2001; Masahiko 2002; Ochs & Schieffelin 2001). For instance, it is central to the “constructivist” conception of meaning, and to the concept of “communicative competence” as developed by Hymes (2001). Focusing on child development of language, Masahiko (2002, p.20) points out that

«The acquisition of culture-specific communicative competence (...) plays a critical role in the process of language acquisition and the development of narrative discourse skills. »

Testing those hypotheses is beyond the scope of this research but the finding is interesting with respect to the productions of Tunisian learners of French in their L2. Our findings concerning vocabulary diversity are quite interesting. In fact, L-educated and H-educated groups differ quantitatively (i.e. in length of the retellings) on the same task in TAL1 or FrL1. This gives strong evidence that the level of instruction is a factor that affects speakers' productions on this task regardless of the language used. VOCD analysis reveals that these groups of L-educated and H-educated informants are able to use an equally diversified vocabulary to complete the task in their L1. This leads to the conclusion that if the L-educated use less propositions to complete the task but using as rich a vocabulary as the H-educated group, the difference between their productions stems from differences in the perspectives taken and general choices made by each group to complete the task and not in their language abilities and size of the lexicon.

We now turn to discussing the last feature of our quantitative analyses, the investigation of narrative complexity of the retellings of simultaneous situations.

3.1.3. Analysis of narrative complexity

As mentioned in the data coding section, the retellings were assessed in terms of their complexity using a framework adapted from Petersen *et al.* (2008). Every retelling was given a score corresponding to the index of narrative complexity (INC) measured after assessing a number of criteria (setting up the characters, initiating event, internal response...etc). These criteria are detailed in Table 18 above. In this part, we deal with the results of INC analyses for TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2. The narrative complexity measured against that set of criteria resulted in INC scores. Furthermore, an average score (\bar{x}) was calculated for each informant in both groups. In addition, the variance of scores was calculated using the Standard Deviation measure (σ). These analyses aimed at testing whether the retellings by L-educated and H-educated informants manifested the same narrative complexity. More specifically, we tried to test the following hypothesis for each of our language groups TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2:

H-educated informants' retellings present the same degree of complexity as those by L-educated informants.

In order to compare the two sets of values obtained and to verify this hypothesis, we applied a battery of tests:

1) First of all, we checked if the observed diversity is detected within the same distribution using *Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test*. This test is a general, non-parametric one, i.e., it does not make any assumptions about the underlying distribution of the samples and offers a universal test for the null hypothesis that both samples are drawn from a single population and therefore that their probability distributions are equal, which corresponds to the H_0 as discussed above.

The non-parametric nature of the test is particularly important as, given the small size of the samples and the bounded nature of complexity measure, the normality of the sample might be questionable.

2) Following that, in order to gather further insight into the nature of the phenomena, we applied a parametric, more standard test, *F-test*, to verify whether the variance in the two samples is the same across the videos and the informants. While this test assumes normality of the underlying sample, it offers a ready approach to assess the nature of variance in the underlying data. Indeed, the F-test in a one-way analysis of variance is used to assess whether the expected values of a quantitative variable within several pre-defined groups differ from each other.

3) As the last test, we used a t-test to ensure whether the average complexity measure for the two L-educated and H-educated groups for each language and learner variety is statistically different. While the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test verifies whether the underlying data generating process, as specified by cumulative distribution function is the same, it does not readily allow us to verify the direction of the difference if there is any. The t-test allows for this, at the price of assuming normality of the sample. While this assumption might be questionable for the reasons described above, the use of the t-test is justified to verify the results of the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney non-parametric test and the frequency of its use in SLA research.

It is worth adding that while we focused for FrL1 and TAL1 retellings on the comparison of productions by the two L-educated and H-educated group, we implemented some further analyses for FrL2 productions. In fact, after comparing the two groups, we considered the narrative complexity scores in the light of the acquisitional stages of the informants as identified in the methodology section. In order to study the correlation between INC scores and the learner varieties we used a Pearson's correlation test. This test is the most common measure of correlation (the degree to which variables are related). We therefore used it to find out about the degree of linear relationship between two variables: narrative complexity and learner variety.

3.1.3.1. TAL1

We first display the INC scores calculated for TAL1 retellings in Table 34.

Table 34. TAL1 speakers' narrative complexity scores

		Birds	Breakfast	Earthsea	Fire	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Wakeup	\bar{x}	σ
H-educated	A01	8	6	14	7	14	10	1	16	9.5	5.01
	A02	7	5	9	5	13	9	10	12	8.75	2.96
	A03	6	6	8	5	10	4	5	8	6.5	2
	A04	4	6	13	7	14	9	6	13	9	3.85
	A05	11	6	7	6	10	11	9	13	9.125	2.59
	A06	3	5	6	6	8	5	5	10	6	2.14
	\bar{x}	6.5	5.67	9.5	6	11.5	8	6	12	8.15	-
	σ	2.88	0.51	3.27	0.89	2.51	2.82	3.22	2.751	1.50	-
L-educated	A1	3	2	3	3	3	4	4	10	4	2.51
	A2	2	4	4	2	7	4	5	8	4.5	2.14
	A3	3	4	5	8	8	3	2	6	4.875	2.29
	A4	5	5	5	7	8	7	7	0	5.5	2.51
	A5	3	5	7	3	5	4	5	7	4.875	1.55
	A6	3	4	4	5	12	5	8	11	6.5	3.42
	A7	6	5	4	3	12	4	5	9	6	3.02
	A8	3	4	9	4	13	6	4	11	6.75	3.77
	A9	4	6	6	3	17	12	6	10	8	4.69
	A10	3	3	2	1	10	6	3	6	4.25	2.92

		Birds	Breakfast	Earthsea	Fire	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Wakeup	\bar{x}	σ
	A11	5	5	7	3	6	9	3	10	6	2.56
	A12	3	3	4	6	3	3	5	5	4	1.19
	A13	4	4	6	4	12	6	3	11	6.25	3.41
	\bar{x}	3.62	4.15	5.08	4.00	8.92	5.62	4.62	8	5.50	-
	σ	1.12	1.07	1.89	2	4.19	2.57	1.71	3.19	1.22	-

The implementation of the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test gave the test statistic of $U_A = 70.5$ with the critical values being 16.5 (lower limit) and 62 (upper limit) and 12 and 66 at 5 and 1 percent significance levels. Given that the test statistic is higher than the upper critical values at both standard significance levels, the null hypothesis of informants with high and low educational profile producing retellings with the same degree of complexity can be rejected. Therefore, we conclude that the complexity measures of H-educated and L-educated samples come from different distributions.

The probability value corresponding to the F- test statistic is 51%. Compared against the 5% of significance level, it does not give support for rejecting the null hypothesis of variances of both samples being not statistically different. We have analysed the in-sample variance across informants for particular videos and confirmed that, with the exception of one video (*Birds*), in all cases the null hypothesis of equal variances across H-educated and L-educated sample cannot be rejected. This supports the hypothesis that the variance in complexity measures results from the informants rather than the nature of the scenes. This does not mean that the particularities of the scenes and notably the type of *Sim* they involve do not affect the way informants retell the situations involved. Indeed, its influence is indeed observed in both groups with the same degree of variance between them.

We shall return to discussing the types of retellings with relation to the type of *Sim* in the conclusion of this section.

Given the group averages and Standard Deviation (σ) reported in the table above, the unpaired t-

test for the significance of the difference between the means gave the value of the t-statistic of 4.12. In fact, the difference between 8.15 (average for H-educated) and 5.50 (average for L-educated) with standard deviations of 1.50 and 1.22 respectively, is significantly different from zero at the 5% level. We conclude, based on the values of the standard deviation, that the dispersion in the complexity of narratives is higher among H-educated speakers.

3.1.3.2. FrL1

The same criteria used for TAL1 retellings are applied here to study in detail the complexity of each retelling with the assumption that it is a narrative produced as an answer to the question given: “*what happened in the video you have seen?*” The following table displays the scores for each informant and retelling as well as averages (\bar{x}) and standard deviation across the scenes (σ)

Table 35. FrL1 speakers’ narrative complexity scores

		Birds	Breakfast	Earthsea	Fire	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Wakeup	\bar{x}	σ
H-educated	F01	4	8	8	9	14	9	9	7	8.5	2.78
	F02	4	9	9	7	18	8	9	14	9.75	4.33
	F03	4	7	6	8	3	2	7	9	5.75	2.49
	F04	7	6	9	6	14	12	10	12	9.5	3.02
	F05	7	6	10	6	10	5	10	12	8.25	2.55
	\bar{x}	5.2	7.2	8.4	7.2	11.8	7.2	9	10.8	8.35	-
	σ	1.64	1.30	1.52	1.30	5.67	3.83	1.22	2.77	1.59	-
L-educated	F1	4	4	9	4	11	2	4	6	5.5	3.02
	F2	8	3	8	6	6	6	6	9	6.5	1.85
	F3	6	4	5	4	2	1	0	6	3.5	2.27
	F4	4	4	5	1	1	2	0	4	2.62	1.85
	F5	2	1	3	3	10	5	3	3	3.75	2.76
	F6	6	4	4	4	11	2	2	5	4.75	2.87
	\bar{x}	5	3.33	5.67	3.67	6.83	3	2.5	5.5	4.44	-
	σ	2.1	1.21	2.34	1.63	4.54	2	2.35	2.07	1.42	-

Testing the null hypothesis H_0 postulating that H-educated and L-educated retellings present the same narrative complexity using the three statistical tools explained above gave the following

result:

The implementation of the Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test gave the test statistic of $U_A = 29$ with the critical values being: 3 (lower limit) and 27 (upper limit) and 2 and 28 at 5 and 1 percent significance levels respectively. Given that the test statistic is higher than the upper critical values at both standard significance levels, the null hypothesis of informants with high and low educational profile producing retellings with the same degree of complexity can be rejected.

The probability value corresponding to the F-test statistic is 80%. Compared against the 5% of significance level, it does not give support for rejecting the null hypothesis of variances of both samples being not statistically different. In all the scenes without exception, the null hypothesis of equal variances across H- and L-educated sample cannot be rejected. This again supports the notion that the variance in complexity measures stems from informants rather than from the nature of the scenes.

Given the group averages and σ reported in the table above, the unpaired t-test for the significance of the difference between the means revealed that the dispersion in the complexity of narratives was higher among H-educated speakers. In fact, the difference between 8.35 (average for H-educated) and 4.44 (average for L-educated) with standard deviations of 1.59 and 1.42 respectively is significant at the 5% level. The value of the t-statistic for this test was 4.31.

We investigate in the following section narrative complexity in FrL2 applying the same statistical means.

3.1.3.3. FrL2

We have, at a first stage of analysis, compared the two groups of learners according to their education, as we have done above with TAL1 or FrL1 retellings. The INC scores of FrL2 informants, means for the L-educated and H-educated groups as well as the variance of scores is presented in detail in Table 36 below:

Table 36. FrL2 Learners' narrative complexity scores

		Birds	Breakfast	Earthsea	Fire	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Wakeup	\bar{x}	σ
H-educated	A01	7	5	9	5	8	10	1	7	6.50	2.83
	A02	8	6	12	8	6	11	11	9	8.88	2.30
	A03	8	7	7	7	7	8	6	6	7.00	0.76
	A04	5	6	9	5	13	8	8	10	8.00	2.73
	A05	11	6	7	7	13	9	10	13	9.50	2.73
	A06	6	7	5	5	10	7	8	10	7.25	1.98
	\bar{x}	7.50	6.17	8.17	6.17	9.50	8.83	7.33	9.17	7.86	
	σ	2.07	0.75	2.40	1.33	3.02	1.47	3.56	2.48	1.16	
L-educated	A1	3	3	3	3	4	7	4	8	4.38	2.00
	A2	1	4	4	3	4	5	5	4	3.75	1.28
	A3	3	4	2	6	5	2	2	8	4.00	2.20
	A4	4	5	5	6	3	3	5	12	5.38	2.88
	A5	2	2	5	2	2	3	4	6	3.25	1.58
	A6	4	5	4	1	7	5	2	9	4.63	2.56
	A7	4	5	7	6	5	7	3	9	5.75	1.91
	A8	3	4	3	2	4	6	3	6	3.88	1.46
	A9	4	6	6	4	17	11	7	10	8.13	4.39
	A10	4	2	3	2	6	4	2	2	3.13	1.46
	A11	1	4	3	1	3	3	3	7	3.13	1.89
	A12	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	6	3.75	1.16
	A13	3	4	5	2	9	5	2	10	5.00	3.02
	\bar{x}	3.08	4.00	4.08	3.15	5.62	5.00	3.38	7.46	4.47	
σ	1.12	1.15	1.44	1.82	3.88	2.38	1.56	2.70	1.38		

Testing the same null hypothesis using the same battery of tests gave way to the results discussed below:

- The *Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test* verifying whether the two sets of values come from the same distribution gave the test statistic of $U_A = 74$ with the critical values being 16 (lower limit) and 62 (upper limit) and 12 and 66 at 5 and 1 percent significance levels respectively (See full results in Appendix 3). Given that the test statistic is higher than the upper critical values at both standard significance levels, the null hypothesis of informants with high and low educational profile producing retellings with the same degree of complexity can be rejected.

- The application of the f-test to verify whether the variance in the two samples in FrL2 is the same across the scenes and the informants gave the probability value corresponding to the test statistic 74%. Compared against the 5% of significance level, it does not give support for rejecting the null hypothesis of variances of both samples being not statistically different. In all the videos without exception, the null hypothesis of equal variances across H- and L-educated sample cannot be rejected. This again supports the notion that the variance in complexity measures stems from informants rather than the nature of the videos.

- The verification of the direction of the difference between the two groups' productions using the t-test gave the t-statistic of 5.21. The difference between 7.86 (average for H-educated) and 4.47 (average for L-educated) with standard deviations of 1.16 and 1.38 respectively is significant at the 5% level.

As mentioned earlier, at a second stage, the INC scores were examined in the light of the acquisitional stages identified for each informant (cf. Table 37 below). In order to quantify the association between the INC score obtained for each informant and his / her learner variety, we used the Pearson correlation statistical test.

Table 37. Narrative complexity scores of FrL2 retellings

Code	L.V	Birds	Breakfast	Earthsea	Fire	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Wakeup	INC	σ
A1	2	3	3	3	3	4	7	4	8	4.4	2
A5	2	2	2	5	2	2	3	4	6	3.3	1.58
A8	2	3	4	3	2	4	6	3	6	3.9	1.46
A2	3	1	4	4	3	4	5	5	4	3.8	1.28
A3	3	3	4	2	6	5	2	2	8	4	2.2
A4	3	4	5	5	6	3	3	5	12	5.4	2.88
A6	3	4	5	4	1	7	5	2	9	4.6	2.56
A12	3	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	6	3.8	1.16
A11	3	1	4	3	1	3	3	3	7	3.1	1.89
A10	3	4	2	3	2	6	4	2	2	3.1	1.46
A13	3	3	4	5	2	9	5	2	10	5	3.02
A7	4	4	5	7	6	5	7	3	9	5.8	1.91
A9	4	4	6	6	4	17	11	7	10	8.1	4.39
A01	5	7	5	9	5	8	10	1	7	6.5	2.83

Code	L.V	Birds	Breakfast	Earthsea	Fire	Kabaret	Salmon	Soup	Wakeup	INC	σ
A04	5	5	6	9	5	13	8	8	10	8	2.73
A02	6	8	6	12	8	6	11	11	9	8.9	2.3
A03	6	8	7	7	7	7	8	6	6	7	0.76
A05	6.5	11	6	7	7	13	9	10	13	9.5	2.73
A06	6.5	6	7	5	5	10	7	8	10	7.3	1.98

Notes: L.V = Learner variety

We attributed numerical values to each acquisitional stage, from 2 (basic stage) to 6.5 (the stage between the higher advanced variety and near-native variety). We wanted to test the null hypothesis stipulating the following:

There is no correlation between the acquisitional stage and the INC score.

The result of the statistical test calculated the correlation value of **0.87**, which gives very strong evidence against the null hypothesis. The graph below (Figure 14) portrays this correlation as it shows that the more advanced the learner variety, the higher is the retellings' complexity of the learners. This is represented by the exponential function, which models this constant change:

Figure 14. Correlation between acquisitional stage and INC scores

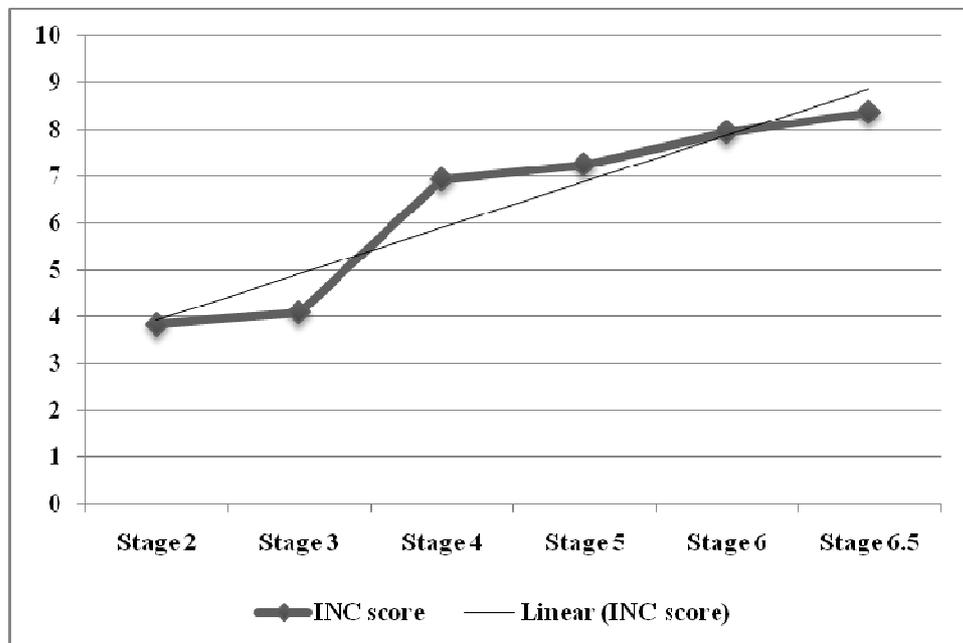


Table 38. Correlation between acquisitional stage and INC scores

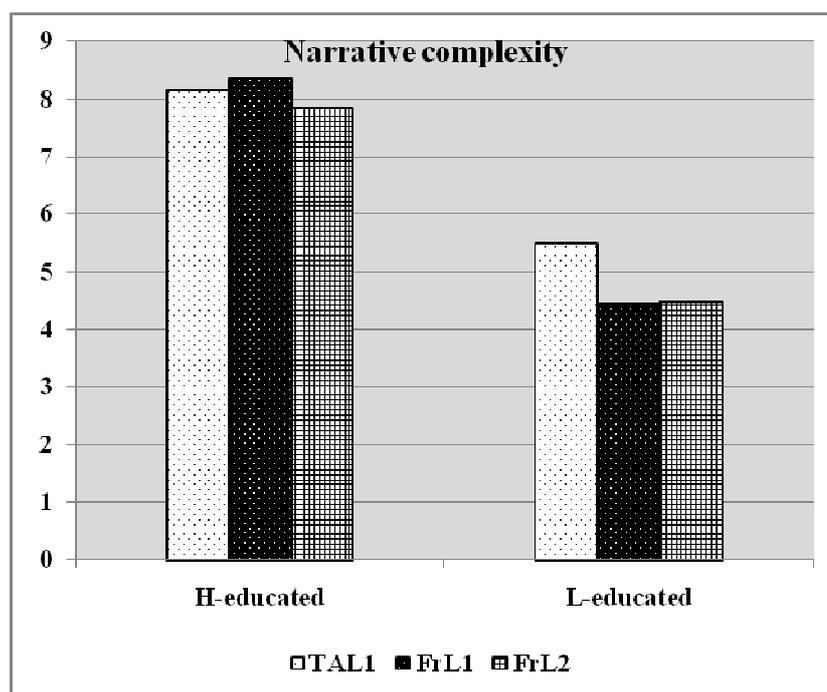
	Coeff	Estimate	St.error	t-ratio	P-value	95% Lower	95% Upper
a	Const	1.0647	0.6796756	1.5664772	0.13566	-0.369294	2.4986864
b	x	1.16522	0.1649733	7.0630591	1.9E-06	0.8171528	1.5132792

We conclude in the following section on the quantitative analyses conducted so far on INC of L2 retellings.

3.1.3.4. Conclusions on narrative complexity analyses of TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 retellings

A representation of the average scores in each group in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 reveals that L-educated group in either first languages or in learner varieties have lower scores than H-educated ones.

Figure 15. Narrative complexity scores in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2



The case of FrL2 retellings is quite predictable, as learners do not have the same learner variety, and thus are expected to have variable overall narrative abilities. The results of TAL1 and FrL1

narrative complexity analysis however are rather interesting. They show that the level of education of the speakers affects the way they tell a story. H-educated speakers are more liable to produce more complex stories than L-educated ones regardless of the language used.

3.1.4. Description of the types of retellings produced in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2

We now turn to discussing the types of retellings produced, in the light of the task performed, and the specificities of the different visual stimuli used for it. As established in the methodology chapter, the videos used to elicit the retellings have many distinctive features: source, length and type of situations involved. As part of the quantitative analyses carried out above, namely of narrative complexity, we started with the assumption that all our retellings are of the same nature. Looking here at the internal components of the productions however, we notice that they are not. In fact, not all the productions can qualify as narrations. We applied for our classification of productions the *quaestio* model discussed in the theoretical part. In fact, a retelling is a narrative when it includes a minimum of two propositions, which answer the questiones “*what happened at t₁? What happened at t₂?*” It has therefore to include a component that indicates a progression on the time line, and that answers the implied question “*what happened next?*” We present in the following table (Table 39) the proportions of actual narrative texts produced by each group of informants in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2. In other words, the table shows the proportion of productions that include, as their main component, progression $t_1 \dots t_n$ on the time line as defined above.

Table 39. Proportion of narratives in the video retellings

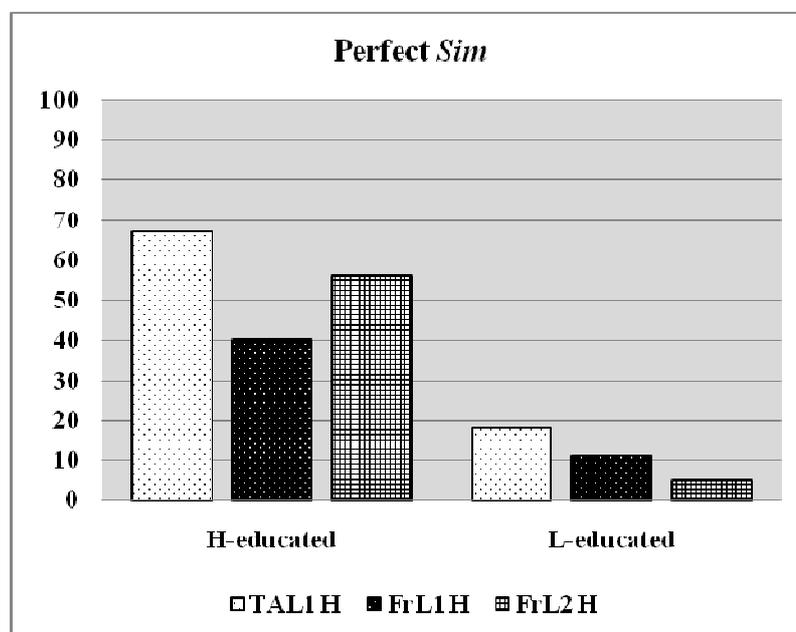
Type <i>Sim</i>		Perfect <i>Sim</i>				Inclusion						Total
Video		Breakfast	Birds	Earthsea	\bar{x} (%)	Kabaret	Wakeup	Fire	Salmon	Soup	\bar{x} (%)	\bar{x} (%)
TAL1	H	50%	67%	83%	67	100%	100%	100%	100%	67%	93	83
	L	15%	15%	23%	18	92%	92%	85%	92%	31%	78	56
FrL1	H	40%	40%	40%	40	100%	100%	80%	100%	80%	93	73
	L	0%	17%	17%	11	83%	83%	83%	67%	50%	78	50
FrL2	H	33%	50%	83%	56	100%	100%	67%	100%	67%	87	75

Type <i>Sim</i>	Perfect <i>Sim</i>				Inclusion						Total \bar{x} (%)
Video	Breakfast	Birds	Earthsea	\bar{x} (%)	Kabaret	Wakeup	Fire	Salmon	Soup	\bar{x} (%)	
L	0%	0%	15%	5	77%	85%	31%	54%	23%	54	36

Notes: H= H-educated / L= L-educated

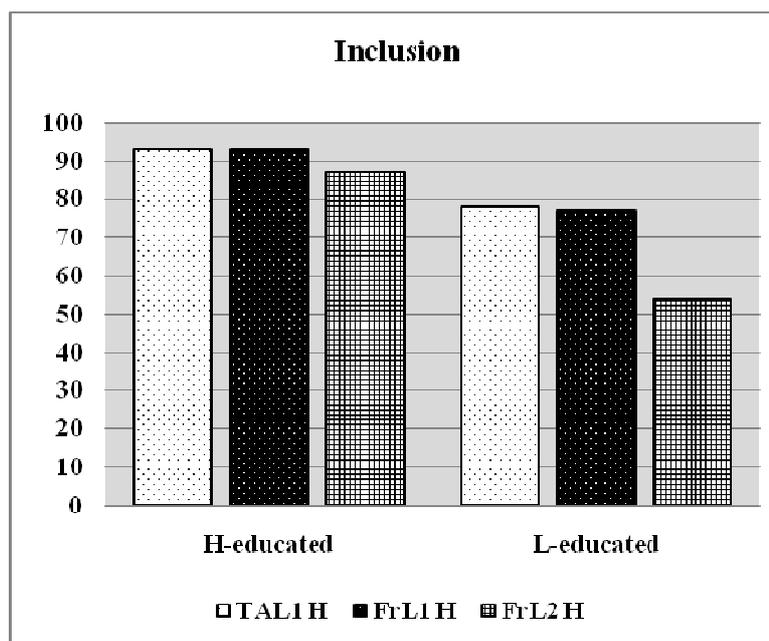
As we can see, the type of *Sim* involved in the videos affects the type of the retelling produced. In fact, as clearly shown in Table 39, the proportion of narratives is clearly higher when the videos present progression on the time line. Consider for example the higher averages for both groups in TAL1, 93% for H-educated and 78% for L-educated group with the inclusion type, compared to 67% (H) and 18% (L) with videos showing no progression on the time line. Surprisingly however, the type of *Sim* does not exclusively constrain the type of discourse produced. In relation to our quantitative descriptions above, H-educated produce more narratives than L-educated group regardless of the *Sim* type involved in the stimuli (Figure 16 and Figure 17). In fact, even when there is no obvious progression of the events involved such as in *Birds*, *Earthsea*, and *Breakfast*, H-educated speakers always managed to produce significantly more narratives than the L-educated group.

Figure 16. Proportions of narratives produced by TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 to retell Perfect *Sim*



We notice in the graph showing proportions of retellings of perfect *Sim* that TAL1 H-educated native speakers produced more narratives than FrL1 speakers. The same speakers produced more narratives in the same task in FrL2. When it comes to inclusion TAL1 and FrL1 proportions of narrations are quite comparable as the graph below shows.

Figure 17. Proportions of narratives produced by TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 to retell Inclusion



Overall, H-educated informants choose to produce narratives more often than L-educated informants do. In the light of this additional finding, we postulate that the two groups have different conceptualisations of the situations presented in the stimuli and take therefore different perspectives to retell them. The productions of H-educated group manifest less deviation from the question determining the *quaestio* “*what happened in this scene?*” regardless of whether or not the video presents progression on the time line. When it did not (i.e., in the case of Perfect *Sim*), they either implemented progression within one of the two simultaneous situations of the video, or in their interaction. The two types of progression are schematised as follows (the representation does not account for the type of *Sim* as shown in the stimuli but for the perspective of the informants taken on their internal representations of the events):

Table 40. Portrayal of progression of two simultaneous events on the time axis

1) Progression within one of the two situations	2) Progression and interaction of the two situations
S1 ---t ₁ ---t ₂ ---t _n	S1 ---t ₁ ---t _n
S2 -----	S2 ---t ₂

The first type is illustrated by example (37), the second one by (38).

(37) A02, *Breakfast*

Nafs eṭṭfol elli shof-ne-h qbal
 Same the-boy who see-PP1-him before
 The same boy we have seen before

y-haḍḍar fi waḥda krep
 PS3M-prepare PRG one pancake
 Is preparing a pancake

da:har-li krep
 AP&appear-to-me pancake
 I think a pancake

Mais ḥraq-ha d'un côté
 But burn-PS3M-it from one side
 But he burnt it on one side

W qlib-ha
 and turn-PS3M-it
 and he turned it

ḥraq-ha min shi:ra
 burn-PS3M-it from side
 He burnt it from one side

w qlibha .
 and flip-PS3M-it
 and he turned it

w min ba'd .
 and after
 and afterwards

w omm-u: qa:'da tisma' fi-l mu:zi:ka .
 and mother-his PRG PS3F-listen PRG-the music
 And his mother is listening to music

w ta'mal fi des mouvements .
 and PS3F-do movements
 and doing movements

t-tabba' fi-ha za'ma za'ma .
 PS3F-follow PRG-it pretending pretending
 She is pretending to follow the rhythm

The example involves some instances of codeswitching, the alternate use of two elements from two different languages within the same utterance (Lawson & Sachdev 2000, p.1344), here from Tunisian Arabic and French. This phenomenon is the outcome of the multilinguistic heritage of Tunisia due to its past as a French colony and also its strategic situation being located at the crossroads between the Arab world, the Mediterranean and Europe (*ibid.*, p.1345).

(38) A04, *Earthsea*
Bon on voit un dessin animé.
On voit une fille.
En train de chanter.
Au départ il me montre un joli paysage du soleil et un peu à la campagne.
Et elle chante tellement bien.
Qu'il y a un jeune homme à côté.
Et qui se met à pleurer.
Ensuite elle pleure elle aussi.

The other retellings, which are not categorised as narratives, are classified as descriptive accounts of events. In fact, these retellings are a static representation of events, they show no temporal progression of events and they are considered as a deviation from the initial question asked. In fact, in producing them, the informants take a different perspective on events, describing them using more spatial entities for referential movement. The following retelling (example 39) is an example of a descriptive account (the spatial adverbial is highlighted).

(39) F03, *Birds*
Ok c'est un peu plus énigmatique.
Donc quelqu'un joue de la guitare.
Et on va dire même si c'est.

*C'est un morceau qui est typiquement hawaïien.
 Il a une sonorité qui en effet rappelle une musique hawaïienne.
 Une petite fille danse dans une musique hawaïienne à côté.*

We finish this investigation with a detailed analysis of the proportion of productions with narrative progression compared to all productions by FrL2 learners (Table 41)

Table 41. Proportions of FrL2 narratives

Code	L.V	Perfect <i>Sim</i>				Inclusion					Σ
		Breakfast	Birds	Earthsea	Σ	Kabaret	Wakeup	Fire	Salmon	Soup	
A1	2	-	-	-	0	+	+	+	-	-	3
A5	2	-	-	+	1	-	+	-	+	+	3
A8	2	-	-	-	0	+	+	+	+	-	4
A2	3	-	-	-	0	+	-	-	+	-	2
A3	3	-	-	-	0	-	+		+	-	2
A4	3	-	-	-	0	+	+	-	+	-	3
A6	3	-	-	+	1	+	+	-	+	-	3
A12	3	-	-	-	0	-	+	-	-	-	1
A11	3	-	-	-	0	+	+	-	-	-	2
A10	3	-	-	-	0	+	-	-	-	-	1
A13	3	-	-	-	0	+	+	+	+	+	3
A7	4	-	-	-	0	+	+	-	+	-	3
A9	4	-	-	-	0	-	+	-	-	+	2
A01	5	+	-	+	2	+	+	+	+	-	4
A04	5	+	-	+	2	+	+	+	+	-	4
A02	6	-	+	-	1	+	+	+	+	+	5
A03	6	-	+	+	2	+	+	-	+	+	4
A05	6-7	-	+	+	2	+	+	+	+	+	5
A06	6-7	-	-	+	1	+	+	-	+	+	4

The FrL2 speakers are classified according to their learner varieties indicated in the first column. As the table shows, FrL2 learners are more liable to produce narratives out of the videos showing the inclusion type of *Sim*, i.e. videos where the time of the second situation S2 is included in the TSit of the first one (S1). This, according to our results, generates an obvious temporal progression of events, which is exploited even at earlier stages of language acquisition to make narrations out of the situations presented. Perfectly simultaneous situations are less likely to generate narratives among the lower varieties and even at the intermediate level of acquisition.

3.1.5. Conclusions on section one and discussion of quantitative analyses

Based on the number of quantitative analyses carried out on the two sets of retellings by H-educated and L-educated groups; namely of their length in terms of number of propositions produced, vocabulary diversity using the *Vocd* software and narrative complexity (as inspired by Petersen *et al.*'s (2008) framework), we can formulate the following conclusions:

- H-educated and L-educated oral productions on the task of retelling simultaneous situations are similar with regard to the use of a diversified vocabulary. The possibility that the type of task completed by the informants could influence the vocabulary used and result in this similarity of richness of the lexicon cannot be ruled out as the informants were presented with the same set of visual material. In fact, the influence of the task generally called “*l'influence de la tâche*” on the oral productions is attested by many studies (e.g., Dankova 2003; Gayraud *et al.* 1999). These latter agree that the type of task and stimuli provided to the informants partly shape the way they complete the verbal task. For instance, Gayraud *et al.* (1999, p.28) call attention to the necessity of considering the impact of the task as an influencing factor on oral productions:

«Les différences obtenues entre les différentes tâches suggèrent qu'il est important de garder à l'esprit, quand on utilise une seule tâche, que les conclusions auxquelles on aboutit sont nécessairement partielles.»

L-educated and H-educated speakers' productions are nevertheless significantly different in terms of length and narrative complexity. This means that speakers of the same language make different choices on a particular task, in this case, the retelling of simultaneous situations. H-educated informants produce longer and more complex retellings than L-educated ones in TAL1 and FrL1 even though the statistical analyses of the type of lexicon used reveal no significant differences. This similarity of results regarding the use of the lexicon is directly related to the restrictions imposed by the nature of the stimuli used.

The difference between the two groups in each L1 investigated lies not in the words chosen to complete the task, but in the way the utterances are arranged and the number of propositions selected to produce them.

The analyses of retellings in TAL1 and in FrL1 reveal striking similarities of results, which allow us to safely draw general non language-specific conclusions on the points raised. Indeed, in both languages, the highly and low educated informants take different perspectives. Their productions differ in terms of length and complexity. Furthermore, H-educated speakers choose to make narratives out of the simultaneous situations more often than L-educated speakers do. It turns out then that instruction plays a role in the retelling abilities and the strategies adopted for the complex verbal task of retelling simultaneous events.

In the following section, we analyse the expression of on-goingness in retelling simultaneity. We would like to examine whether or not the differences outlined above between the L-educated and H-educated groups in each language and in learner varieties would imply differences in the use of the progressive markers and on-goingness devices to express simultaneity within the proposition and in the discourse as a whole.

Section 2. The role of on-goingness in expressing simultaneity

3.2.0. Introduction

In this section, we consider the way our informants exploit the aspectual value of on-goingness to retell simultaneous situations. As explained in the literature, the French language has many ways of expressing that a situation is on-going. It relies on lexical means, the periphrasis «*en train de*», or the *présent de l'indicatif*. Likewise, the most used devices to express on-goingness in TAL1 are the markers *qa:'id* and *fi* or the prefixed verb form (PV). To distinguish between the different devices, we call «*en train de*» and «*qa:'id (+fi)*» the 'marked' forms; and the simple forms - *présent de l'indicatif* and PV- the 'unmarked' ones.

Therefore, we explore in this part the uses of the marked forms; «*qa:'id (+fi)*», and «*en train de*» interchangeably with the unmarked ones; the prefixed verb, and the *présent simple* in TAL1 and FrL1 respectively. We are interested in how they are used to present the two situations involved in each of our eight visual stimuli.

Our investigation of the marked forms versus the unmarked ones is related to our investigation of how simultaneity is expressed. It is done in two main stages: first, we explore the use of the different marked and unmarked forms within the proposition level. Afterwards, we consider the forms in the wider context of discourse.

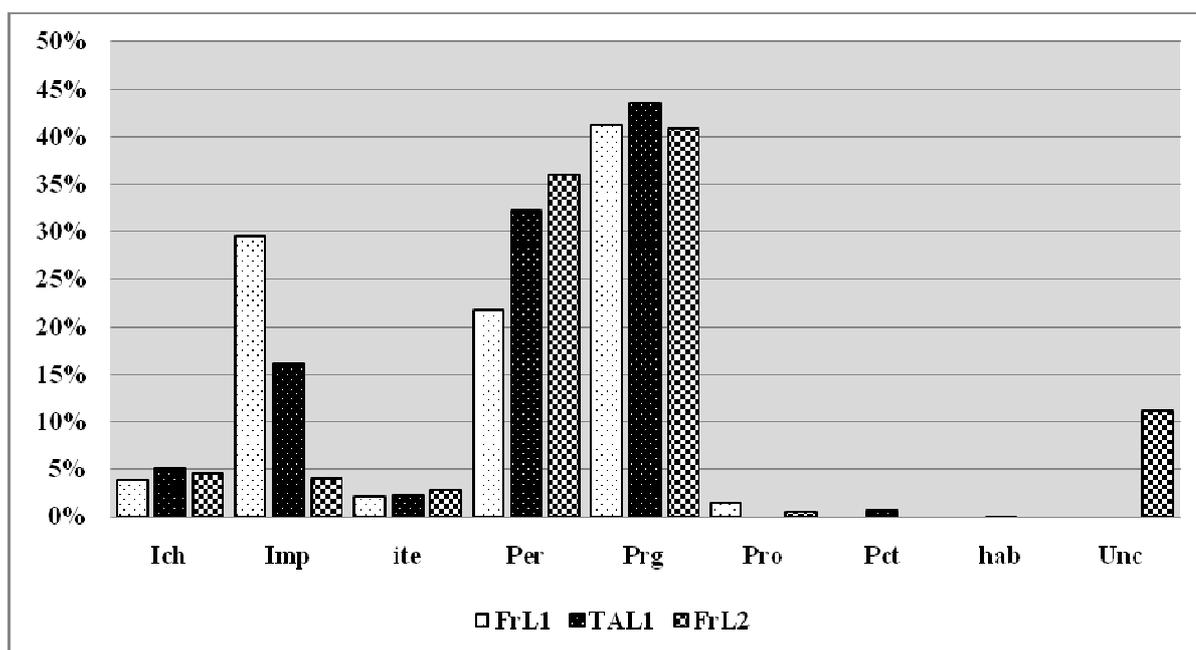
3.2.1. Marked and unmarked forms within the proposition

Before we start, let us repeat here what constitutes a proposition in this study in order to clarify the scope of this first part of the section. We have defined a proposition as a unit that contains an event, process or state, organised according to the topic-focus distribution. It may or may not contain a verb so the term encompasses nominal propositions as in the pre-basic variety of learners, and possible verbless clauses in TAL1. The proposition is the minimal unit that we used for chunking our oral retellings. In the first part of this section (section 2), we deal with the marked and unmarked forms at this limited level. Our analyses included therefore the frequency of use of each form and the type of lexical content selected for it. For every feature, we deal with each language investigated separately.

3.2.1.1. Proportions and frequencies

We aim here to present the frequencies of use of the marked forms versus the unmarked ones to express that a situation from a video is on-going. Before doing so, it is worth noting that on-goingness is the most frequently used aspectual value to construe events as conceptualised from the visual stimuli presented (see Figure 18).

Figure 18. Aspectual relations expressed in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 retellings



Ich: inchoative / Imp: imperfective / It: iterative / Per: perfective / Prg: progressive / Pro: prospective / Pct: perfect / Hab: habitual / Unc: unclear aspectual value

We investigated afterwards in details for each language and learner variety every form used to express on-goingness. In order to do so, all the predicate forms used to express that a situation is on-going in the retellings of our eight videos have been coded.

3.2.1.1.1. TAL1

TAL1 speakers have many lexical choices to represent an event as on-going. The different forms found are listed in details in Table 42 for L-educated and H-educated groups. We separated the

frequencies of each group for the differences observed between them.

Table 42. Forms expressing on-goingness in TAL1 retellings

L-educated	Perfect Sim			Inclusion					Σ
	Breakfast	Birds	Earthsea	Kabaret	Wakeup	Fire	Salmon	Soup	
PV + <i>fī</i>	16	4	8	17	5	4	14	14	82
PV	11	21	15	3	1	3	4	9	67
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV	5	10	7	2	1	7	3	7	42
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV + <i>fī</i>	9		2	2		1	8	6	28
AP					6				6
<i>qa:'id</i> _(AP) + AP			1		1				2
' <i>amma:l</i> + PV (still)			0	2					2
<i>y-kammal</i> _(PV) + PV PS3M-finish									0
<i>q'ad</i> + AP sit-PS3M			1		1				2
<i>q'ad</i> + PV sit-PS3M			1	3		1			5
<i>bqa</i> _(SV) + PV Stay-PS3M								1	1
L-educated Σ	41	35	35	29	15	16	29	37	237
H-educated	Perfect Sim			Inclusion					Σ
	Breakfast	Birds	Earthsea	Kabaret	Wakeup	Fire	Salmon	Soup	
PV + <i>fī</i>	7	3	4	6		2	3	6	31
PV	3	3	2			3	3	3	17
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV	2	7	4			4	6	6	29
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV + <i>fī</i>	11		4	2			4	4	25
AP	1				5				6
<i>qa:'id</i> _(AP) + AP									0
' <i>amma:l</i> + PV (still)									0
<i>ykammal</i> _(PV) + PV		1	1		2				4
<i>q'ad</i> + AP sit-PS3M					1				1
<i>q'ad</i> + PV sit-PS3M				3					3
<i>Bqa</i> _(SV) + PV Stay-PS3M									0
H-educated Σ	24	14	15	11	8	9	16	19	116

As the table shows, the use of the preverbal progressive marker *qa:'id* is not systematic to

express that a situation is on-going. It clearly competes with the prefixed verb used alone or with the post verbal marker *fi*. The use of the active participle (AP) for the same aspectual value is very marginal; we count indeed only one occurrence in the video retellings showing perfect *Sim* and six in retelling *Wakeup*. The AP form is exclusively used in *Wakeup* retellings with the verb *rqad* (he slept). For some reason, the verb in its prefixed form cannot be used preceded by the preverbal marker *qa:’id*. Consider the following examples (our creation):

(40)
 *Qa:’id yo-rqod fi-l bi:t
 PRG 3PSM-sleep in-the room

(41)
 *Q’ad yo-rqod fi-l bi:t
 sit-3PSM 3PSM-sleep in-the room

(42)
 Q’ad reqid fi-l bi:t
 sit-3PSM sleep&AP&3PSM in-the room
He stayed in the room sleeping

(43)
 Reqid fi-l bit.
 sleep&AP&3PSM in-the room
He is sleeping in the room

We hypothesise that the recourse to AP in our data to express on-goingness is not random but the result of some constraints. Given the origin of the marker *qa:’id* (a verb of static posture), we hypothesise that it cannot combine with another verb indicating a static posture (here *rqad* ‘he slept’ / or rather he was asleep). Similarly, the preverbal marker conflates with other verbs indicating static postures such as *wqif* (he stood up), *q’ad* (he sat), *ittakka* (he lay down). As such, propositions such as (44) or (45) are unusual in TAL1:

(44)
 *Qa:’id yoq’od
 PRG PS3M-sit
He is sitting

(45)
 *Qa:’id yeqif

PRG PS3M-stand
He is standing

We can however very well say

(46)
Qa:'id ra:qid
PRG sleep&AP&PS3M
He is sleeping

(47)
Qa:'id weqif
PRG stand&AP&PS3M
He is standing

We can therefore conclude that AP used to convey on-goingness does so conveying also a resultative meaning of a state or an action. For instance, *reqid* does not mean that somebody is actively engaged in some activity of sleeping but conveys simply that he is in a state of sleeping.

Furthermore, the AP can also be preceded by the preverbal marker *qa:id* as example (48) below shows.

(48) A12, *Earthsea*
Huwa ga:'id miṭhamms-il-ha
He PRG enthusiastic-to-her
He is encouraging her

We also conclude that *qa:'id* is rather compatible with verbs expressing a dynamic activity when used in a PV form. The use of «*qa:'id* + PV» therefore conveys the dynamicity of an event necessarily viewed in progress.

On-goingness can also be expressed by other co-verbs, which generally precede a PV and semantically convey the on-goingness of a situation. The use of these co-verbs is also rare in the data: two propositions with the co-verb *kammal* (he finished). Used as a preverb it rather means 'He continued doing something' (see example (49)). We also have constructions with a PV and an AP preceded by the suffixed form of the verb *q'ad* (he sat, stayed), consider example (50) below.

(49) A05, *Birds*

w-(l)-ra:jil y-kammal yi-l'ab 'ala ru:hu: .
 and-the-man 3PSM-continue 3PSM-play on himself
 And the man continued playing by himself

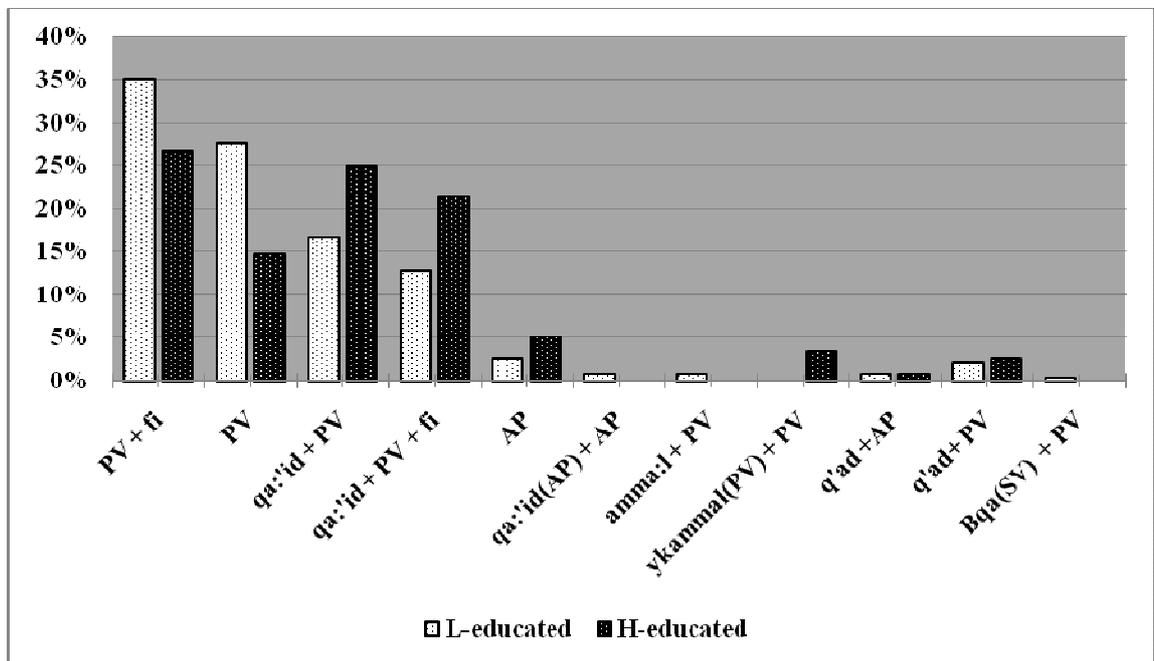
(50) A8, *Earthsea*

g'ad yi-bki
 sit-3PSM 3PSM-cry
 He kept on crying

g'ad (he sat) is the verb from which the preverbal marker *qa:'id* is derived. Used in the masculine singular in its suffixed form, it conveys on-goingness with a past time reference (TT prior to the TU). This aspectual value is basically lexically expressed.

Going back to the most frequently used constructions to express on-goingness, to make the frequencies of forms more intelligible, we designed the graph below which reveals the forms favoured by TAL1 speakers: these forms are the PV followed or not by the marker *fi*, and the predicate constructions containing *qa:'id*, again containing or not the particle *fi*.

Figure 19. Predicate forms expressing on-goingness in TAL1



We consciously chose to separate the following four constructions, which appear to be most

frequently used in the data to express on-goingness:

(i) PV

(ii) «*qa:’id* + PV»

(iii) «PV + *fi*»

(iv) «*qa:’id* + PV + *fi*»

The difference between (i) and (iii) is the presence of *fi*. As mentioned in the theoretical part, *fi* is obligatorily used when the proposition expresses an on-going event at some time of reference, and contains a direct object complement. This simply entails that the absence of *fi* only means that the verb of the sentence is intransitive, and therefore does not need any complement. The difference between (ii) and (iv) is quite the same. Two important issues are worth noting here:

First, unless used like the “historical present” to denote bounded events, PV forms express that an event is in progress at a certain reference time.

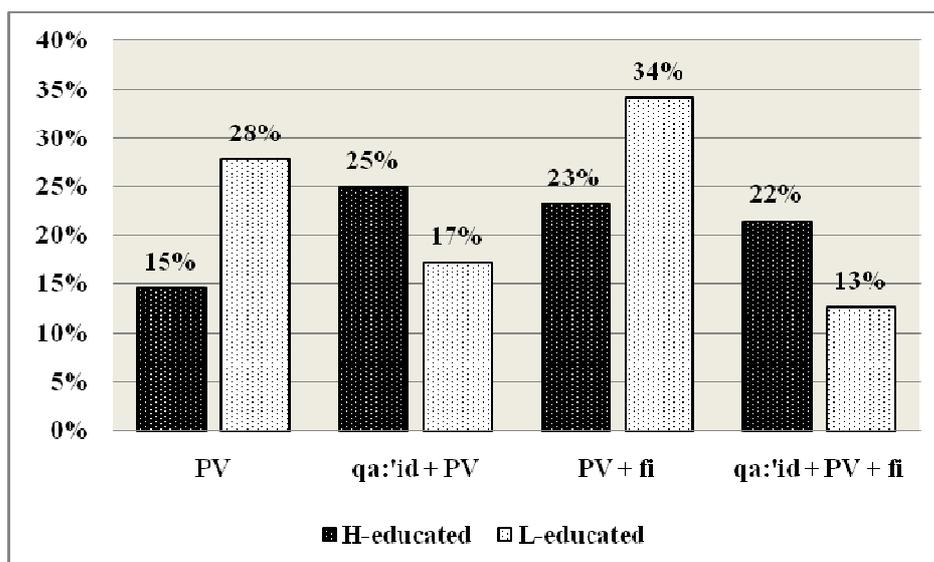
Interpreting the PV as expressing bounded events / perfectivity is context-related. In fact, boundedness, as opposed to the progressive reading can be retrieved from the type of lexical content used (e.g., the use of 2S punctual verbs⁴²) or by explicit markers indicating the chronology of events happening in a sequence.

Second, given the obligatory character of *fi*, the separation of each construction allows us to study the contexts of use of the preverbal marker *qa:’id* which is much less systematically used, and whose contexts are not very clear yet. Examining the contexts and systematicities of use of the apparently ‘optional’ preverbal marker *qa:’id* is one of the objectives of our analyses. We are therefore able to study the difference between (i) and (ii), and also between (iii) and (iv) in our two groups L-educated and H-educated. We focus now on only these four forms and we display

⁴² In her PhD project, Leclercq (2007) distinguishes between punctual 2-State predicates such as <to break>, <to kick the ball> and durative 2-State predicates like <to prepare soup>, <to eat two bananas>.

their use by each group. The graph below allows us to examine the frequency of use of *qa:'id* by each group. In fact, it gives precise information about occurrences of PV alone as opposed to «*qa:'id* + PV» when the verbs selected are transitive in nature. It also allows comparing «PV + *fi*», as opposed to «*qa:'id* + PV + *fi*» when the verbs selected are transitive and require obligatorily *fi*.

Figure 20. Use of the four constructions by H-educated and L-educated groups



The percentage of use of each form is calculated against the total progressive propositions. The figure clearly shows that *qa:'id* is more used by the H-educated group than the L-educated one. H-educated informants use *qa:'id* more when the PV is intransitive. It is however less used when it is transitive, as the construction contains *fi* (See Figure 21 and Figure 22 below).

Figure 21. Proportions of PV vs *qa:'id* + PV in retellings of L-educated informants

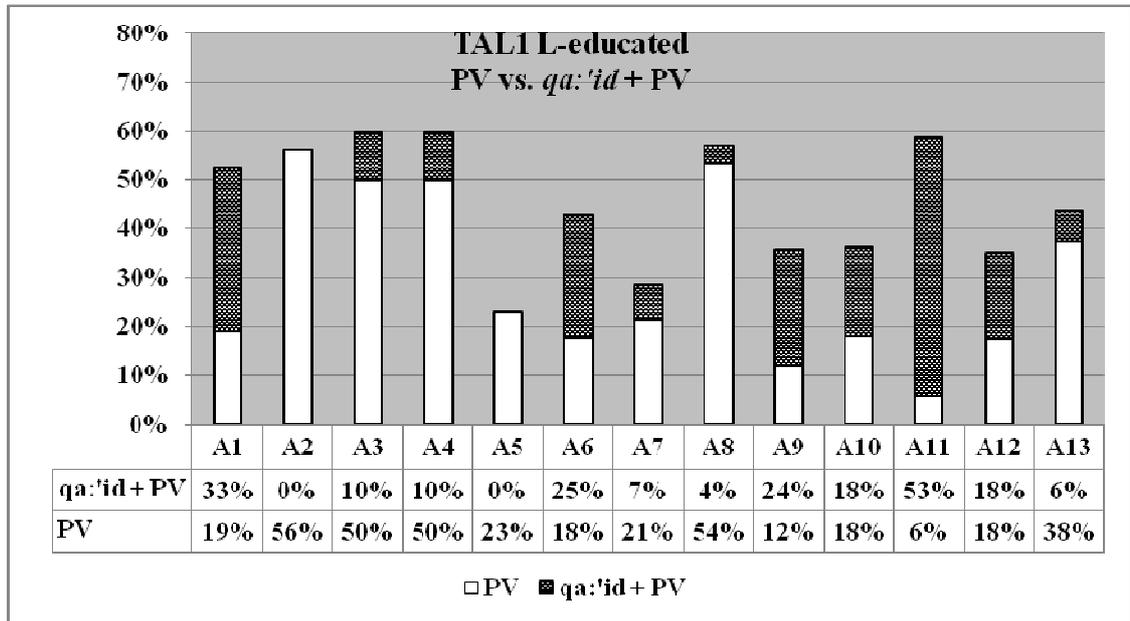
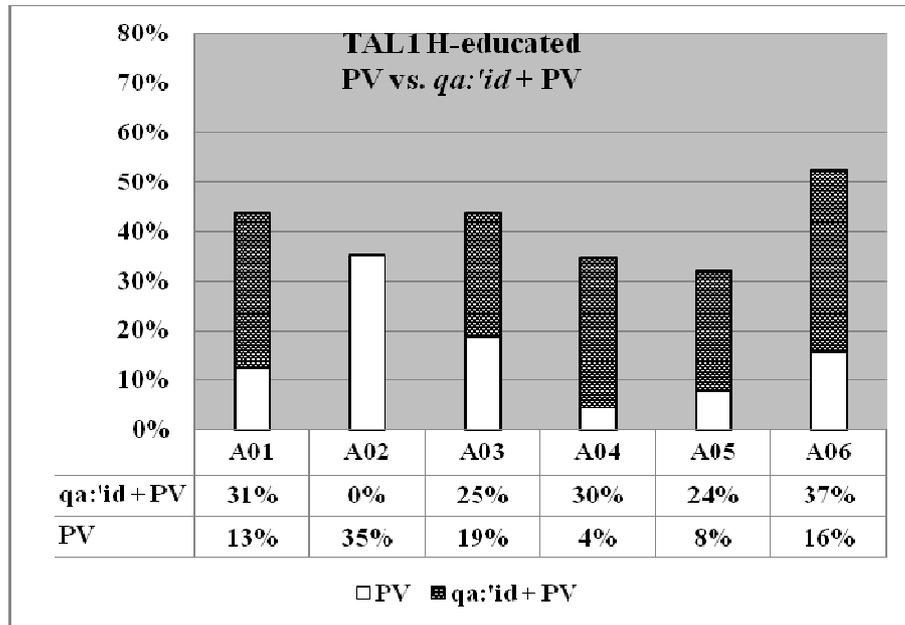


Figure 22. Proportions of PV vs *qa:'id* + PV in retellings of H-educated informants



We can postulate therefore that *qa:'id* is more liable to be used when the PV is used alone and can be ambiguous. L-educated informants however make much less use of *qa:'id* in their retellings. Indeed, they use more PV and «PV + *fi*» than «*qa:'id* + PV» with or without *fi* (Figure

21 and Figure 23).

Figure 23. Proportions of PV + *fi* vs *qa:'id* + PV + *fi* in retellings of L-educated informants

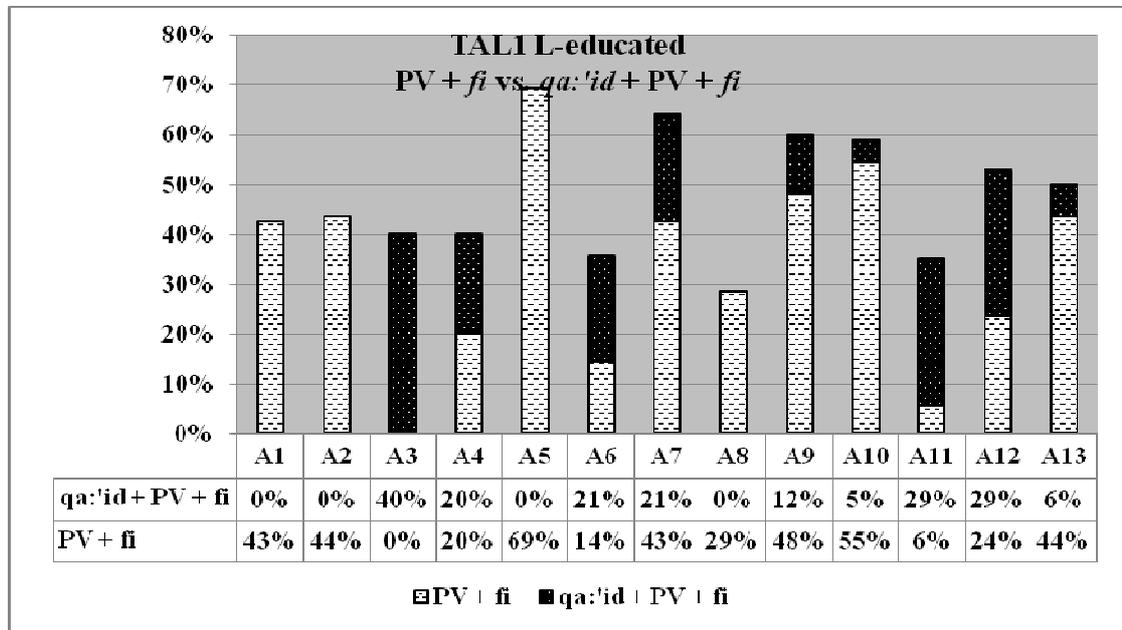
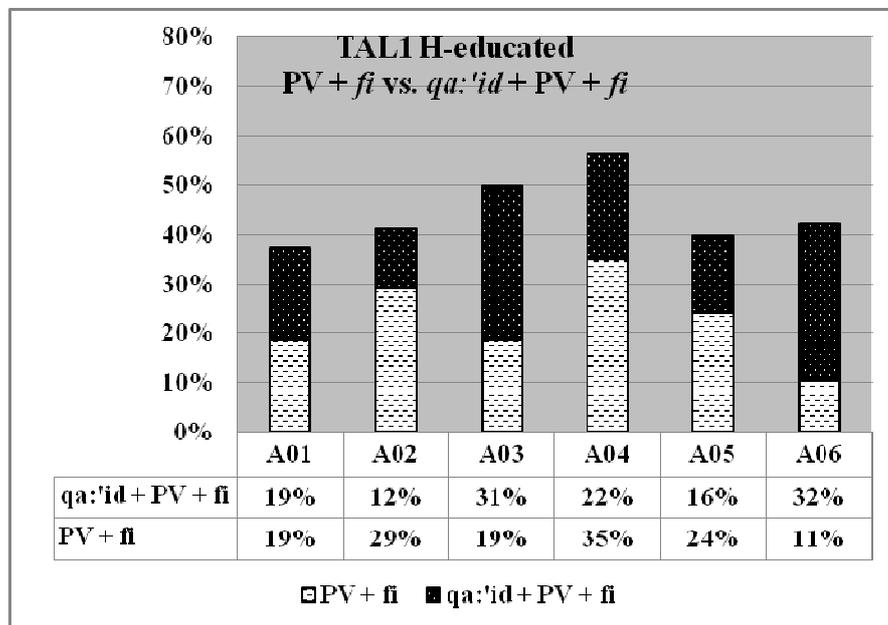


Figure 24. Proportions of PV + *fi* vs *qa:'id* + PV + *fi* in retellings of H-educated informants



Conclusions on the proportions of progressive forms in TAL1

It is worth concluding that TAL1 has many lexical devices that allow speakers to express the on-goingness of an event. These devices share the common feature of expressing that a certain event lasts a stretch of time long enough to be viewed as an on-going process at a certain time interval. Nevertheless, they are different and are used therefore in different contexts. For instance the preverbal marker *qa:'id* is compatible with predicates expressing that a protagonist is actively engaged in a dynamic process (e.g. *reading, writing, running* and *eating an apple...*). When the on-going event is rather static such as *sleeping, sitting in a park*, there are two possibilities: the speaker can use either the AP of the verb, such as *ra:qid* (he is asleep), or he could use *qa:'id* to precede the AP form of the verb.

Furthermore, we notice that the H-educated group and the L-educated group use progressive devices differently. H-educated make more use of the preverbal marker *qa:'id* than L-educated group especially with intransitive verbs that do not require *fī* in progressive contexts. Conversely, L-educated informants rely more on the prefixed verb form to verbalise progressive events. The case of A2 who never uses *qa:id* to convey on-goingness is interesting compared to H-educated informants who all use the marker. We hypothesise at this stage of analysis that *qa:'id* is more frequently used to disambiguate the speaker's viewpoint when *fī* is not possible. We will definitely discover more specificities of this marker, *qa:'id*, and the contexts of its use later on when we deal with lexical contents and when we examine it in the wider context of the discourse. We now turn to FrL1 to examine similarly the use of the marked form, «*en train de*», and the unmarked one *présent de l'indicatif* by the two informant groups.

3.2.1.1.2. FrL1

The table below displays the linguistic means used to encode on-goingness in all FrL1 retellings. Many options are available to French native speakers: the marked form, i.e., the periphrasis with «*en train de*», *présent de l'indicatif*, *gérondif*, the *imparfait* and also co-verbs such as the verb *continuer à* used with an infinitive. The frequencies of use are listed in descending order.

It is worth noting here that in addition to expressing on-goingness of a particular event in particular contexts, *gérondif* links two propositions, which express *Sim* of two events related to one protagonist. We do not focus on this device in our investigation of aspectual *Sim* marking, as we are interested in the devices employed to link two simultaneous events related to two distinct protagonists.

Table 43. Forms expressing on-goingness in FrL1 retellings

	Perfect <i>Sim</i>			Inclusion					Σ
	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Birds</i>	<i>Earthsea</i>	<i>Kabaret</i>	<i>Wakeup</i>	<i>Fire</i>	<i>Salmon</i>	<i>Soup</i>	
L-educated									
<i>(être) en train de</i>	3	0	1	3	0	0	3	1	11
Présent de l'indicatif	7	12	6	4	3	3	1	5	41
Gérondif	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	4
Imparfait	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	4
L-educated Σ	11	12	9	8	3	5	4	8	60
H-educated									
<i>(être) en train de</i>	13	2	5	6	3	4	4	7	44
Présent de l'indicatif	3	9	5	0	0	2	6	6	31
Gérondif	3	7	2	1	0	0	0	2	15
Imparfait	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	4
Continuer à + V inf	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
H-educated Σ	22	18	13	7	3	9	10	15	97

The most frequently used unmarked form is the *présent de l'indicatif*. We shall focus in what follows on the marked and unmarked forms; respectively, «*en train de*» and *présent de l'indicatif*, the reason being that they are the forms that are most frequently used in the data as Table 43 shows.

The unmarked form *présent de l'indicatif* is generally more used than the periphrasis if we look at the overall frequencies, and in particular more favoured by the L-educated group of informants. Apart from in the retellings of the video *Birds*, where both groups clearly favour the use of the *présent de l'indicatif* to express the on-goingness of the events, H-educated retellings show more use of «*en train de*» in progressive contexts. Another striking finding is that the *présent de l'indicatif* is more used than the marked form in retellings of perfectly simultaneous situations (Perfect *Sim*), and used with almost equal proportions with the Inclusion type of *Sim*.

A general observation is worth making about the marked form in all the retellings. ‘*En train de*’ is used with or without the auxiliary *être* and the details are provided in Table 44. In fact, the data show that «*en train de*» is not necessarily used with the auxiliary *être* as in *Il est «en train de» préparer des crêpes*, but also without it as in «*je vois un homme en train de préparer des crêpes*».

Table 44. Proportion of (*être*) *en train de*

	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Birds</i>	<i>Earthsea</i>	<i>Kabaret</i>	<i>Wakeup</i>	<i>Salmon</i>	<i>Soup</i>	<i>Fire</i>	Total
AUX + <i>en train de</i>	50%	8%	24%	29%	33%	54%	24%	40%	31%
<i>en train de</i>	8%	0%	0%	29%	17%	0%	14%	0%	8%
Total (<i>être</i>) <i>en train de</i>	58%	8%	24%	57%	50%	54%	38%	40%	39%

The fact that «*en train de*» is not systematically used when the progressive aspectual relation is expressed and that it competes with other linguistic means such as the simple present is not new or surprising. Its relatively high use in our data at a rate of 39% of the total progressive propositions however, is quite interesting. More interestingly, the use of «*en train de*» compared to the use of the simple present is different depending on the video and the type of situation that is retold. In fact, while both linguistic means are evenly used in the retellings of *Fire* and *Wakeup*, «*en train de*» is more highly used in retelling *Breakfast*, *Kabaret*, *Salmon* and *Soup*. In *Birds*, *Earthsea* however, it is rather the simple form which is more used to express on-goingness.

After analysing the proportions of the marked forms used in TAL1 and FrL1 as compared to the unmarked forms, we now turn to examining how our FrL2 learners used the different forms to express on-goingness in their retellings.

3.2.1.1.3. FrL2

Before investigating the devices used to express on-goingness by FrL2 learners, we formulate some hypotheses made possible by the analyses of the learners’ L1, (TAL1) and of French native speakers’ productions on the same task.

- In both TAL1 and FrL1, speakers make use of different lexical means to view an event in progress at a certain time interval. Both languages have a marked form, consisting of a periphrasis that contains an element that is grammaticalised to a certain extent, *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» in TAL1 and FrL1 respectively.
- In both languages there is some flexibility in the use of these marked forms, i.e., they are not systematic, and compete with other devices such as the simple present.
- H-educated and L-educated expression of on-goingness shows clear differences in the proportions of use of the marked forms. H-educated speakers use them more frequently, while L-educated speakers prefer *présent de l'indicatif* and PV in FrL1 and TAL1 respectively.
- The difference between TAL1 and FrL1 use of the marked forms however is that while «*en train de*» is used interchangeably with a form that is completely unmarked, TAL1 has a second marker *fi*, which has very clear conditions of use.

All this leads us to hypothesise that learners should be able to express on-goingness using different devices.

Furthermore, they should be able to use the periphrasis «*en train de*» more at later stages than at earlier ones as Wray (2002) postulates regarding formulaic sequences. At earlier stages, however, it is more of a “non-analysed sequence” which might be used instead.

We display in the following table (Table 45) all the devices used to express that events are on-going at a certain reference time by our FrL2 informants. These devices include the aspectual marker «*en train de*» and every other means used by learners to express an on-going event. The focus particle *encore* used by A13 to express that an event is on-going was classified separately under the category “other”. Here is the extract from his retelling:

(51) A13, *Wakeup*
Dans cette scène il y a un mec.
Qui fait dodo.
Et /&dorme/.
Un moment le réveil /&sone/.

Et &turn il /&turn/.
 Il éteint.
 Il /&dor/ **encore**.
 Et après sa maman vient le réveiller.
 Pas de succès.
 Alors qu'est ce qu'elle fait.
 Elle prend elle prend un pistolet.
 C'est pour chasser je sais pas l'oiseau ou bien un truc comme ça.
 Elle tire.
 Et là il se réveille.

«*Il dort encore*» is interpreted here as an on-going event, despite the presence of *après* in the following adjacent proposition, indicating the temporal referential movement and boundedness. The on-goingness meaning is explicit by the use of the focus particle *encore*. The same proposition can be paraphrased as «*Il continue à dormir*», an event which opens a temporal frame including the bounded events happening in the rest of the retelling (actions performed by the mother after she comes into the room).

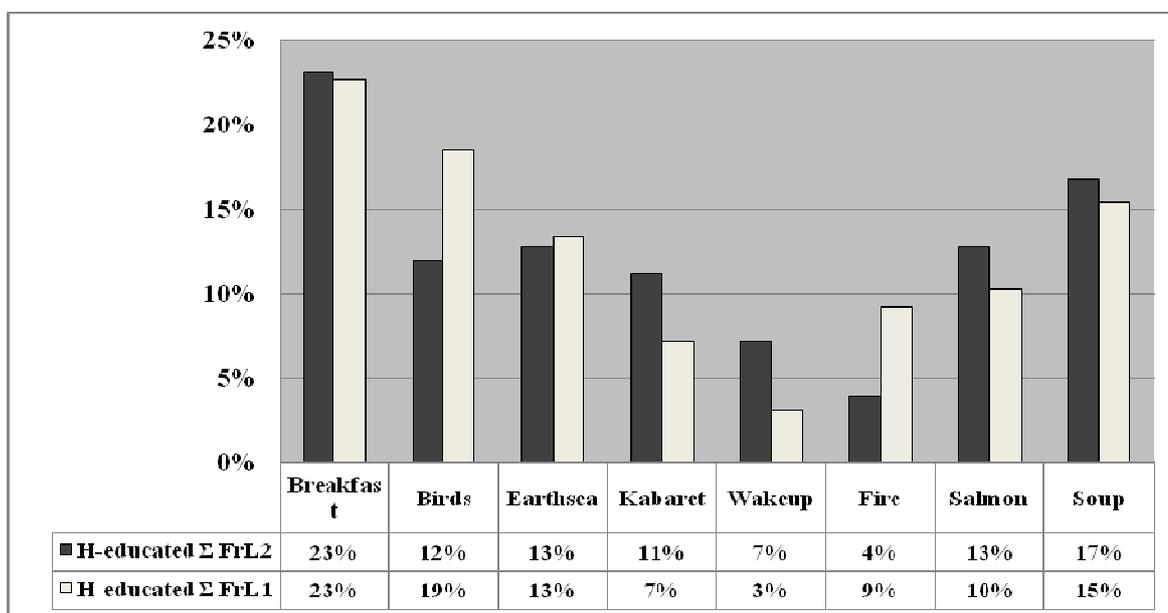
Table 45. Forms expressing on-goingness in FrL2 retellings

LV	code	«en train de»	Présent de l'indicatif	Gérondif	Imparfait	«Continuer à + V»	Other	Total
Stage 2	A1	0						0
	A5	4						4
	A8	0						0
Stage 3	A2	0	13	1				14
	A3	7	1					8
	A4	8	4					12
	A6	2	17					19
	A10	7	6	1				14
	A11	11	2					13
	A12	6	3					9
	A13	2	9				1	12
Stage 4	A7	9	2					11
	A9	13	3		1			17
Stage 5	A01	10	10	3				23
	A04	8	3	3				14
Stage 6	A02	1	3		4			8
	A03	13	3					16

LV	code	«en train de»	<i>Présent de l'indicatif</i>	<i>Gérondif</i>	<i>Imparfait</i>	«Continuer à + V»	Other	Total
<i>Stage 6-7</i>	A05	16	2	1		5		24
	A06	15	2	5		1		23
Total		132	83	14	5	6	1	241

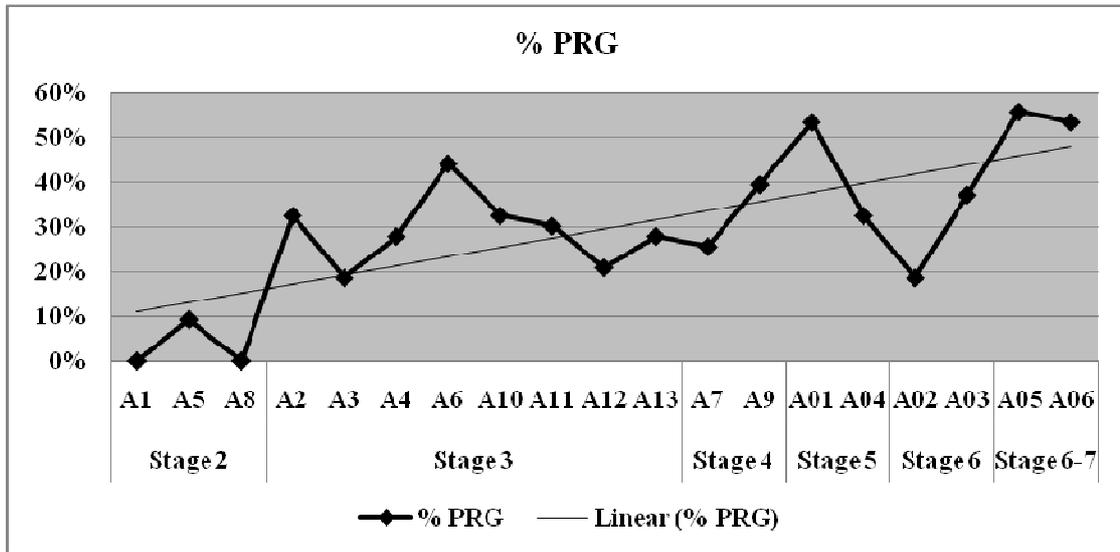
We notice that FrL2 learners in the H-educated group (emphasised using italics in the table) use exactly the same devices as FrL1 H-educated native speakers (see Table 45 above). The comparability of results is also verified across the scenes, as the figure comparing the total progressive propositions below shows:

Figure 25. Comparison of FrL1 and FrL2 H-educated informants' use of on-goingness devices across the videos



Examining the percentages of the use of progressive propositions compared to the total number of propositions by each FrL2 speaker reveals a generally ascending trend throughout the acquisitional stages. The expression of on-goingness drops however at stages 5 and 6. This can be explained by the fact at later stages; L2 learners construe the simultaneous events while using more extended side structures and commentaries, which might lower the percentages at those stages. We shall return to analysing the structuring of information in the discourse in the last section of our findings.

Figure 26. Percentage of use of progressive utterances by the total utterances

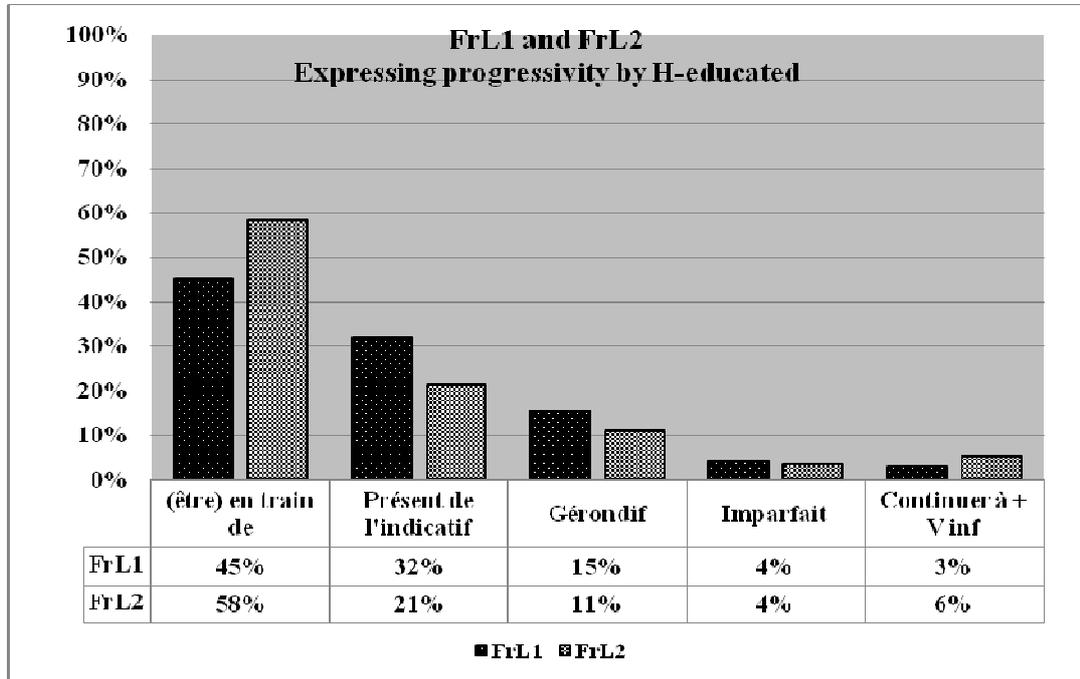


We also compared in detail the use of each device in Figure 27. We notice an interesting difference between native speakers and advanced learners: FrL2 speakers use «*en train de*» more frequently than FrL1 speakers do. Furthermore, FrL2 make less use of the *présent de l'indicatif* than native speakers do. We formulate therefore the following: FrL2 H-educated informants manage to use «*en train de*» to express on-goingness in retelling the situations we presented to them. However, their use shows higher frequencies than the use of native speakers of the marked form. We can therefore hypothesise that.

FrL2 advanced learners use «en train de» differently from native speakers. They use the construction more often because they generalise its use to progressive contexts.

We go back to this issue after examining «*en train de*» at the discourse level to achieve better insights.

Figure 27. The different devices of expressing on-goingness by FrL1 and FrL2 H-educated groups



We now turn to investigating into more details the expression of on-goingness by all FrL2 speakers. We look at the proportions of use of «*en train de*» in every possible realisation: we labelled \pm Aux. «*en train de*» every possible occurrence of the sequence (\pm stand for the occurrences with (+) and without (-) an auxiliary). We look at these variations later.

Figure 28. Proportions of use of «*en train de*» by all FrL2 informants across acquisitional stages.

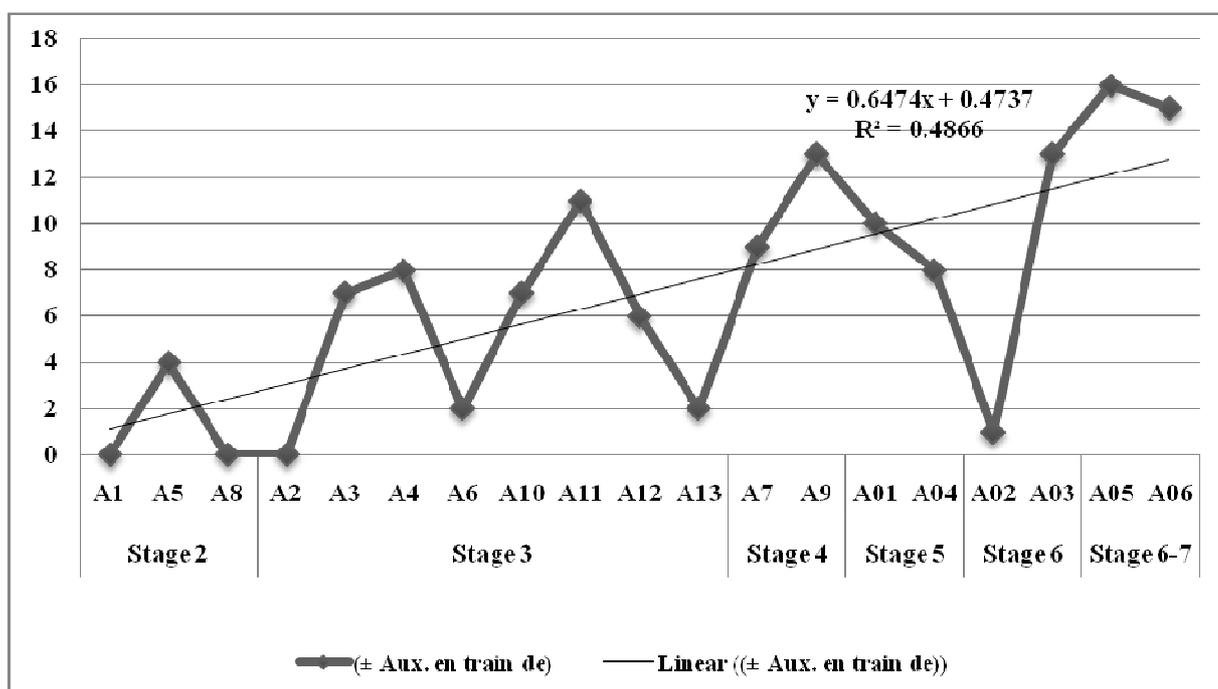


Figure 28 gives a detailed account of the proportion of use of the sequence « *(être) en train de* » by each informant. It also displays the details concerning each stage of acquisition to which the learners belong. An interesting observation we can make is that only one out of the three informants at Stage 2 uses the periphrasis in his retellings. He uses the expression as a rote form, exploiting the main element of the periphrasis /trẽ/ followed by a base form (V or Ve) as illustrated by the example from his retelling *Kabaret* (the verbal elements are written in phonetics and put between / /):

(52) A5, *Kabaret*

*EXP: *Qu'est ce qui s'est passé dans cette scène ?*

*SUI: /&jãna/ comedien.

*SUI: /&trẽ &bwa/.

*SUI: *Et /&trẽ &fet/ des gestes.*

*SUI: *Pour /&rigole/ les gens là.*

*SUI: /&trẽ &rgarde/ le femme.

*EXP: *Qu'est ce qu'elle fait la femme ?*

*SUI: *Elle /&trẽ &rir/ le journal.*

*SUI: *et /komās &agarde/.*

Likewise, in A2's productions (Stage 3), no occurrence of «*(être) en train de*» has been found.

The use of «*en train de*» remains unstable in the intermediate variety as in the speech of A6 who uses the marker twice, that is, very rarely. He once utters it as being composed of three distinct words (like it sounds in native speech) and another time as /ãtra/ + V, with the verbal element similar to a base form. Here is the extract of the retelling:

(53) A6, *Kabaret*
Il y a une dame au théâtre.
/ãtragarde/.
elle lit le journal et tout.
et un monsieur il est entré.

/ãtragarde/ is interpreted as '*en train de regarder*'. We notice a difference between this use and A5's in the basic variety. The latter uses a more basic form of the sequence /trẽ/, trying to produce the main word '*train*', whereas in A6's retelling there is also an attempt to utter the preposition *en*, which is a clear development of the form on the left.

All the possible realisations of the periphrasis by all FrL2 learners are displayed in the following table (AUX + *en train de* + INF accounts for all the uses of the periphrasis in a native-like manner. It also includes instances where the auxiliary is not present and not needed, as opposed to the other possibilities where the auxiliary is absent but necessary in the context of the utterances):

Table 46. The different verbalisations of «*(être) en train de*» by FrL2 learners

		/trẽ/ + V - Ve	/ãtrẽ/ + V - Ve	(-AUX) <i>en train</i> (-de) +INF	(-AUX) <i>en</i> <i>train de</i> +INF	AUX + <i>en train de</i> + + INF
Interpretation		<i>train</i>	<i>en train</i>	<i>en train</i> + INF	<i>en train de</i> + INF	<i>(être) en train de</i> + INF
Stage 2	A1					
	A5	4				
	A8					
Stage 3	A2					
	A3				7	
	A4		2		6	

		/trɛ̃/ + V - Ve	/ãtrɛ̃/ + V - Ve	(-AUX) en train (-de) +INF	(-AUX) en train de +INF	AUX + en train + de + INF
	A6		1		1	
	A10				1	6
	A11			1	8	2
	A12					6
	A13					2
Stage 4	A7					9
	A9					13
Stage 5	A01					10
	A04					8
Stage 6	A02					1
	A03					13
Stage 6-7	A05					16
	A06					15

We summarise the proportions presented in Table 46 in the following table:

Table 47. Summary of use of the periphrasis in learner varieties

	∅	/trɛ̃/ + V - Ve	/ãtrɛ̃/ + V - Ve	en train + INF	en train de + INF	AUX + en train + de + INF
Interpretation	No use	<i>train</i>	<i>en train</i>	<i>en train</i> + INF	<i>en train de</i> + INF	(<i>être</i>) <i>en train de</i> + INF
Basic Variety Stage 2	+	100%				
Intermediate variety Stage 3	+		7%	3%	53%	37%
Advanced Low Stage Stage 4						100%
Advanced Medium Stage Stage 5						100%
Advanced High Stage Stage 6						100%
Very Advanced / Near -Native Variety Stage 6-7						100%

The first emergence of «*en train de*» in the earliest stages of the acquisitional process, i.e. in the pre-basic variety, cannot be examined in this project. The results of our analysis of the periphrasis indicate that it emerges around the basic / intermediate varieties. Furthermore, we can hypothesise given the results that the total absence of the periphrasis in the productions by some

learners might be in favour of the claim that «(*être*) *en train de*» does not necessarily appear in earlier stages of French language acquisition. This hypothesis might find some support in the longitudinal research on emergence of forms in FrL2 (see Bardovi-Harlig (2000)). In fact, we know for instance from those studies that auxiliaries emerge later in the acquisition of a L2.

The periphrasis evolves and develops slowly across the acquisitional stages in a systematic and organised way, moving from a single entity to a multiple complex structure. Along with the development of their chunking abilities, i.e., the ability to distinguish and separate parts of a speech utterance, the sequence starts to accommodate more elements starting with “*en*” even though the base forms are still used. The appearance of the auxiliary is the last step after the emergence of all the elements «*en train de*» and their utterance in an articulate native-like manner.

At earlier stages, specifically, in the basic variety in the beginning of L2 acquisition, learners attempt the main element of the periphrasis (*train*) putting it before a base form. In fact, the periphrasis emerges as a non-analysed sequence that appears as a rote form (Bartning & Forsberg 2006; Wray 2002), where only the main element *train* is exploited. At the stage immediately following the basic variety (i.e., intermediate variety), the learners start building up hypotheses on the composition of the sequence. This stage is very productive as many attempts at analysing the sequence are made, and consequently, the periphrasis is uttered differently by the same informants and by different ones. Indeed, the sequence is most fluctuating and unsystematic use is observed within the productions of one informant and across learners. Additionally instances of the use of the non-analysed form followed by a base form can still be observed at this stage (54).

(54) A6, Kabaret
Il y a une dame au théâtre.
/àtragarde/.
elle lit le journal et tout.
et un monsieur il est entré.

The learners’ analysis of the sequence starts with the immediate / adjacent components (*en* on the left (See (55)) then *de* on the right ((56))

(55) A11, *Birds*
Il y a les gens .
Qui en train danser .

(56) A3, *Earthsea*
Tante et je sais pas son frère ou bien copine en train de pleurer.

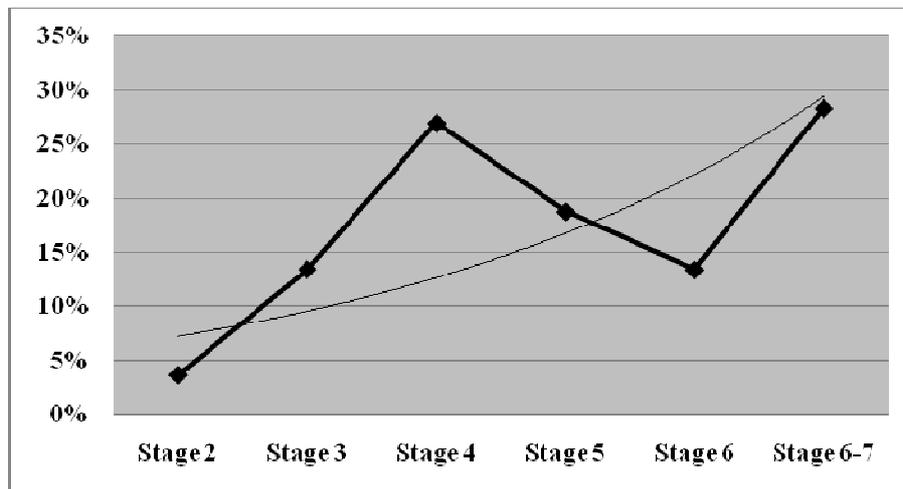
We also observe a native-like use of the periphrasis and the first appearance of the auxiliary (37% of the uses) as in the example below:

(57) A4, *Breakfast*
Euh la dame on voit la dame.
Elle fait le sport .
Et le monsieur là il est en train de faire la crêpe.
Et son crêpe elle est crâmée.
Peut être il est énervé pour ça.

Beyond the intermediate variety, the use of «*en train de*» is functional, but up to the near native variety, the differences in its use are observed on the macro, discourse organisation level.

The average number of occurrences of the periphrasis at each stage is graphically represented in Figure 29.

Figure 29. Use of «*(être) en train de* » at the different acquisitional stages



The slope shows an idiosyncratic variation of the use of the periphrasis across the acquisitional stages. This might be due to the limited number of informants at each stage.

We also calculated the average proportion of use of «*en train de*» against the average number of predicates used to express on-goingness at a given stage; we obtained the following results (see Table 48 below):

Table 48. Use of «*en train de*» across acquisitional stages: statistical interpretation

	Coeff	Estimate	St.error	t-ratio	P-value	95% Lower	95% Upper
a	Const	0.02318	0.0961953	0.240972	0.82142	-0.243901	0.2902614
b	x	0.03428	0.0204895	1.6729857	0.16965	-0.022609	0.0911667

Under the assumption that progression between stages is linear (i.e. the difference between stages is treated to be the same), the trendline present in the data has the constant 0.14 and the slope coefficient of 0.034. The T-test for the values of coefficient indicates the null hypothesis of constant being equal to zero cannot be rejected at standard of 5% confidence level with t-ratio of 0.93 corresponding to p-value of 0.39%.

Conversely, the value of the slope coefficient of 0.08 is statistically greater than zero with t-ratio of 2.48 with p-value of 5% and 95% confidence interval of -0.002 to 0.17. When estimated under the assumption of constant equal to zero.

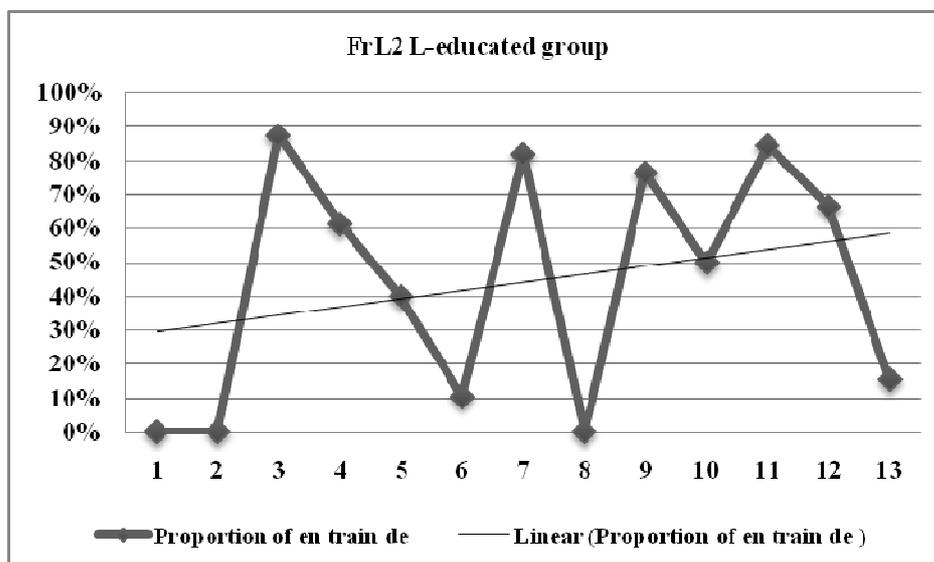
The slope coefficient estimate is 0.11.

Interpretation: For the basic case with constant move between stages changes the proportion of «*en train de*» utilisation by 8.45 percentage point.

Assuming that the constant equals zero, the move from an acquisitional stage to a more advanced adjacent one increases the «*en train de*» frequency by 11 percentage points.

It is worth clarifying here that if the same analyses are conducted on the data with consideration to only the informants' period of residence, in the two groups separately, we obtain different results, displayed in the following figures and tables:

Figure 30. Period of residence and proportion of the marked form in L-educated speakers' retellings



Note: 1-13 refers to the informants in the L-educated group A1→A13

Table 49. Use of «en train de» and duration of residence: statistical interpretation

	Coeff	Estimate	St.error	t-ratio	P-value	95% Lower	95% Upper
a	Const	0.27198	0.2066745	1.3159643	0.21495	-0.182911	0.7268639
b	x	0.02428	0.0260385	0.9324766	0.37111	-0.03303	0.0815908

The figure shows that the period of residence in France does not correlate with a higher use of «en train de». Actually, the period of residence does not necessarily imply greater exposure to the language and input, which would favour a faster acquisition and use of the sequence. Indeed, A8 who had lived 4 years in France at the time of the recording does not use the sequence at all in her speech. Her exposure to the language, according to the questionnaire was indeed very limited as she spent most of her time at home in an Arabic speaking family and environment. These results are not surprising, as it is a fact that most of our informants were not likely to be exposed to a great amount of language input given their professional and personal contexts. However, there is a correlation between the period of residence of H-educated informants in France and the proportion of «en train de» in their speech as evidenced by the ascending line in Figure 31 and the statistical analysis presented in Table 50 below.

Figure 31. Period of residence and proportion of the marked form in H-educated speakers' retellings

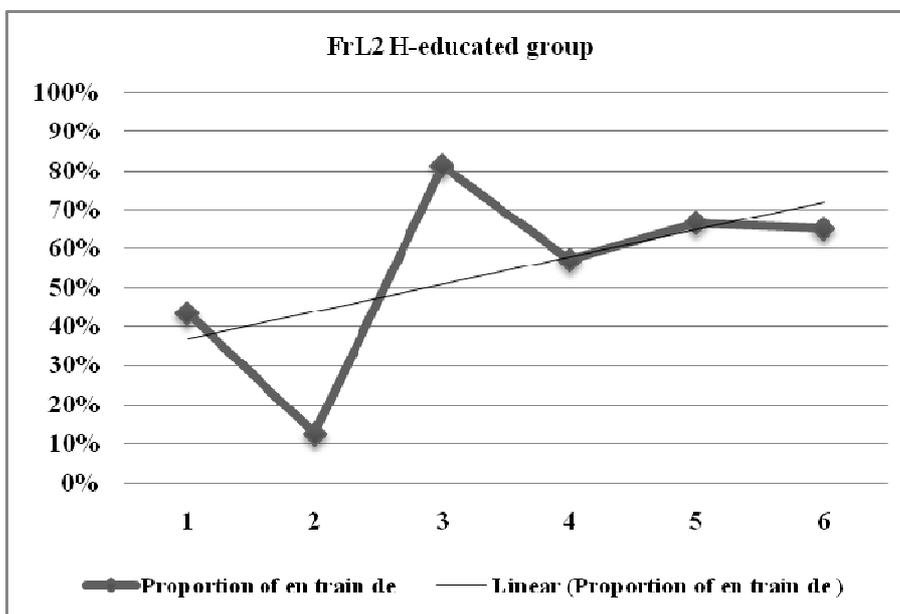


Table 50. Regression calculations of the proportions of «en train de» in H-educated FrL2 speech

	Coeff	Estimate	St.error	t-ratio	P-value	95% Lower	95% Upper
a	Const	0.29667	0.2080959	1.4256413	0.22711	-0.281097	0.874437
b	x	0.0706	0.0534341	1.3211923	0.25695	-0.07776	0.2189536

Under the assumption that progression between stages is linear (i.e., the difference between stages is treated to be the same), the trendline present in the data has the constant 0.29 and the slope coefficient of 0.07. The t-test for the values the values of coefficient indicates the null hypothesis of constant being equal to zero cannot be rejected at standard of 5% confidence level with t-ratio of 1.42 corresponding to p-value of 22%.

The value of the slope coefficient of 0.07 is not statistically greater than zero with t-ratio of 1.32 with p-value of 5% and 95% confidence interval of -0.07 to 0.21.

In the following section, we would like to investigate the types of lexical contents selected with the use of the marked versus the unmarked forms to express the progressive aspect in TAL1, FrL1 and in FrL2. In fact, any investigation of the progressive aspect and its expression should also take into account the lexical aspect as demonstrated by different studies (e.g., Bardovi-

Harlig 2008; Bardovi-Harlig & Reynolds 1995).

3.2.1.2. Types of situations, lexical contents and use of *qa:'id* and of «*en train de*»

As mentioned before, Leclercq (2007) shows in her study that aspectual marking is for device of expressing *Sim*. Aspectual marking, as her analyses show, involves grammatical as well as lexical marking. Furthermore, we believe that aspectual contrast or juxtaposition of lexical contents is also a means of expressing *Sim*. We therefore investigate lexical contents employed in solving the verbal task of retelling simultaneous events. Our objective is twofold: to examine whether the selection of lexical contents affects the means chosen to express on-goingness and to investigate how lexical aspect is used to express *Sim*.

We base our analyses of lexical aspect on the three-class categorisation of Klein (1994) (0-State, 1-State and 2-State lexical contents). By so doing, we would like to see whether there is any correlation between the use of *qa:'id* and of «*en train de*» in Tunisian Arabic and French respectively, and the type of verb and lexical content used. In other words, we aim at checking whether in using *qa:'id* or «*en train de*» in the retellings of TAL1 and FrL1 or FrL2 respectively, the type of lexical contents guides and constrains the choices of the speakers to use the marked form rather than any other available option.

3.2.1.2.1. TAL1

The lexical contents selected with the four most used constructions are analysed and displayed in Table 51 (the percentage of the lexical content selected with each form is calculated). We examined whether there was a relation of dependence between the type of lexical content selected and the use of one construction or the other.

Table 51. Lexical contents and the four forms in TAL1

	0S		1S		2S		Total (100%)
	n=	%	n=	%	n=	%	n=
PV + <i>fī</i>	0	0%	69	62%	42	38%	111
PV	0	0%	77	93%	6	7%	83
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV	0	0%	54	76%	17	24%	71
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV + <i>fī</i>	0	0%	23	43%	30	57%	53
Total	0	0%	223	70%	95	30%	318

The lexical contents generally selected with a progressive aspectual value are of two types: Predicates which present only one TT contrast, 1-State lexical contents (1S); called “activities” in other theoretical frameworks, and predicates that present two TT contrasts implying a change from a source state to a target state (2S). Table 51 shows that the progressive aspect is predominantly expressed by means of 1S lexical contents, i.e. with activity verbs (70% of lexical contents). In fact, the frequencies and rates of use show that PV (prefixed verb) forms expressing on-goingness tend to select almost only 1S contents (93%). The 2S contents selected for the same form are very limited in number and represent only 7% of the total PVs used to express the progressive value. These 2S contents used with PV in progressive contexts have the particularity of involving a transitive verb that needs an indirect object complement, like in example (58) below:

- (58) *yi-ddakkak 'a-l mumat^hla*
 PS3M-annoy on-the actress
 He is annoying the actress)

We notice that the presence of the markers *qa:'id* and *fī* allows expressing on-goingness when the verbs chosen present two state contents. In order to test the null hypothesis of independence between the type of lexical content and the aspectual marker *qa:'id*, we did a standard χ^2 test (see Table 52 below).

Our null hypothesis (H_0) postulates that there is no significant relationship between the occurrences of the preverbal marker *qa:'id* and type of lexical content. We examined the difference between the observed and the expected frequencies of each predicate form (with *qa:'id* and predicate forms without *qa:'id*) with 1S and 2S lexical contents.

Table 52. Role of lexical content in the use of *qa:'id* in TAL1

	Observed frequencies			Expected frequencies	
	1S	2S	Raw total	1S	2S
Progressive predicates without <i>qa:'id</i>	146	48	194	136.04	57.96
Progressive predicates with <i>qa:'id</i>	77	47	124	86.96	37.04
Column total	223	95	318	$\chi^2 = 0.012\%$	

Our calculated value of chi square is 0.012%. It indicates that there is less than 5% probability that the relationship we have stated is random. This allows us to reject the null hypothesis of independence at the standard 5% significance level.

We furthermore tested the hypothesis (H_0) of independence between the predicate form chosen to express the progressive and the type of lexical content chosen in a proposition (see Table 53). We focused on the four constructions as above. A χ^2 was also conducted with each of the four predicate forms listed in the following table:

Table 53. Role of lexical content in the choice of constructions in TAL1

	Observed frequencies			Expected frequencies	
	1S	2S	Raw total	1S	2S
PV + <i>fi</i>	69	42	111	77.84	33.16
PV	77	6	83	58.20	24.80
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV	54	17	71	46.79	21.21
<i>qa:'id</i> + PV + <i>fi</i>	23	30	53	37.17	15.83
Column total	223	95	318	$\chi^2 = 2.53$	

H_0 is yet again strongly rejected given the χ^2 value obtained.

In conclusion, we postulate that on-goingness in TAL1 has more affinities with lexical contents which present an activity (1S contents). The PV form alone used with 1S contents expresses unambiguously the progressive aspect, unless explicitly marked otherwise by an adverbial for example, or employed to narrate bounded events. Lexical contents, which present a source state and a target state however, employed with PV form, take a different aspectual value, for e.g., the imperfective value, and in our data, it takes the value of the narrative present (59)).

- (59) A13, Kabaret
- a. n-shu:f-u: mra .
PP1-see-PP1 woman
We see a woman
- b. Taqra fi(j)jari:da .
PS3F-read PRG-the-newspaper
She is reading the newspaper
- c. W rajil yo-dxol
And man PS3M-enter
A man enters
- d. Yo-q'od hd^he-ha
PS3M-sit near-her
He sits close to her

In (59) b. *Taqra fi-(j)-jari:da* (she is reading the newspaper) expresses the progressive aspect while c. and d. contain punctual 2-S verbs which denote bounded events in a sequence.

3.2.1.2.2. FrL1

We investigated the lexical contents that were selected by FrL1 informants in each group. We were especially interested in those with the marked («*en train de*») and unmarked (*présent de l'indicatif*) forms to construe the main situations of the stimuli (that is why the numbers here are different from those in the general frequencies). Indeed, proportions presented in Table 43 concern all propositions expressing on-goingness whereas the following frequencies (see Table 54) deal only with the propositions that retell the main simultaneous situations presented in the videos S1 and S2.

Table 54. Lexical contents in FrL1

	Marked form		Unmarked form	
	1S	2S	1S	2S
H-educated	26	14	16	10
L-educated	4	7	32	8
Σ	30	21	48	18

The results allow us to make the following observations about the linguistic forms expressing on-goingness in relation to the inherent temporal properties of lexical contents. Firstly, both forms can be used with 1S dynamic contents or 2S contents. Secondly, the *présent de l'indicatif* in French is more employed with 1S dynamic contents than with predicates presenting a change of state. (See examples (60) and (61))

(60) F1, *Earthsea*
La jeune fille chante.

(61) F4, *Birds*
Il y a une petite fille qui danse une petite pré ado avec un guitariste

Thirdly, the periphrasis «*en train de*» can be used with homogeneous dynamic lexical contents as well as with predicates presenting a change of state (2S). Finally, 0S contents are not selected at all.

We now examine the lexical contents and the forms chosen by FrL2 informants to express on-goingness.

3.2.1.2.3. FrL2

We list in the following table the percentages of the different lexical contents with each form. The rates of use of «*en train de*» by L-educated speakers also include its occurrences as a non-analysed sequence. These non-analysed occurrences are all employed with verbal contents presenting one TT contrast (1S).

Table 55. Lexical contents in FrL2

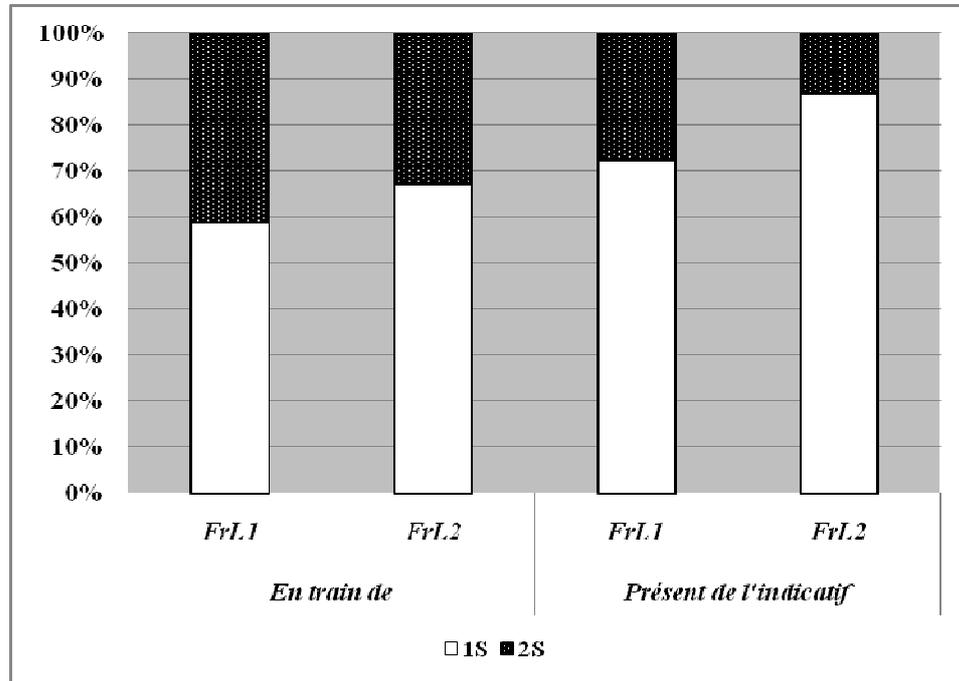
	Type of content	H-educated	L-educated
Marked form	1S	63%	70%
	2S	37%	30%
Unmarked form	1S	83%	88%
	2S	17%	12%
Base form	1S	0%	88%
	2S	0%	12%

The percentages reveal striking similarities between the two groups of L2 learners in the choices of lexical contents. In fact, most of the two forms' occurrences are with 1S verbs, showing clear affinities between the progressive and dynamic activities. We also observe more 2S contents with the marked form than with the unmarked one. We formulate the following hypothesis:

Given that the présent de l'indicatif is not a marked form for conveying on-goingness, the choice of the 1S contents is a less ambiguous option to the speaker when the unmarked form is selected. This is due to the homogeneity and durativity of those contents, which are compatible with the concept of on-goingness. Conversely, when 2S verbs are applied, the marked form is unambiguous in the sense that it dilates a temporal interval to accommodate on-goingness meaning to a verb presenting two boundaries, one source state and one target state.

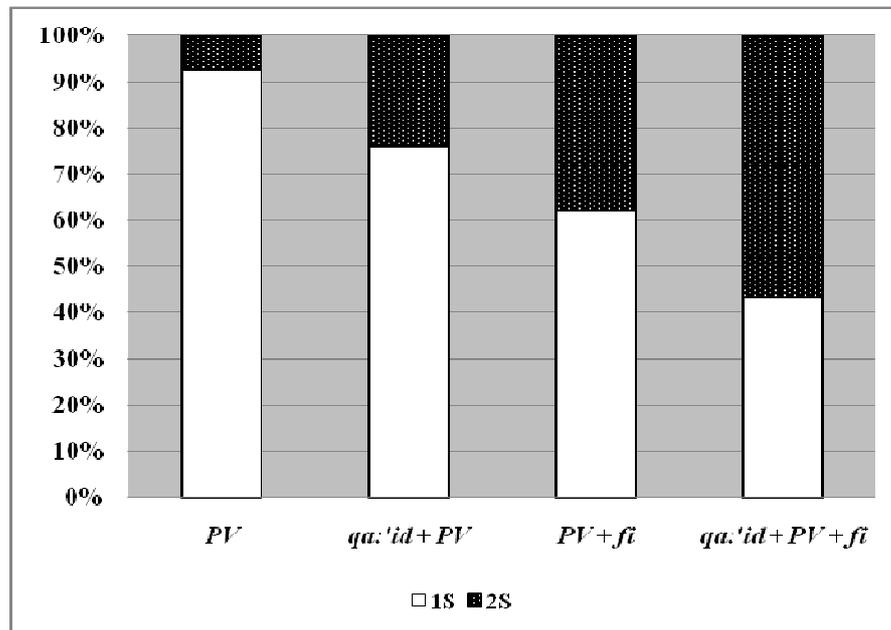
A comparison with FrL1 speakers' choices of lexical contents reveals remarkable similarities as Figure 32 below shows:

Figure 32. Comparison of FrL1 and FrL2 lexical contents



FrL2 learners, just like French native speakers, use more the marked form than the unmarked form with lexical contents presenting two boundaries, a source state and a target state. Nevertheless, the percentages of the use of 2S lexical contents are always higher among native speakers than among learners.

Figure 33. TAL1 lexical contents



When we confront these results with TAL1 findings, the hypothesis above is supported. In fact, 2S lexical contents are more frequent when on-goingness markers are used. The post verbal marker *fi* is more employed with this type of verbs than the preverbal marker. We have already noted the stable character of *fi* (i.e., the necessity of its presence with object complements). The highest frequency of 2S verbs is with the whole periphrases with the preverbal and postverbal markers.

As we can see, the investigation of the types of lexical contents reveals striking similarities between the three corpora: TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2. These concerns the choice of the lexical content with relation to the forms. We have found that the unmarked forms in both native languages and learner varieties goes most of the time with dynamic contents, which we label after Klein's framework 1S contents. 2S contents however, occur, but there is evidence that they are more frequent with marked forms («*en train de*» in FrL1 and *qa:'id* and *fi* in TAL1.) The likeness observed in the lexical choices by the three groups of languages is striking. We therefore hypothesise that the type of languages we have present similarities as to the expression of on-goingness. These similarities have to do with the distribution of the unmarked forms and the

marked forms concerning the choice of lexical contents used.

3.2.1.2.4 Lexical contents in relation with the videos' situations:

For a more refined investigation of lexical aspects, we studied in details the lexical contents selected with the *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» forms to retell each situation from the videos, S1 and S2. As a reminder, we summarise in Table 56 below the main properties of the situations shown in the videos based on Table 15 above.

Table 56. Properties of the situations involved in the eight videos

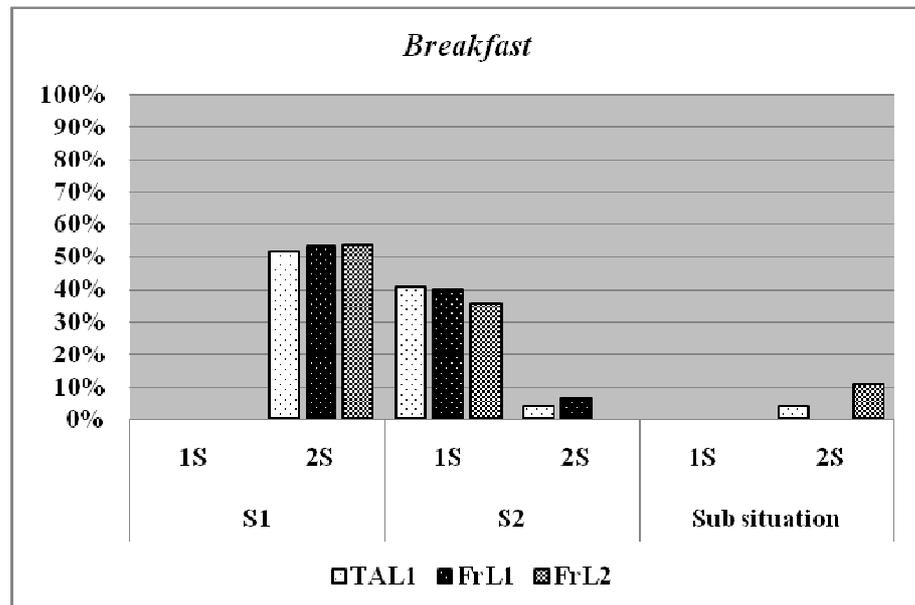
	S1 no visible boundaries	S1 inferred end result	S2 left-bounded	S2 bounded	S2 iterative	S2 affects the course of S1	S2 puts an end to S1
<i>Breakfast</i>	+	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Birds</i>	+	-	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Earthsea</i>	+	-	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Kabaret</i>	+	-	-	+	-	+	+
<i>Wakeup</i>	+	-	-	+	-	+	+
<i>Soup</i>	+	-	-	+	+	+	-
<i>Salmon</i>	-	+	-	+	+	-	-
<i>Fire</i>	+	-	-	+	-	-	-

We examined the situations for which the marker *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» were used in the retellings. We present in the following section a detailed analysis for each video. As we will see, the lexical contents selected are influenced by the properties of situations involved in the videos.

3.2.1.2.4.1. Videos showing perfect simultaneity: *Breakfast, Birds and Earthsea*

The choices made in *Breakfast* retellings are quite comparable as to the use of the marked forms to construe S1 and S2 as Figure 34 shows. The marked forms are employed both with 2S and 1S lexical contents. The graph rather shows the impact of the visual stimulus on the speakers' choices. In fact, S1 of the video has an inferable end result that explains the exclusive use of 2S contents presenting a change of state (hence inferring a boundary to the event). S2, however, is homogeneous and durative, and the selection of 1S contents was clearly favoured in all the retellings.

Figure 34. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Breakfast* retellings



What is interesting however, is that none of the French native speakers used «*en train de*» to construe the sub-events of S1 [putting batter in pan, tossing pancake, etc] while in FrL2, we notice the existence of some occurrences. The periphrasis plays a role in structuring the discourse and it is rather used to construe a macro, globalising event. The following example is an illustration of the learner's use of «*en train de*» to describe sub-events:

(62) A05, *Breakfast*

Donc on voit le même jeune homme de tout à l'heure dix minutes après.

Qui s' est reveillé.

En train de préparer une crêpe.

Et sa maman enfin la dame qui a essayé de le réveiller tout à l'heure.

En train de faire des exercices.

Et le film alterne entre.

Lui en train de faire de préparer sa crêpe.

Donc il est en train de la retourner.

On dirait.

De la faire tourner dans l' air.

De la remettre dans le poêle.

Là et la dame qui continue.

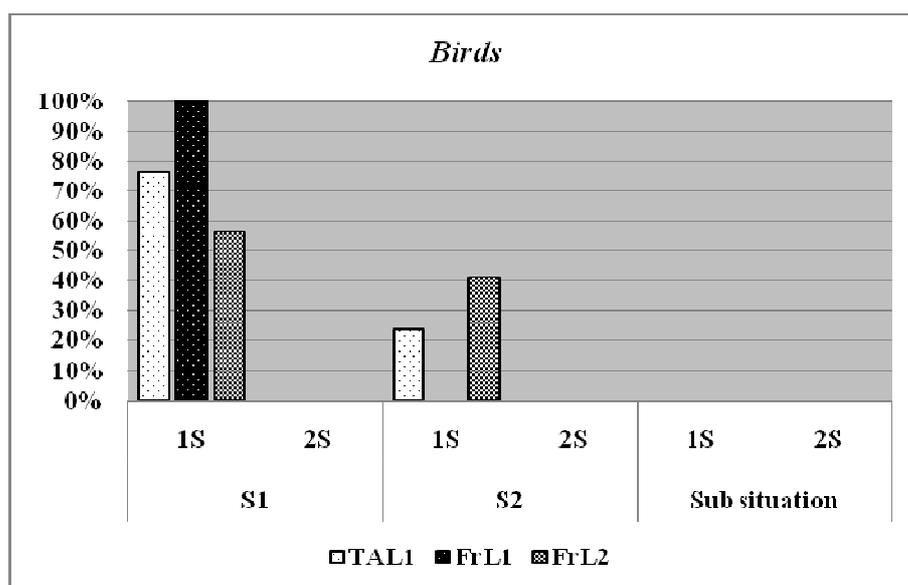
A faire ses exercices tranquillement sur une musique un peu ringarde.

While this use is not at all found in native speech, as sub-events are generally construed with the

simple form (*présent de la narration*), sub-events in TAL1 are possibly told by means of the preverbal marker *qa:’id*. We might think here of a case of overgeneralising the use of «*en train de*» assimilated to the TAL1’s distribution of the marked form. Given the very limited occurrences, we cannot generalise such a claim in this project. It remains though a very good avenue for further research.

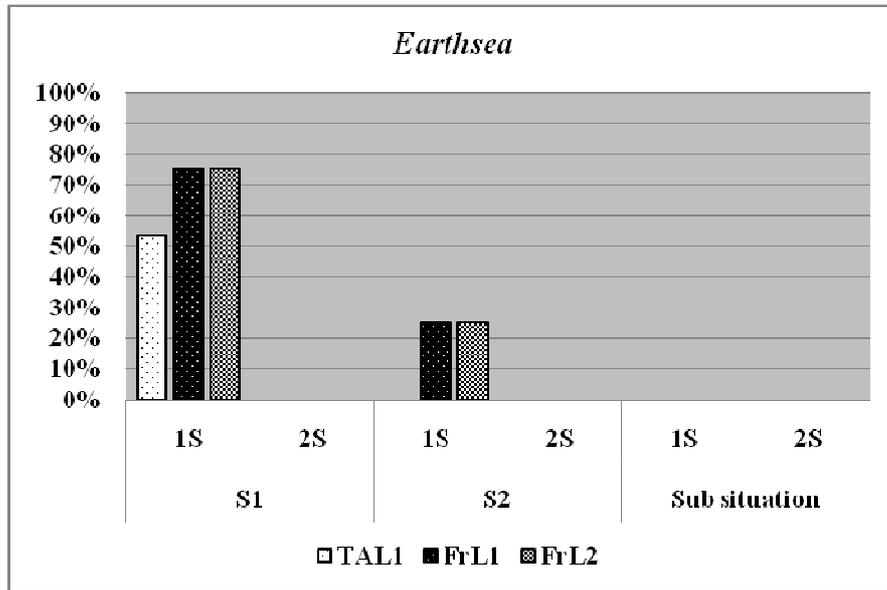
Birds’ retellings as represented in the graph below show some divergence in the choices of the speakers. FrL1 speakers choose «*en train de*» exclusively for S1 with dynamic 1S lexical contents. We suppose therefore, that left-bounded situations do not trigger the use of «*en train de*» in French native speech. Tunisian speakers however, choose the marked form to account also for S2. We observe in addition to that the occurrence of «*en train de*» in some FrL2 retellings to construe S2.

Figure 35. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Birds* retellings



The comparability of FrL1 and FrL2 *Earthsea* retellings regarding the selection of lexical contents with the marked forms is striking. Again, «*en train de*» and *qa:’id* are used more with the unbounded durative situation which is S1 of the video (see Figure 36).

Figure 36. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Earthsea* retellings



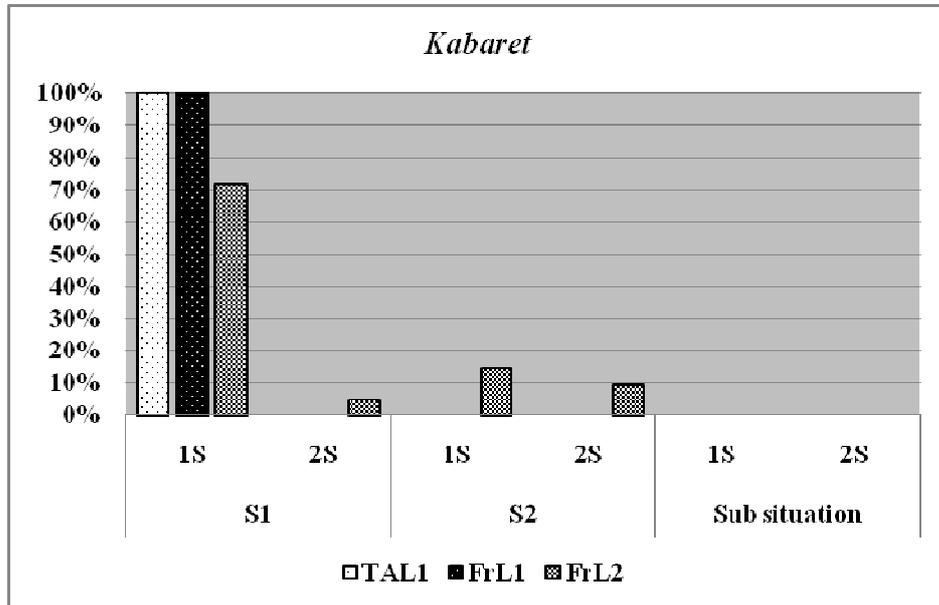
We notice that the choice of the marked form and of the lexical content are related to the situations involved in the videos. The ones which present an inferable boundary (S1 in *Breakfast*) are construed with 2S contents combined with the marked form. We examine also that situations which have a visible onset do not trigger the use of the marked forms. We examine in the following the choices made for the second type of *Sim*, inclusion.

3.2.1.2.4.2. Videos showing inclusion: *Kabaret, Wakeup, Fire, Salmon and Soup*

In the retellings of all these videos, the marked forms are selected to construe the situation conceptualised as durative and which operates as a frame to the bounded situations making up the second situation of the videos. The choice of the lexical content depends on the properties of the situations.

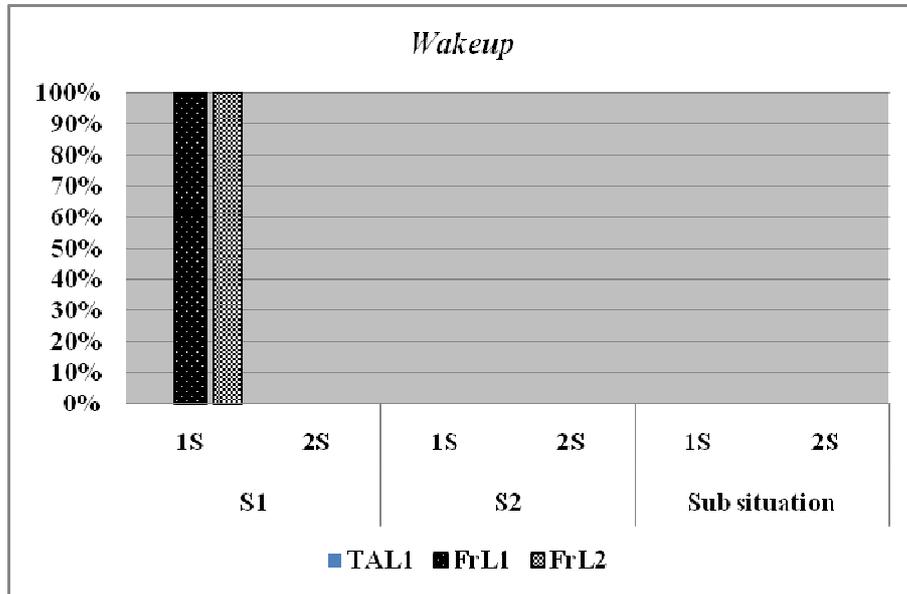
In *Kabaret* retellings we note a difference between the native speakers' and the learners' use of the marked forms. These latter only construe S1 of the video, while FrL2 learners also apply it for S2 bounded events.

Figure 37. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Kabaret* retellings



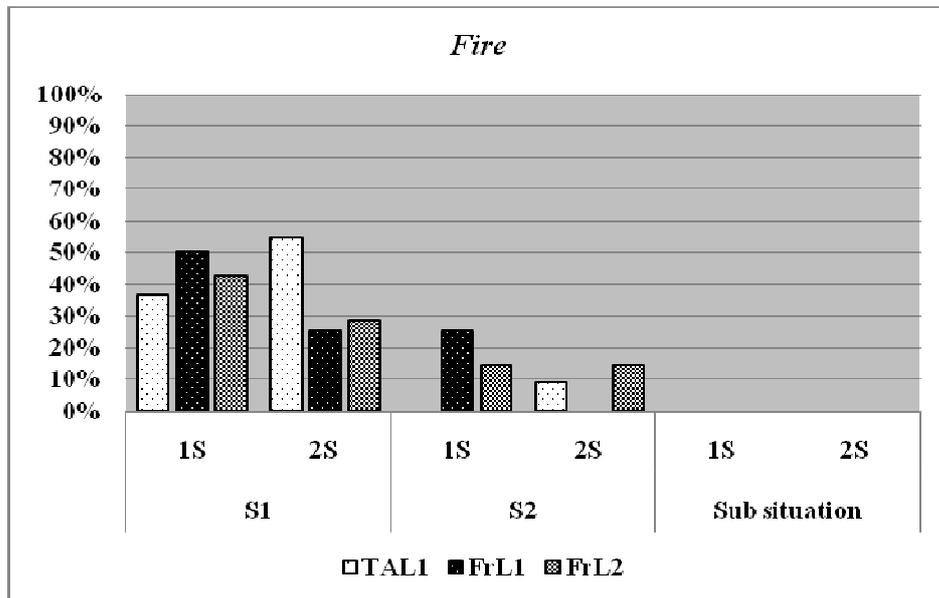
In *Wakeup* retellings, the marked forms are employed exclusively in FrL1 and FrL2 for S1. What is striking is that in TAL1, there is a massive preference for using the active participle to account for the same situation [to be asleep]. We have argued above that the nature of the marker (as indicating static posture) necessitates a dynamic PV and not one evoking a static position.

Figure 38. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Wakeup* retellings



In *Fire* retellings, the marked forms are used more for S1 than for S2 of the video.

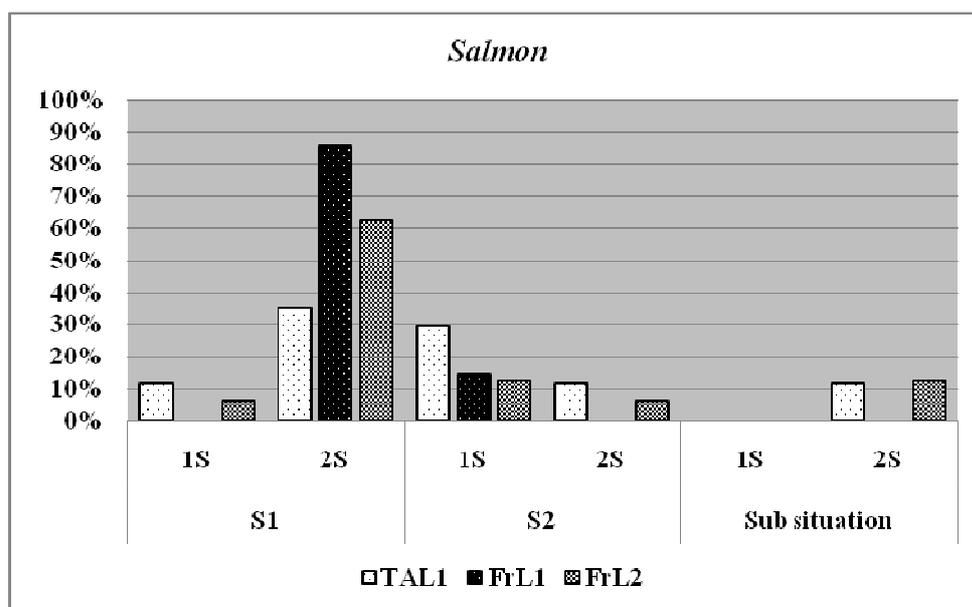
Figure 39. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Fire* retellings



In *Salmon* retellings, there is a clear preference for 2S lexical contents for the S1 of the video. This finding is quite comparable to the *Breakfast* retellings where S1 is of the same nature [a

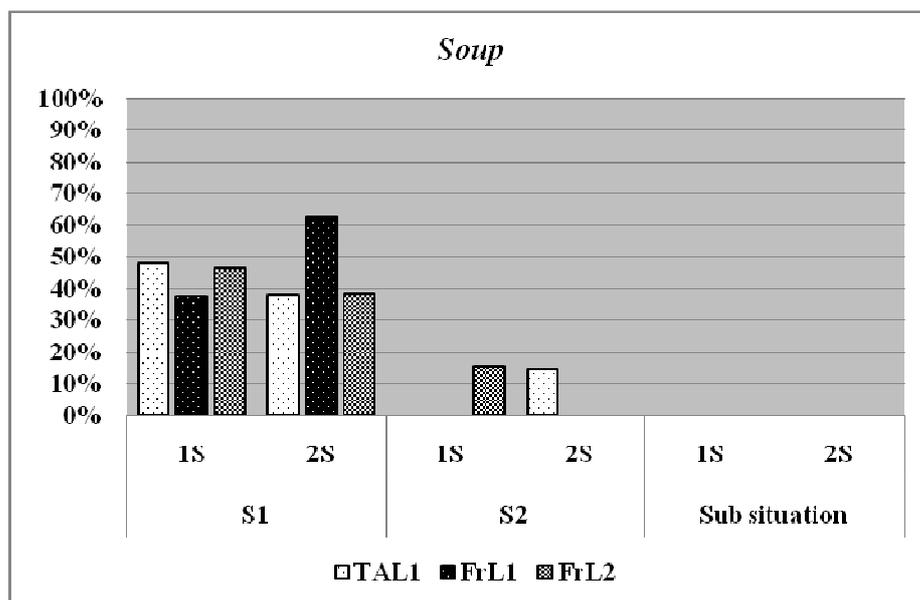
man cooking a meal]. We also have similar observations concerning the construction of sub-event by means of «*en train de*» by FrL2 learners, which is not observed in French native speech. We also notice the use of *qa:'id* in TAL1 *Salmon* retellings.

Figure 40. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Salmon* retellings



In *Soup*, «*en train de*» and *qa:'id* are preferably used for S1 construal, [a man eating]. In addition there is an equal preference for 1S or 2S predicates to describe it.

Figure 41. Selection of lexical contents with the marked forms in *Soup* retellings



After examining the lexical contents, we can conclude that their selection is very much influenced by the videos' situations. We notice a preference of the marked form «*en train de*» with 2S contents when situations present a boundary. Furthermore, 1S contents are generally selected to construe the events showing a homogeneous dynamic activity.

3.2.1.3. Conclusions on the first part of Section two

Examining the devices used to express on-goingness at the propositional level as well as the lexical contents selected with them provides useful information. We already know that in TAL1 as well as in FrL1, many forms compete to express that a situation in the observed world is on-going. While FrL1 has two very often used forms (a simple form, *présent de l'indicatif* and a marked form, «*en train de*»), TAL1 has four possible devices or constructions. These are the simple form (prefixed verb form abbreviated as PV), PV preceded with the marked *qa:'id*, PV followed by the marker *fi*, or PV both preceded by *qa:'id* and followed by *fi*. While *fi* is a grammaticalised form, i.e., used very systematically to express that an event is on-going, *qa:'id* shows less systematicity. Therefore, the FrL2 learners have two markers of on-goingness in their mother tongue, and only one marked form available in the L2. We have seen that our learners

overgeneralise the use of «*en train de*», applying it more frequently than native speakers of French do.

To examine the role of these devices in the expression of the simultaneity of situations with more depth, we widen the scope of the investigation and take into account the general discourse into which they are employed. By so doing, we aim at examining how the different on-goingness devices are employed, how simultaneous situations are construed with the different forms and how the temporal relation between them is articulated in the large context of the discourse. This is the scope of section 2 that follows.

3.2.2. Marked and unmarked forms beyond the proposition level in discourse

3.2.2.0. Introduction

We start this wider scope analysis with an investigation of the structures with which forms expressing on-goingness are employed. In each of the languages studied, several means are available to verbalise a particular event as on-going at a certain reference time. Among these devices, some exclusively express this aspectual value (on-goingness) while others can express other aspectual values in different contexts. Following our observations of the behaviour of different forms, we notice that they are used differently in dissimilar contexts. More specifically, in order to disambiguate unmarked forms, PV, and *présent de l'indicatif* in TAL1 and French respectively, some devices help specify the event as a single occurrence in discourse (i.e., as on-going at a certain reference time).

We aim in the following section to investigate the means we call “specification devices” in each of our languages.

3.2.2.1. Specifying events as single occurrences: Use of Specification means

Specification means are the devices we found in our data and which helped clarify that the utterance refers to an event, which is happening as a single occurrence. For TAL1, FrL1 and

FrL2, these devices were classifiable into similar broad categories: they are presentatives, demonstratives, adverbials, spatial means and other discursive means to introduce the retelling or establish its ‘orientation’ (Labov 2003). Some of these specification means, such as the presentatives, play other roles in the discourse, for instance, introducing the protagonists. Here is a description of each category:

a. Presentatives

Presentatives are constructions used to play at least two roles in retelling / narrative discourse: the first role is to specify the situation talked about, and the second one is to introduce protagonists (Leclercq 2009). These include deictic presentatives such as *c'est* (it is), *il y a* (there is / are) in French and perception verbs such as *voir* and *entendre*. Unlike deictic presentatives, which directly point out to the situation talked about, perception verbs take the speaker (narrator) as a reference or perception point.

b. Anaphoric demonstratives to the shared viewed story

Demonstratives point out to the situation / scene as a whole, or to the protagonists, as in “*This girl is singing*”. Therefore, just like presentatives they can play different discursive functions, among which the introduction of the protagonists.

c. Spatial adverbials

Spatial adverbials such as ‘on the left / right’ are reference devices that link one event with another, specifying an event as related to the same topic time as the preceding one. They also serve to establish a spatial relationship between the two protagonists in the retelling and therefore a simultaneity relation between the events that are verbalised.

d. Temporal adverbials

The most frequently used temporal adverbials to specify a situation are those that specify the ‘here’ and ‘now’. In other words, they specify a deictic *origo* for the utterance in particular and the discourse as a whole.

e. Discourse introductory devices

In most cases, specification devices are situated within the proposition where the form is or in an adjacent context. Some devices that help to organise the discourse as a whole are also found to specify the single occurrence of a situation. Among these devices, we have the recurrent construction “in this scene...” by many speakers in the three sets of retellings.

Given the multiplicity of roles played by these specification devices, and the fact that they do not only specify situations as single occurrences, but also play a general structuring role in discourse, we hypothesise, based on our observations concerning the types of retellings and the informants’ general retelling abilities, that these devices will be more exploited by H-educated informants than L-educated ones. The results of our investigations are outlined for each native language and learner variety in what follows.

3.2.2.1.1. TAL1

We examine the context of occurrence of each of the TAL1 four forms described before: PV, «*qa:’id* + PV», «PV + *fi*» and «*qa:’id* + PV + *fi*». We seek to reach an understanding of what triggers the use of each one of them by examining the specification devices. In fact, as said earlier, the PV can be ambiguous; it can express a generic, imperfective or habitual value. The proportions of the different means found to specify the single occurrence of situations and prevent a generic reading are displayed in the following table:

Table 57. Specification means with the forms with *qa:’id* and with *fi*

Specification means	PV	« <i>qa:’id</i> + PV»	«PV + <i>fi</i> »	« <i>qa:’id</i> + PV + <i>fi</i> »
Presentative constructions	23	11	16	14
Demonstratives	3	1	4	1
Spatial adverbials	3	2	2	1
Perception verbs (<i>shéf, ra</i> = he saw)	7	11	17	8
Discourse introductory devices	10	9	8	8
Σ	46	34	47	32

These means play many roles in the discourse; many of them introduce the protagonists of the stories retold, eg, presentatives, perception verbs, demonstratives and spatial adverbials.

- **Presentatives:** They are the most frequently used introductory devices by TAL1 informants. The most frequent presentative construction contains the presentative *famma*, produced also as *t^hamma* by some informants. *Famma* and *t^hamma* correspond in translation to ‘there is’ or ‘there are’. *T^hamma* is a word retained from the standard Arabic; and *Famma* blends together *t^hamma* and the preposition *fī* (in). The word *famma* is unique to TAL1, its equivalent in other spoken Arabic languages would be different, e.g. *fīih* in Egyptian Arabic which is composed of “*fī* + the 3rd person sing. Masc. suffix –h, corresponding in translation to either ‘there is’, ‘there are’ or to the indefinite article *a, an*” (Mitchell 1962, p.56). Some other presentatives much less frequent *famma* are *keyin* and *jeybi:n* functioning just like *famma*. *Ka:yin* is the active participle masculine singular of the auxiliary *ka:n* (*ka:n* is translatable into ‘he was’). *Ka:yin* can be literally translated into ‘it exists’, or ‘it is existent’ (example (63)). As for *jeybi:n*, it is the active participle masculine plural of the verb *jeb* (he brought). This AP acts like a presentative, its literal meaning is “they are bringing up...” and its approximate meaning here can be ‘they are showing...’

(63) A5, *Breakfast*

Ka:yin wehid fi-l ku:ji:na
ka:n&AP&PS3M one in-the kitchen
There is someone in the kitchen

- **Verbs of perception:** the most frequent in TAL1 data are *shaf* or *ra* translatable into ‘he saw’. We also find *shbah*, another synonym of the same verbs in some regions of Tunisia.

- **Discourse introductory devices** also introduce the situation or the whole narrative / discourse. It sets up the orientation of the retelling. Below is an example of discourse introductory devices:

(64) A05, *Birds*

fī-l-laqta *hed^h* n-shu:f-u: .tofla .
In-the-scene this PP1-see-PP1 girl
In this scene, we see a girl

qa:'da .
sit&AP&PS3M
sitting down

mittikkya .
lie&AP&PS3M
Lying down

ħa:ʈta yidd-ha 'ala xadd-ha .
put&AP&PS3M hand-her on cheek-her
Putting her hand on her cheek

qa:lqa shwayya .
fed-up&AP&PS3M a-little
She is fed up a little bit

W weħid bi-jnab-ha rasta .
And one on-side-her rasta
And a rasta man on her side

'and-u gitar .
have-PS3M guitar
He has a guitar

W qa:'id yi-l'ab muzi:ka reggae apparemment.
And PRG PS3M-play music reggae apparently
And he is apparently playing reggae music

In this extract, the speaker focuses the situation with the introductory device *'fillaqta hed^h'* (in this scene). This device frames the retellings as a whole and within this frame, the introduction of the first, then the second protagonist, is made with the perception verb *'nshu:fu:'* (we see). This perception verb opens a frame of reference for both protagonists (we see a girl.... and a rasta man...).

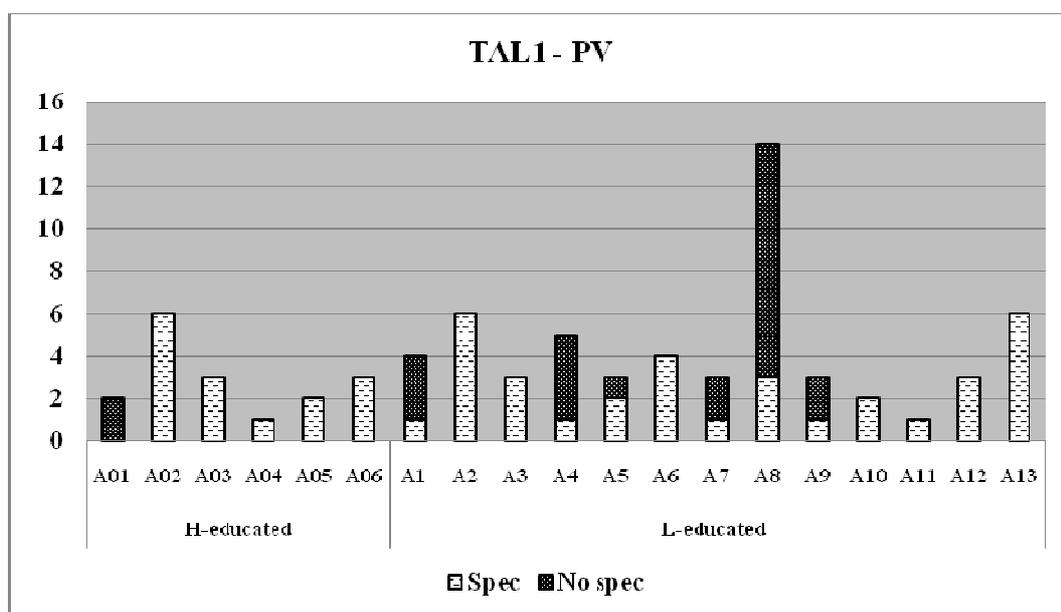
The instances of the four forms without any focalisation devices were also counted. The results are displayed in Table 58.

Table 58. Proportion of the four forms used with no explicit specification devices

	PV	«qa:'id + PV»	«PV + fi»	«qa:'id + PV + fi»
% no spec	39%	45%	43%	37%
% spec	61%	55%	57%	63%

Percentages of the instances when no specification devices were employed reveal that the four forms more or less go with with specification devices to the same degree. Contrary to our expectations, PV, the form that can be ambiguous, shares almost the same characteristics as the other forms containing on-goingness markers. This shows that the use of specification devices is not a discriminatory criterion that helps us understand the distribution of every form. A more detailed analysis of the specification devices by the two groups H-educated and L-educated informants with each of the four forms is provided in what follows (see Figure 42, Figure 43, Figure 44 and Figure 45 below).

Figure 42. The use of specification devices with PV

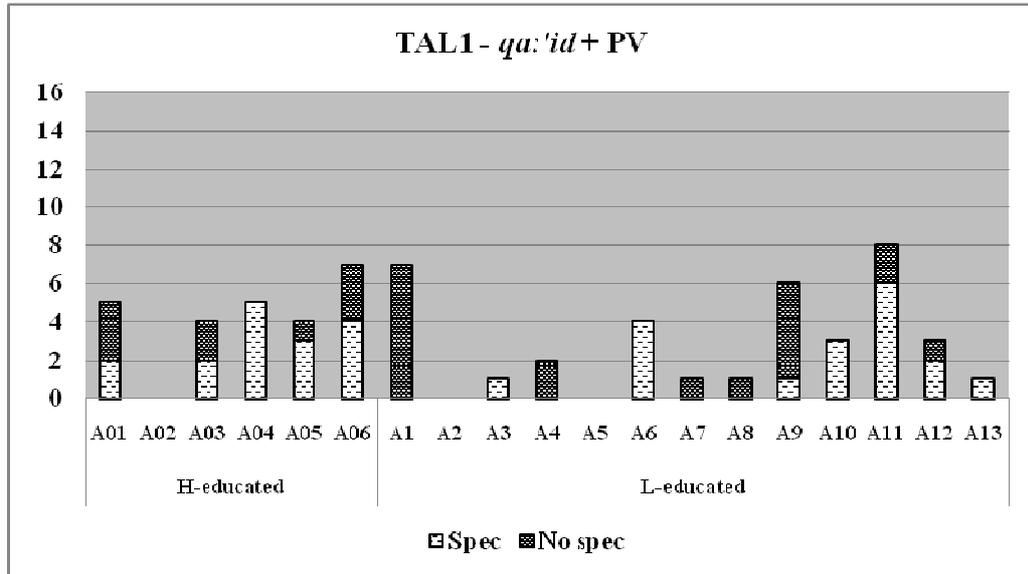


Notes: spec = presence of specification devices / no spec = absence of specification devices

The figure shows that all H-educated informants except A01 use PV automatically with the specification devices explained above. A01, however, employs the form very rarely, and we will

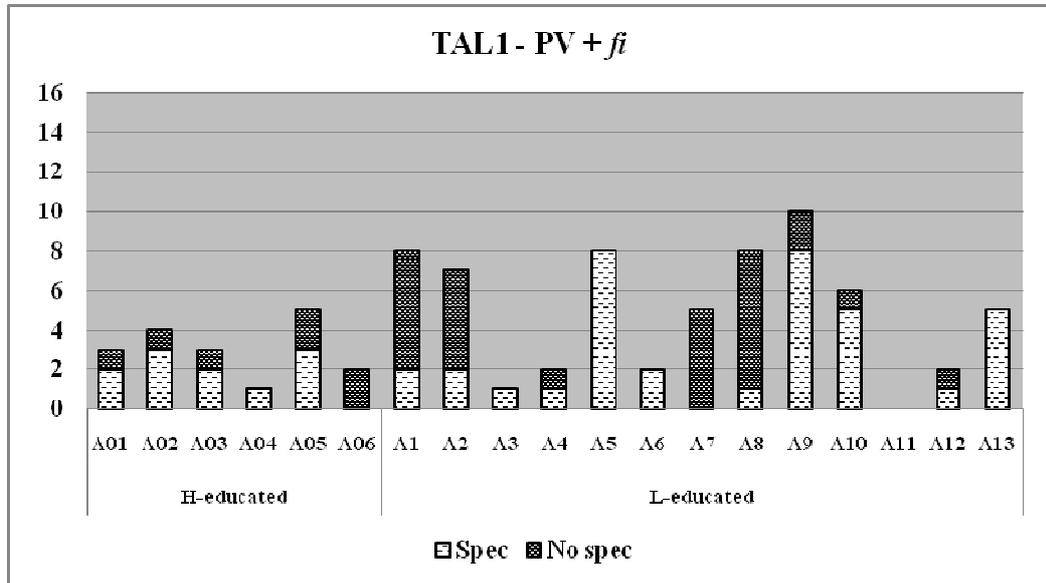
see that she generally favours forms containing on-goingness markers. PV with no specification devices in the adjacent context is more common among L-educated informants.

Figure 43. The use of specification devices with «*qa:’id + PV*»



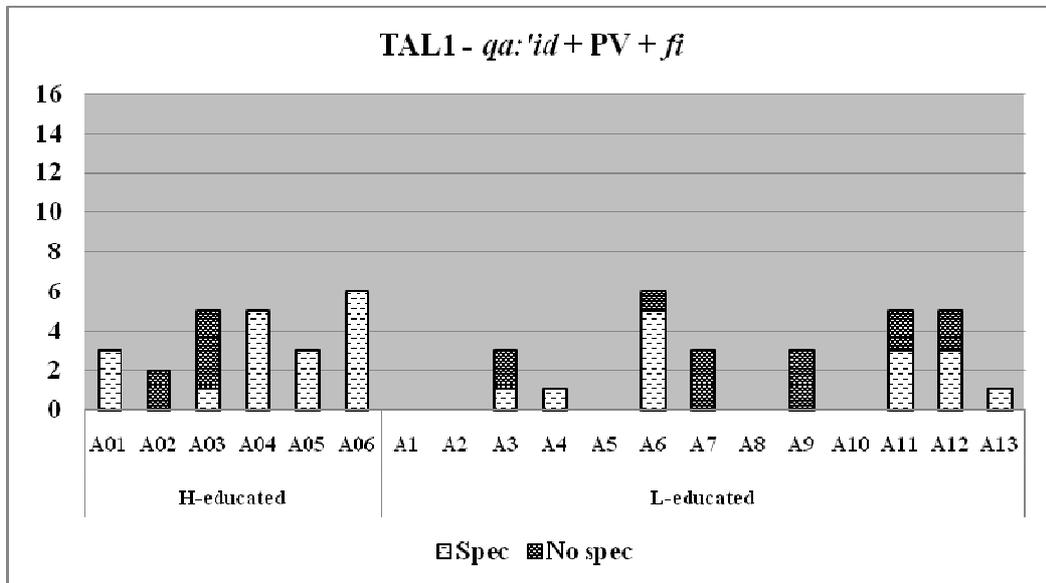
As for the distribution of «*qa:’id + PV*» form, the graph shows that when the preverbal marker precedes PV, there is less necessity to specify the proposition with further devices among L-educated and H-educated speakers alike. This might explain why most informants chose one option or the other in their retellings. For many of them (e.g., A01, A9 and A1) the instances with no focalising means are more frequent. Figure 44 below shows results of «*PV + fi*». We see that while H-educated informants specify their propositions with other means, L-educated informants tend to leave their propositions unspecified in most cases.

Figure 44. The use of specification devices with «PV + *fi*»



Last, with «*qa:'id* + PV + *fi*», which is the construction that contains a preverbal marker and a post-verbal marker of on-goingness, the informants do not make different choices than with the other forms.

Figure 45. The use of specification devices with «*qa:'id* + PV + *fi*»



Informants in both groups can use the periphrasis in the presence of further specification devices or not. H-educated however show more systematicity. In fact, A02 does not at all exploit specification devices with this periphrasis, A03 mixes both styles and all the others in this group use the specification means.

3.2.2.1.2. FrL1

We formulate for FrL1 our early hypothesis: Given its degree of grammaticalisation, the marked form «*en train de*» expresses the on-goingness of a situation without recourse to further means to specify it. The unmarked form, however, is ambiguous, as the simple present can convey other perspectives taken to view a situation. In fact, it can convey the habituality of an event, *Tous les jours je me lève à dix heures* or a generic reading like in *Le dromadaire vit dans le désert*. We postulate that in order to present a situation as on-going or in progress, the simple present resorts to some devices, which help anchor the situation as on-going. It has therefore recourse to some other linguistic devices that disambiguate its aspectual value. The means found to specify that a situation is in progress are displayed in Table 59.

Table 59. Specification means used with «*en train de*» and the *présent de l'indicatif*

	« <i>en train de</i> »		<i>Présent de l'indicatif</i>	
	n=	%	n=	%
Perception verbs: "Je vois..., on voit..."	21	38%	14	20%
The deictic presentative "Il y a ..."	16	29%	7	10%
Temporal adverbials	8	15%	13	19%
Use of demonstratives "ce..., cette..."	5	9%	4	6%
Discourse introductory devices	2	4%	6	9%
The deictic presentative "c'est ..."	1	2%	1	1%
Spatial adverbials	0	0%	2	3%
No specification	2	4%	23	33%
Total	55	100%	70	100%

We give examples of each of the categories then we discuss the specification devices used with the marked and unmarked forms.

- **Presentatives:** many types of presentatives were found in our FrL1 retellings: the deictic

presentatives *c'est* (65) and *il y a*, and perception verbs, such as *voir* (to see), *entendre* (to hear), *comprendre* (to understand) (66).

(65) F01, Soup

C'est⁴³ un mec.

Qui est «en train de» regarder un match de tennis.

Et qui **en même temps** qui mange il mange sa soupe avec beaucoup de bruit.

(66) F04, Breakfast

Donc **dans cette scène** on retrouve les le garçon et la vieille dame de tout à l'heure.

Donc, **là il y a** le garçon qui a le crâne rasé.

Enfin qui est chauve.

Il est «en train de» faire des crêpes ou des pancakes.

(67) F02, Kabaret

Alors **cette scène** se passe dans un théâtre.

En fait c'est la captation d'une pièce de théâtre.

Puisque on voit la scène.

Et on aperçoit les spectateurs de dos.

Et on entend leurs réactions leurs rires leurs applaudissements.

À ce qu'ils sont en train de regarder.

Et donc au début de l'extrait il y a un acteur sur scène.

Qui est une actrice.

Elle est assise sur une chaise dans un décor assez vide.

Et elle est en train de lire le journal.

Et un autre acteur arrive sur scène.

Et son personnage est celui de quelqu'un d'ivre.

Qui tient une bouteille d'alcool presque vide à la main.

Qui est un peu clochard.

Ses vêtements sont sales.

Il a une barbe d'un aspect pas très engageant.

On va dire.

Et donc on pense assister à une scène de drague.

Puisque quand il l'aperçoit assise.

En train de lire le journal.

Il se dirige vers elle.

Et on pense.

⁴³ As many specifying means are used together in the discourse, those that are being currently analysed are underlined. The others of different nature contributing to play the same role are in bold font.

Qu'il a envie de la draguer.

The extract of the retelling put under example (67) contains many perception verbs. The latter show that, unlike the deictic presentatives, which directly point out the situation talked about, perception verbs take the speaker (narrator) as a reference or perception point.

- **Anaphora and demonstratives:** in example (66) and (67), the speakers point out the situation as a whole to specify it as a single occurrence. An example of demonstratives that point out the protagonists as well as to specify the single situation is given in (68).

(68) F2, *Earthsea*
Alors cette petite jeune femme chante.

- **Spatial adverbials:** the example (69) is provided to illustrate the spatial references found in FrL1 retellings

(69) F02, *Birds*
Donc dans cette scène on voit deux personnages un musicien rasta
Qui est «en train de» jouer de la guitare électrique un air assez entraînant oui un air
peut être du reggae.
Ça y ressemble en tout cas
Et un musicien noir rasta et à côté de lui il y a une petite fille
Qui avec une jupe et un collier d'inspiration tahitienne qui danse.

In this extract, the second protagonist *une petite fille* is introduced with the presentative *il y a* and also by means of the spatial reference *à côté de lui* establishing a parallelism between the event *danser* and *jouer de la guitare*, related to P1, the protagonist performing S1. *À côté de lui* specifies therefore the situation *danser* and helps to disambiguate the aspectual value of the simple present.

- **Temporal adverbials;** *là*⁴⁴ is employed with 9% of the propositions containing «*en train de*»

⁴⁴ *Là* can also be considered as a spatial reference, conveying a deictic *origo* of the here and now. However, we consider the temporal meaning as more prominent in the retellings, as *là* marks the TT related to one video retelling as simultaneous to the TU. It also distinguishes the time of retelling of one video from the other in the course of retelling. Indeed the videos were presented one after the other, while the space (here) remains constant, the TT for each retelling changes and speakers use *là* (now) to put the emphasis on the video retold at a certain time of the data

and 10% with those containing the unmarked form. Among the other adverbials used to specify a situation are *pendant que*, *au fur et à mesure*, *tandis que*, and *en même temps*. These adverbials link a proposition to another one in the discourse which is already specified by other means such as the perception verbs or presentatives.

- **Discourse introductory devices;** among these organisational devices, we find introductory sentences such as “*ça se passe ...*”, “*ça se déroule*” as illustrated by the examples below:

(70) F05, Birds

Ça se passe dans la rue

un guitariste black joue de la guitare un morceau de reggae

Juste à côté de lui *se tient une femme*

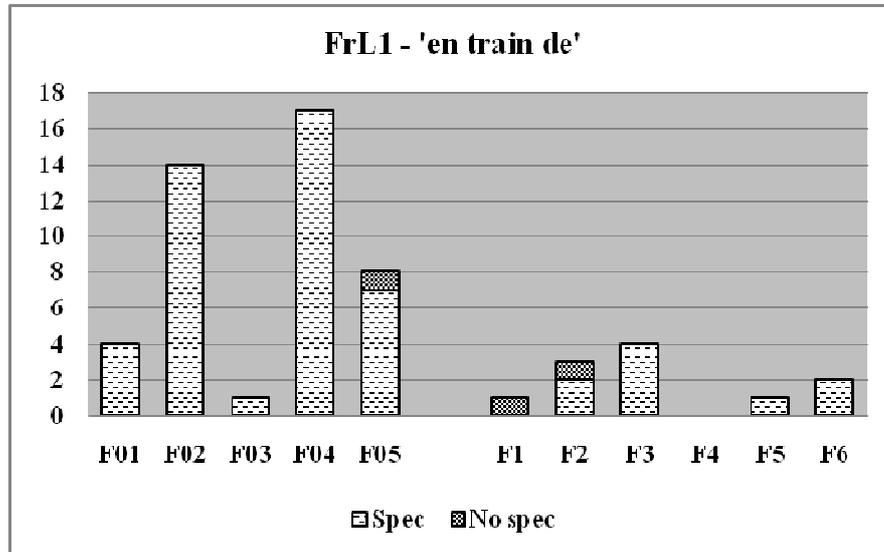
qui porte un collier de fleurs

et qui danse.

Table 59 above gives an overview of all the means explained. It shows that the devices specifying that a situation is in progress are the presentative *il y a* and perception verbs. It also shows that the devices examined specifying the situations occur with both the marked and the unmarked forms. Propositions with no specification devices were also counted. Surprisingly, the use of the simple present without any specification devices is higher than the propositions containing the progressive marker without such devices. The following graph shows that most of the propositions contain specification devices. Three of all the informants employ «*en train de*» without recourse to any such devices: 1 H-educated and 2 L-educated informants. Among them, only one in the L-educated group uses «*en train de*» exclusively with no specification devices. According to the retellings of these three informants, «*en train de*» can, alone, signal that a particular event is a specific occurrence and that it is on-going at a certain reference time.

recording.

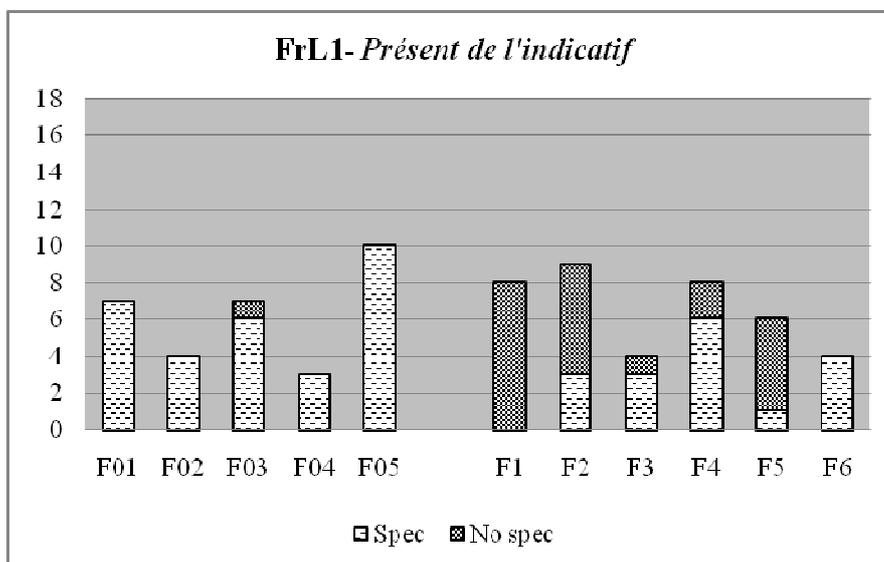
Figure 46. The use of specification devices with «en train de»



Notes: F01→F05 H-educated, F1→F6 L-educated / Spec: presence of specification devices / No Spec: no specification devices.

When we look at the use of *présent de l'indicatif* by each of the informants in both groups (Figure 47), we notice the simple form without specification devices is more common among the L-educated group. When we compare Figure 46 and Figure 47, we observe individual variations, which characterise the productions of the informants: For example, F01, F02 and F04 in the H-educated group systematically apply specification devices.

Figure 47. The use of specification devices with *présent de l'indicatif*



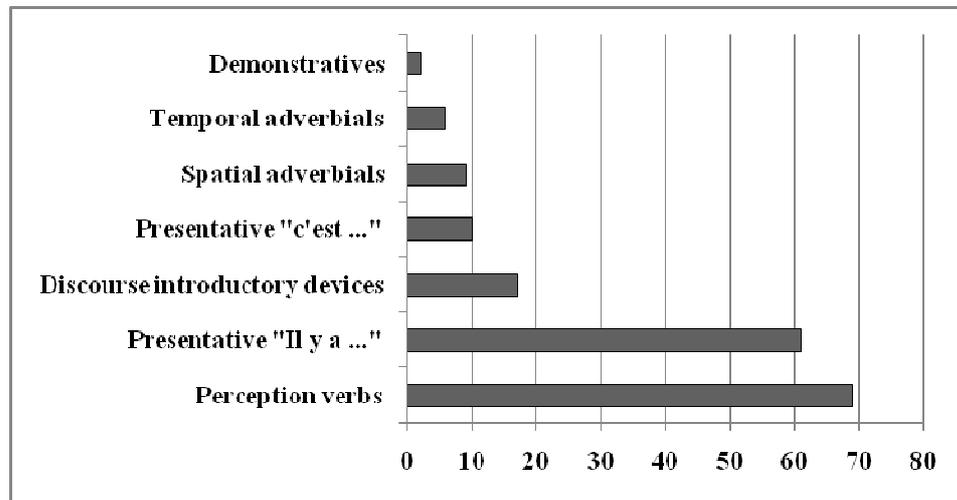
Moreover, all the on-going situations in the retellings of F1 with either «en train de» or the simple form contain no further specification devices.

In what follows, we examine the specification devices present in the learners' productions and which focalise the events described as a single occurrence.

3.2.2.1.3. FrL2

The different specification devices are classified as follows according to the frequency of their use by all FrL2 learners:

Figure 48. Specification devices used by FrL2 learnets



- **Perception verbs:** They are the most frequent means by both L-educated and H-educated speakers with the marked form. In most cases, the verb *voir* (to see) is used. In some others (2 propositions), it is the verb *regarder*. In the following example (71), the speaker confuses *voir* with *regarder*:

(71) A1, Earthsea
 /Ze &rgarde/ petite fille.
 Qui /&chante/.
 Et un garçon.
 Qui /&pler/.

b. Presentatives: they are very frequently used by L-educated speakers, and much less by H-educated ones. The most recurrent deictic presentatives by both groups is «*il y a*». *C'est* is much less frequent. We note that in the learners' variety we notice another verbalisation of this sequence, which is */jāna/*. Here is an example by A5:

(72) A5, Salmon
 /&jāna/ un cuisinier avec le chat.
 Et il /&prepare/ le poisson.
 Et quand il /&fet/ un autre chose.
 Le chat /&prā/ la poisson.

A5 is at the basic variety of acquisition. All the verbs he uttered are transcribed phonetically as

they are analysed as base forms. /*jāna*/, a non-analysed form interpreted as «*il y a*», serves to introduce the referents (*un monsieur*) «/jāna/ *un cuisinier avec le chat*» which will be maintained throughout the retelling with «*il*» while the speaker supplies focalised information about what happened next using the adverbial of temporal breakage «*quand*». The focalising role played by /*Jāna*/ in structuring our informant's retelling corroborates the observation made by Véronique (2000; 2009) regarding the use of /*jāna*/ in Abdelmalek's speech, one of the Moroccan learners of French who participated in the ESF project.

c. Temporal adverbials: the temporal adverbial «*là*» is recurrently used by only L-educated speakers.

d. Demonstratives: L-educated speakers employ demonstratives such as «*ce...*» or «*cette...*». They imply that the speaker shares with the interlocutor information about the stimulus and the protagonists and exploits that information to build their retelling.

e. Discourse introductory devices: in addition to the very common «*dans cette scène...*», some learners use «*la scène décrit...*» which delimits a referential time span for all the events retold and focalises them as related to the video presented.

f. Spatial adverbials: they are rare in FrL2 data.

Overall, L-educated speakers less used the specification devices. Examining the specification devices with base forms is particularly interesting as it allows seeing whether the learners resorted to other devices signalling the event as a single occurrence in the presence of non-finite forms. We noticed that in most of the cases (91%), no specification devices were used. Furthermore, the only devices found are base forms of the perceptive verbs *voir* or *regarder* (functioning as *voir*).

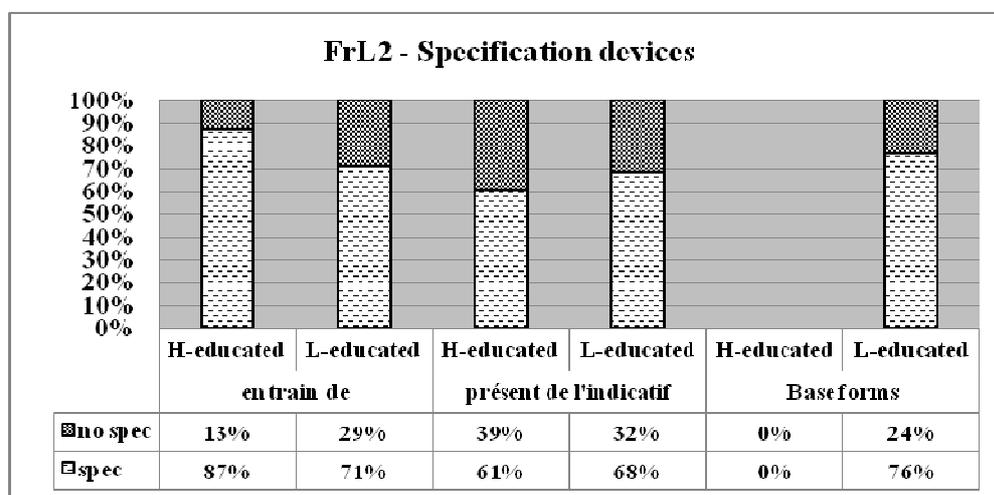
We present the devices we found in our two groups of learners in Table 60. We investigated every one of them employed with the marked, and unmarked forms, and with the base forms.

Table 60. Specification devices in FrL2 retellings

	H-educated		L-educated		
	« <i>en train de</i> »	« <i>présent de l'indicatif</i> »	« <i>en train de</i> »	« <i>présent de l'indicatif</i> »	Base forms
Perception verbs : "Je vois..., on voit..."	43%	17%	29%	18%	9%
The deictic presentative " <i>Il y a ...</i> "	11%	30%	27%	30%	0%
The deictic presentative " <i>c'est ...</i> "	6%	4%	0%	5%	0%
Temporal adverbials	0%	0%	8%	5%	0%
Use of demonstratives " <i>ce... cette...</i> "	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%
Discourse introductory devices	22%	9%	2%	8%	0%
Spatial adverbials	5%	0%	0%	2%	0%
No specification	13%	39%	29%	32%	91%

In the H-educated group, the specification devices are more frequent with «*en train de*» than with the *présent de l'indicatif*, unlike our hypothesis of disambiguating this latter device. L-educated speakers employ these devices almost equally with either form.

Figure 49. Proportions of the use of specification devices with the unmarked form, the marked form, and base forms.



We conclude that the investigation of what we call ‘specification devices’ is not a discriminating method for the use of the unmarked or the marked form. Indeed, as Table 61 shows, the selection of one device or the other is more a matter of individual variation and choice than of a general tendency among learners.

Table 61. Learners' use of specification devices: individual choices

Stage		Perc. Vs	Il y a	Dis. devices	c'est	S.Adv	T.Adv	Dem
2	A8	0						
	A1	8						
	A5		5					
3	A2	0	2		1			
	A3	0	3	1				1
	A4	1			1		5	
	A6	0	8	2	1	3		
	A10	8	2				1	
	A11	1	4					
	A12	8	1	2				
A13	5	3						
4	A7	0	3		1			1
	A9	7	3			1		
5	A01	1	3	3				
	A04	8	7	1				
6	A02	1	6		2	1		
	A03	12	2	1				
6-7	A05	9	4	5		1		
	A06	0	5	2	4	3		
	Tot al	69	61	17	10	9	6	2

Note: Perc.V: perception verbs / Dis. Devices: discourse introductory devices / S.Adv: spatial adverbials / T.Adv: Temporal adverbials / Dem: demonstratives

For example, A01 and A03 use the two forms without any specification devices, whereas A02, A04, A05, A06 apply the devices systematically. Furthermore, our findings verify the hypothesis that the recourse of those devices is linked to the overall discursive strategies adopted by each learner. In fact, more advanced speakers draw on these devices more in their retellings than learners in the earlier stages (e.g., A2 and A3).

3.2.2.1.4. Conclusions

The specification devices help specify an event as a single occurrence, but they are discursive devices used more to structure the way protagonists are introduced, and the whole retelling is

organised. It is therefore not surprising after our findings regarding the differences between the H-educated and L-educated groups to see that H-educated informants exploit more specifications devices than the L-educated ones. Our hypothesis is therefore confirmed.

For that reason, we conclude that analysing the specification devices gives some interesting results regarding the marked and unmarked forms. However, they cannot be considered as a discriminatory tool for analysing the distinctive contexts of their distribution in oral production.

Furthermore, some regularity was observed regarding individual variations between the informants and general tendencies of the two groups. One example of this regularity is the almost systematic recourse of specification devices by H-educated speakers as opposed to L-educated speakers.

As far as learners' specification devices are concerned, they vary across the acquisitional stages and become more diversified the more advanced the learner is. At the earlier stages, the favourite means are the presentatives, mainly «*il y a*» as a non-analysed sequence formulated in the basic variety as /*jāna*/, which plays more than the roles of introducing the protagonists, it plays a structural role of organising information following the topic-focus organisation.

In what follows, we investigate the retellings of simultaneous situations focusing on the role of the marked and unmarked forms in construing the main events included in speech. As such, we shed more light on the selection by the speakers of the core components of each video and what they include in their retellings, as well as what means they employ to describe the events included.

3.2.2.2. Events, aspectual styles and linguistic devices

We have already alluded to the interface of video situations / forms when we dealt with the lexical contents above (in p.267). In this part of the analysis, we are interested in examining the different choices made by the informants regarding the situations shown in the stimuli and those involved in the retellings.

We distinguish between the text we analyse and the different processes that precede its creation. Indeed, according to Levelt's (1989) blueprint, in order to complete a particular communicative goal, the speaker activates a conceptual representation in memory and creates a discourse representation that will generate the text to be produced. We hypothesise following Von Stutterheim & Klein (2002, p.80) that our speakers of TAL1, FrL1 or FrL2 will make different choices on the same task regarding the communicative content of their productions.

«When confronted with a particular subject matter and *quaestio*, speakers of different languages show different preferences for perspectivation of the communicative content. »

The choices that we examine here concern the informants' conceptual representations of the situations presented in the visual stimulus and the events they choose to verbalise in their retellings. In other words, we examine the explicit reference to the core components of our visual stimuli. We are also interested in what forms are used for the events represented. Furthermore, we take into account the degree of granularity with which informants represent situations, i.e., whether they present them wholly or analyse them into sub-events.

We remind here that, in each video, two situations are involved and linked together by a relation of simultaneity. They can or cannot relate to or affect each other. We identified the core components of each video and labelled them as S1 (for the first situation appearing to the viewer / informant) and S2, as the second situation, which is shown next or at the same time as S1. In *Fire*, the screen is split in two halves, and the spatial environments of S1 and S2 are both visible at the same time. While S1 is shown from the start, (telephone burning), S2 starts to happen later. The properties of the situations presented in each video were displayed in Table 15 above, which we enrich here for convenience with details of each situation (see Table 62):

Table 62. Situations of videos and their properties

	S1	S2
<i>Breakfast</i>	Young man preparing pancakes → Heterogeneous, Inferable result, boundary	An old lady is exercising → Homogeneous / no boundary
<i>Birds</i>	A man playing the guitar → Homogeneous / no boundary	A young girl stands up and dances → Homogeneous / visible onset
<i>Earthsea</i>	A girl singing homogeneous / no boundary	A man looking at her, starts crying Homogeneous / visible onset
<i>Kabaret</i>	A young woman reading the newspaper → Homogeneous / no boundary	A man walks on stage, drinks alcohol, disturbs the lady → Series of short bounded situations
<i>Wakeup</i>	A young man sleeping → Homogeneous / no boundary	An old lady tries waking the man up bringing a rifle and shooting out of the young man's window Series of short bounded situations
<i>Fire</i>	A telephone burning → Homogeneous / no boundary	A man walks to the tracks, takes a newspaper and goes away → Series of short bounded situations
<i>Salmon</i>	Hands of a cook preparing a meal → Heterogeneous, Inferable result / boundary	A cat stealing slices of fish → Series of short repeated bounded situations
<i>Soup</i>	A man noisily eating soup in a big bowl. → Homogeneous / no boundary	A male voice on television interrupts him and asks him to stop making noise → Series of short repeated bounded situations

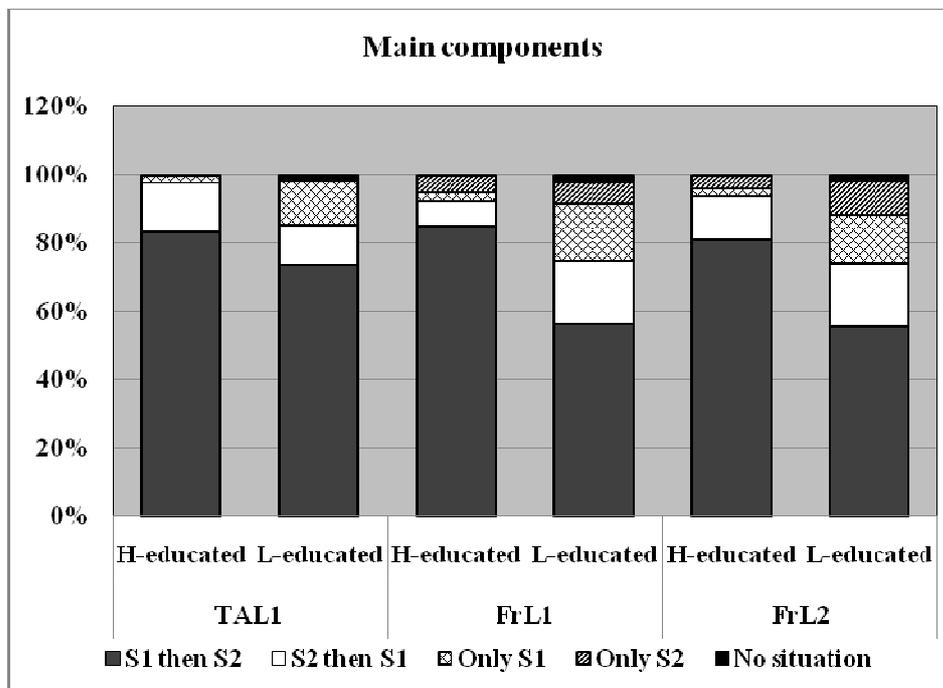
3.2.2.2.1. Informants' selection of the core components

Which elements of the situations detailed above are included in the retellings' informants? How are they verbalised? At which degree of granularity are the events represented? We answer these questions in this part while attempting to find out if there are any differences between TAL1 and FrL1 regarding these issues, and if so, whether the learners' L1 affects their L2 productions as far as the selection of core components is concerned. To give a general picture of the core components of the productions in each language and learner variety, we give the following graph. We classified the retellings into whether the two situations of each video are included, and if they are, we were interested to examine which one is talked about first, S1 or S2⁴⁵. We also

⁴⁵ Concerning our formal description, S1 represents the situation viewed first or the most prominent one, and S2 represents the second to be shown or the one included within S1.

counted the retellings where only one situation is talked about, identifying whether it is S1 or S2 (see Figure 50 below).

Figure 50. Selection of core components in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2



The graph allows us making the following observations:

- In the majority of TAL1, FrL1 or FrL2 retellings, both situations were accounted for as their basic components. This provides a confirmation that the two situations are equally important to verbalise for most of the speakers in each language group.
- In most of these retellings, it is S1 that is represented first, which is consistent with our earlier description of the videos. In fact, most speakers in the three groups of data choose to talk first about S1 and then about S2. However, we find more instances where S2 is talked about first in TAL1 and FrL2 retellings as compared to FrL1 in the H-educated group. Given that the same informants carried out the task in TAL1 and FrL2, consistence in the perspective taken on the core components of the retellings is not surprising. We also can hypothesise a difference of perspective taken by French native speakers and TAL1 ones. The latter show more flexibility as

to what situation to choose first to verbalise than FrL1 who more often choose S1. When we consider the L-educated FrL1 group results however, this hypothesis does not seem to be verified, which leads to the following observation.

- The additional valuable observation made concerns the systematic differences noted between H-educated and L-educated groups in each set of data. It is in fact very interesting to see that the H-educated groups in TAL1, FrL1, and FrL2 make comparable choices, and so do L-educated groups of TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2. For example, retellings where only one situation is accounted for are more numerous among L-educated than among H-educated speakers. We could link this finding to the differences observed from the start between L-educated and H-educated groups to hypothesise that L-educated speakers take different perspectives on the situations in their retellings. The higher choice to start with S2 makes us hypothesise that L-educated speak about the situation, which is retrieved last in their memory.

As for the degree of granularity with which the situations in the videos were perceived, the results are displayed in the following table:

Table 63. Proportions of retellings including sub-events

	TAL1		FrL1		FrL2	
	H-educated	L-educated	H-educated	L-educated	H-educated	L-educated
Sb1	7	5	4	1	4	3
%	15%	5%	10%	2%	8%	3%
Sb2	1	0	1	0	0	0
%	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%

Sb1 and Sb2 stand for sub-event 1 and sub-event 2 respectively. We notice that TAL1 speakers account more for sub-events than FrL1 speakers do. If we look in details into which situations of each video were perceived with a greater degree of granularity, we find out that the stimuli guide very much the way the situations are perceived. In fact, in the three groups of languages, only in *Salmon* and *Breakfast* retellings was S1 further analysed into sub-events. S1 in both videos are similar, it consists of the activity of cooking something. This activity generally has an inferable end-result, either visible and known from the video (in *Breakfast*, the result is a pancake) or inferable, as in the case of *Salmon* where the speakers only infer what the outcome of the

different actions could be. First, the speakers set a globalizing event then analyse it into sub-events.

In the three language groups however, H-educated deal more with sub-events than L-educated ones. As for analysing S2 into Sb2, it is rather rare, and it is found once in H-educated TAL1 retelling (A05) and once in a FrL1 one (F05). In both instances (in bold font), it is the S2 of *Breakfast* that is analysed into a sub-event. Here is the example of F04, *Breakfast*:

(73) F04, *Breakfast*

Donc dans cette scène on retrouve les le garçon et la vieille dame de tout à l'heure.

Donc là il y a le garçon qui a le crâne rasé.

Enfin qui est chauve.

Il est en train de faire des crêpes ou des pancakes.

Il est dix heures moins dix.

Donc là il a réussi à se lever clairement.

Et il y a la vieille dame.

Qui est en train d'écouter la radio.

Ou regarder la télé.

Et elle est en train de suivre.

En train de danser en fait.

Elle fait des pointes.

Et après elle commence à faire des petits pas de danse.

En écoutant la musique.

To conclude on the selection of the core components of the retellings, we can say that the most prominent observation is that L-educated speakers and H-educated ones take different perspectives on the situations, and make different choices as to the main components of their retellings. L-educated speakers' choices reveal that they rely more on retrieval from memory (e.g., by putting S2 first) or else choosing to talk about only one situation. Furthermore, they verbalise events of *Salmon* and *Breakfast* where sub-events are obvious with a lesser degree of granularity than H-educated speakers do. However, some differences between language groups as a whole are noted and these differences might be partially related to the specificities of the languages used. In fact, in TAL1 retellings including sub-events are more frequent than in FrL1. In FrL2 there are less retellings involving sub-events. We hypothesise that in TAL1 a higher degree of granularity (20% of all retellings) is chosen than in FrL1 (12% of all retellings). We wonder also if the cultural specificities related to each language affect the degree of granularity

with which the events are verbalised. We discuss this point later in the discussion section.

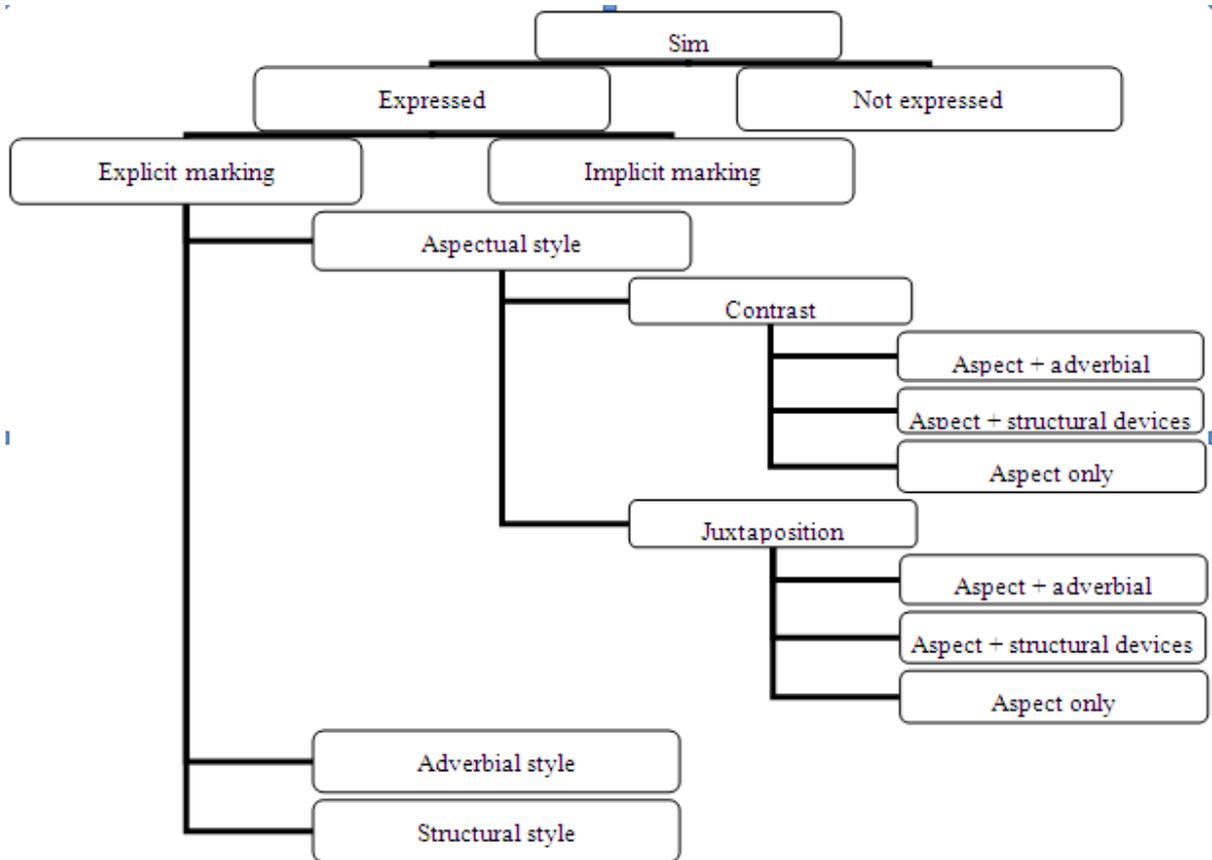
After discussing the core components of the videos selected for the task of retelling simultaneous situations, we examine in detail in what follows what forms are used for what situations in order to gain more insights into the use of linguistic devices to verbalise simultaneous situations.

3.2.2.2.2. Role of aspect in expressing simultaneity: staging the marked and unmarked forms to construe simultaneous events in discourse

In this part, we present results of different analyses conducted regarding the use of aspect in discourse to express *Sim*. We deal first with aspectual marking in native speakers' retellings then in the learners' productions. After that, we focus on how each informant construed the two core components of the videos using the different means of expressing on-goingness available in his / her language. We will look at the forms used to construe the events, and we will mainly focus on how the informants use the marked vs unmarked forms to express them in progress. In the last part, we focus on the function of each form expressing on-goingness in the discourse in terms of construing the two simultaneous events.

We set up the general representation of how *Sim* is expressed in our retellings in the following diagramme:

Figure 51. Different choices to retell *Sim* in oral productions



Overall, *Sim* is expressed in most of the retellings. Informants use most frequently explicit devices. By implicit marking we refer to cases where *Sim* was understood from pragmatic information.

The explicit means are classified into 3 broad categories: Aspectual style, which includes both instances where aspect was used on its own to express *Sim* as well as those where it was combined with other devices namely, adverbials and structural devices.

The two other styles found to express *Sim* are the adverbial style, and the structural style. We focus in what follows on the use of aspect in the expression of *Sim*.

3.2.2.2.1. Aspectual marking: the overall picture

As mentioned above, Schmiedtová (2004) identified three major styles in expressing simultaneity, two aspectual ones, “the stronger” and “the weaker” aspectual styles and one “adverbial” style.

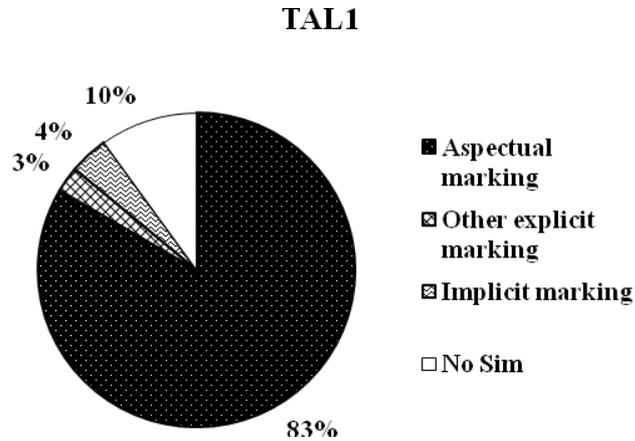
Strongly inspired by Schmiedtová's (2004) categorisation, we classified the different uses of forms to express aspectual values into two broad categories

1) Aspectual juxtaposition: it means that the informant chooses to express the two simultaneous situations of the video shown to him / her representing both of them as on-going.

2) Aspectual contrast: it indicates that the speaker chooses to express an aspectual contrast (progressive contrasted with a non-progressive) when construing the two simultaneous events.

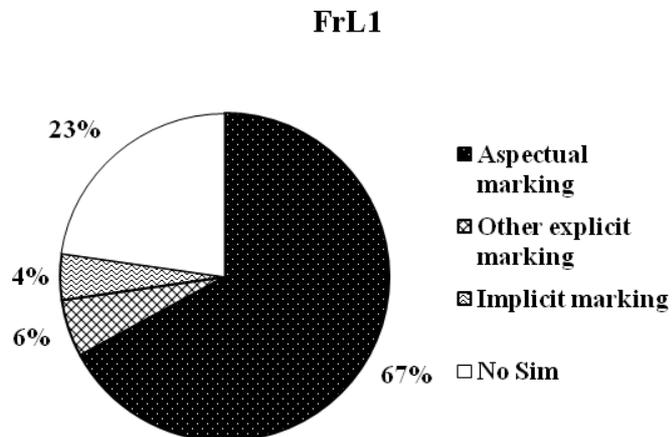
As the following graphic representations show, aspectual marking is frequently used to express *Sim* in the three sets of retellings by native speakers (Figure 52 and Figure 53) and by learners (Figure 54). In some retellings, however, *Sim* is expressed without recourse to aspect (‘other explicit marking’). They contain explicit devices such as connectors and adverbials. In some other retellings, *Sim* marking is implicit (pragmatic inference). “No *Sim*” stands for the retellings where no *Sim* relation is expressed neither explicitly nor implicitly. These retellings are of two types: some containing the two situations of the videos but they are not linked together by a *Sim* relation. Some others contain just one of the core components (one situation) or none at all. We separate for each language the four categories: ‘aspectual marking’, ‘other explicit marking’, ‘implicit marking’ and ‘no *Sim*’.

Figure 52. Proportion of the use of aspect in *Sim* expression by Tunisian native speakers



We notice when we compare the aspectual styles in TAL1 and FrL1 that aspect is highly used by Tunisian speakers to express *Sim* (83%). Retellings where *Sim* is not at all expressed represent only 10% of the total retellings. Conversely, in FrL1, in 23% of the retellings, *Sim* is not expressed, which is a high rate compared to TAL1 proportion (See Figure 52 and Figure 53).

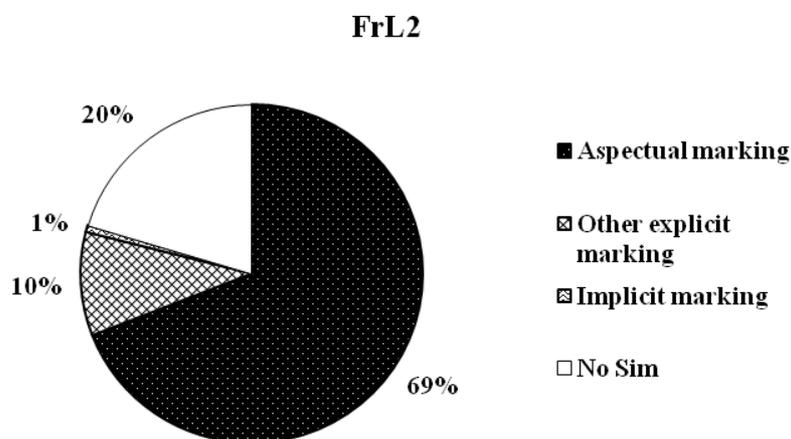
Figure 53. Proportion of the use of aspect in *Sim* expression by French native speakers



In FrL2 retellings, the use of aspect is comparable to FrL1 speakers's. The proportions of the retellings where *Sim* is not at all expressed in FrL1 and FrL2 are also comparable and represent

about 1/5 of all retellings in the respective groups (23% and 20% respectively).

Figure 54. Proportion of the use of aspect in *Sim* expression in L2 French



Furthermore, the average deployment of aspectual marking of *Sim* per informant is calculated in the following table:

Table 64. Average use of aspect to express *Sim* per informant

	Use of aspect n°	Average per informant
FrL1 (n=11)	59	5.36
TAL1 (n=19)	126	6.63
FrL2 (n=19)	105	5.52

We notice that aspectual marking is comparable in both FrL1 and FrL2.

However, our FrL2 learner varieties are varied and the numbers displayed in Figure 54 account for the productions by learners in earlier stages of acquisition. Therefore, the comparability of these percentages should not lead us to wrong conclusions. We deal in more detail with FrL2 different styles in expressing *Sim*.

We now examine in details with the types of aspectual marking shown in Figure 51 above, first in native speakers' retellings, then in learner retellings, examining initially, the proportions of aspectual contrast and juxtaposition and subsequently the role of aspectual marking in expressing

Sim, whether it is used in “combination” or in “isolation”, to borrow the classification of Schmiedtová (2004). We will distinguish between the following three types of *Sim* aspectual marking:

(i) Pure aspectual marking; where only aspectual values of contrast or juxtaposition are employed to express *Sim*.

(74) F3, Kabaret

*Là il avait dû boire du rhum ou quelque chose.
Parce que dans l'état ou il était.
Et puis il allait embêter la fille.
Qui était en train de lire le journal.*

(75) A2, Kabaret

fi-l	ħkeya	had ^h i	weħid	sakra:n
In-the	story	this-one	one	drunk
In this story there is one who is drunk				

ta-qra	fi-l	jari:da .
PS3F-read	PRG-the	newspaper
She is reading the newspaper		

fi-l	exir	lassaq-Ø	li-bla:sit-ha
in-the	end	stick-PS3M	to-place-her
in the end he stuck to her			

(ii) Aspectual marking combined with an adverbial, either temporal or atemporal (e.g. spatial),

(76) F03, Breakfast

*euh donc le garçon et sa grand mère de tout à l'heure qui a du mal à se réveiller.
et là pendant que le garçon prépare des pancakes.
ben la grand mère a l'air de suivre un cours de danse classique par vidéo dans son salon.
pas une grande réussite mais elle y met du sien.*

(iii) Aspectual marking combined with coordination devices assuring structural parallelism of two propositions. Coordination devices stand for conjunctions that chain two propositions together and express their parallelism. These include the frequently present structure translatable

into the following propositions: “P1 <do something> *and* P2 <do something else>”. The introduction of the two protagonists (P1 and P2) can be explicit before stating the events related to them as in example (77) below, or not.

The following is an illustration:

(77) A3, *Birds*

mu:g ^h anni:	w	ra:qsa	chanteuse	ra:qsa
singer	and	dancer	singer	dancer
there is a singer and a dancer				

huwa y-g^hanni .
 He PS3M-sing
 He is singing

w hiya ti-shṭah
 And she PS3F-dance
 And she is dancing

In the absence of aspectual marking, we identified the following marking types:

- 1) Pure adverbial marking where only adverbials, temporal or atemporal express the *Sim* relation,
- 2) Pure structural devices, where only paralleled constructions matched by coordinators express *Sim*, and
- 3) Implicit devices, which means the cases where there is no explicit marking and the *Sim* is conveyed through pragmatic inference. The following is an example:

(78) F02, *Wakeup*

Donc dans la scène que je viens de voir.

Ça se passe le matin enfin le matin.

C'est une scène de jour.

Qui se passe dans la chambre de quelqu' un.

Le réveil sonne.

Apparemment il fait jour quand même depuis assez longtemps.

Et donc le jeune homme enfin voilà d'une vingtaine d'années éteint son réveil.

Et se rendort.

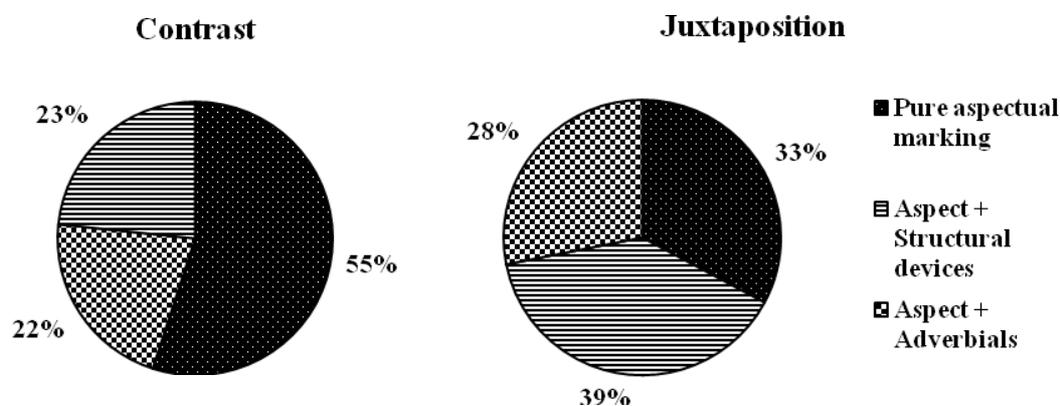
*En tout cas il se retourne vers le mur.
Et se met sous la couette.
En tout cas le réveil n'a pas eu l'effet souhaité.
Et donc quelques secondes après on voit sa mère.
Qui arrive d'un pas très lent pour le secouer.
Qui voit que ça n'a pas d'effet sur lui.
Qui se prend une carabine.
Donc qui se met à sa fenêtre.
Qui ouvre la fenêtre.
Et qui tire qui tire avec.
Et là par contre évidemment il sursaute.
Et c'est comme ça.
Qu'elle arrive à le réveiller.
Donc c'est une scène assez drôle.*

In the example, no explicit means of marking *Sim* is used. The events are represented most of them as completed, but the events related to the mother are included in the TSit of the first event deduced from the context: The mother performs a number of actions while her son is still sleeping. In fact, the retelling starts and closes with reference to the first protagonist, he is represented as part of the background to the events completed by the mother and enclosed within the event of sleeping; retrieved by pragmatic interpretation.

3.2.2.2.1.1. Tunisian Arabic native speakers' aspectual styles

Tunisian speakers use aspect in combination with adverbials, together with structural devices, or alone (pure aspectual marking) to convey *Sim* of events. We notice, as Figure 55 demonstrates, that pure aspectual marking is more frequently preferred when aspectual contrast (55%) expresses *Sim* of events, than with aspectual juxtaposition (33%). Aspect in combination is limited, as it does not exceed 30% of all aspectual marking.

Figure 55. Aspectual styles in TAL1



As for the adverbials used in combination with aspectual juxtaposition or contrast, we identified the following categories:

Table 65. Types of Adverbials used in combination with aspectual marking in TAL1

			Contrast	Juxtaposition	Σ
Aspectual marking +	Spatial adverbials localisation in space	/ (<i>bijnabha, baħd^{eh}</i>) (near her, close to him)	8	12	20
		parallelism (<i>en même temps, fi nafs el waqt</i>) (at the same time)	3	5	
	Temporal adverbials	Temporal break (<i>hakkeka</i> , (then) <i>waqtilli</i> (when))	2	0	13
		Simultaneity + iterativity	3		
Total			16	17	33

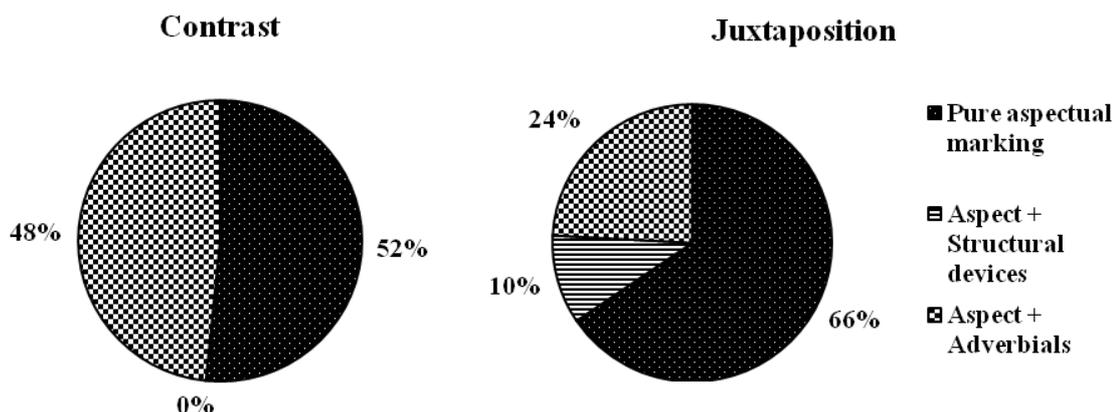
As we can see, the favourite types of adverbials selected in combination with aspect are spatial devices locating the protagonists in some shared space. They are more used for juxtaposition than for contrast. The choice of adverbials indicating a temporal break is marginal and only possible with aspectual contrast.

3.2.2.2.1.2. French native speakers' aspectual styles

There is a clear difference between the way French natives and TAL1 informants exploit aspect in expressing *Sim*. In case of aspectual contrast, French native speakers do not at all have recourse to structural devices. Aspect is employed alone in only 52% of the cases, and otherwise,

it is used in combination with adverbials (see Figure 56 below). The structural devices occur nevertheless in case of juxtaposition, ensuring the parallelism of events in the discourse. Adverbials are less used together with aspectual juxtaposition than with contrast.

Figure 56. Aspectual styles in FrL1



It is worth noting however, that juxtaposing and contrasting aspectual forms and values are not the only feature of aspectual marking. In case of aspectual contrast, the contrast is both conveyed by the contrastive aspects, but also by a contrast of lexical contents. We illustrate the role of the lexical aspect by the example below, where the contrast between the progressive (with «*en train de*») and the non-progressive (*présent de la narration*) is coupled by a contrast in the lexical contents: while <lire un journal> is a 1S dynamic lexical content, <arrive> is a 2S punctual verb.

(79) F1, Kabaret
Une jeune fille est en train de lire un journal dans un café
Un monsieur saoul arrive.
Va s'asseoir à côté d'elle.
Elle s'y intéresse pas.
Et puis elle après il la pousse.
Elle change de place.
Elle tombe.
Et lui il tombe aussi.
Voilà.

Therefore, the punctual verb <arriver> happens while <lire un journal> is in progress.

As for the adverbials selected in combination with aspect, we clearly notice that French native speakers, unlike TAL1 speakers, prefer temporal adverbials to spatial devices. Linking this finding to the lower use of aspectual marking by FrL1 speakers, we could hypothesise that TAL1 expression of *Sim* is predominantly aspectual, and the combination of aspect with adverbials adds a different type of information, that is spatial anchoring. French native *Sim* marking however resorts to temporal adverbials, the fact being that aspectual marking is less employed, and does not suffice to explicitly convey the relation of *Sim*.

Table 66. Types of Adverbials used in combination with aspectual marking in FrL1

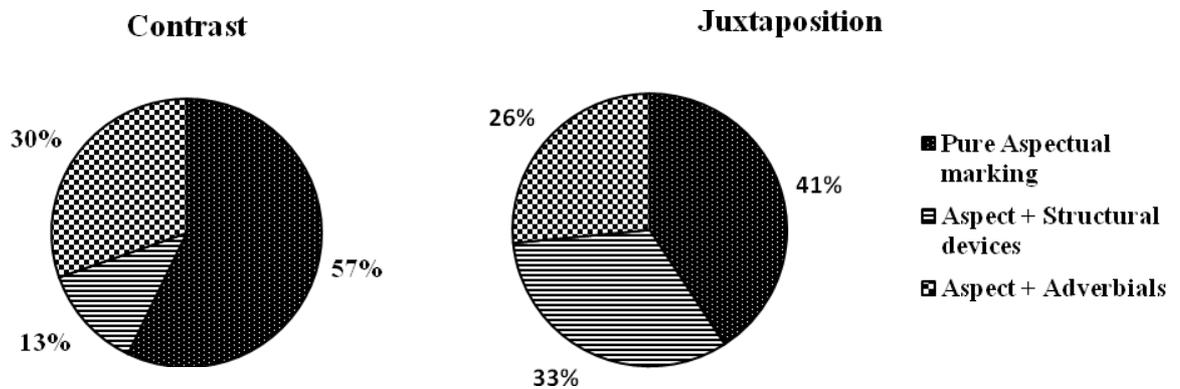
			Contrast	Juxtaposition	Σ
Aspect +	Spatial adverbials	(à côté, en parallèle, à droite)	4	2	6
	Temporal adverbials	Parallelism (<i>au rythme de</i> (at the rhythm of), <i>en même temps</i> (at the same time), <i>pendant ce temps</i> (meanwhile), <i>pendant que</i> (while), <i>tandis que</i> (whereas))	7	5	19
		Temporal break (<i>quand, tandis que</i>)	1	1	
		Iterativity	2	3	

The differences noted between the two groups of native speakers makes us wonder whether learners would select more spatial adverbials than temporal ones in combination with aspect, and whether their use of aspect would present similarities with their mother language and differences from the target language. This is what we investigate in the next part.

3.2.2.2.1.3. Learners' aspectual styles

Our findings show that in FrL2 retellings, learners draw on aspect in a similar way as they do in their TAL1. As such, unlike the French natives' styles, Tunisian learners use structural devices with aspectual contrast as well as with juxtaposition.

Figure 57. Aspectual styles in FrL2



Indeed, learners at different stages highly use aspect in combination with aspectual devices to structure the retelling and insist that the two events construed are parallel to each other. To illustrate this, example (80) is produced by a learner at stage 3 and (81) by an informant at stage 5. Both of them have recourse to similar devices as in their L1 (e.g., *et la mamie...*, *et lui...*).

(80) A5, *Breakfast*
Bon il /&komās &prepare/.
Et la mère &elekut la musique.
Elle /&dās/.

(81) A01, *Breakfast*

Le petit gars il s'est levé pour se préparer et aller au job.
Je ne sais pas quoi.
Il est en train de préparer son petit dej.
Et la mamie elle était en train de suivre ses cours d'aérobic devant la télé.
Et lui on entend bien la musique de la télé.
Il était en train de suivre le rythme en préparant la crêpe.
Chacun il fait une ambiance pour lui.

It is worth noting here that the category 'pure aspectual marking' encompasses the retellings where the progressive is used along with the lexical aspect but also those where only the lexical content is exploited to construe the simultaneous events. Learners at the basic variety use only lexical aspect because they do not master verbal forms at this acquisitional stage. In fact, they

contrast or juxtapose lexical contents in some retellings in order to convey *Sim*.

As we argued before, we have observed instances in this group of informants of mastery of aspectual distinctions with the recourse to lexical forms learnt as non-analysed chunks, before mastering finiteness. As such, we have noted the appearance of phasal and boundary markers such as «*commencer à*» and «*arrêter de*» and instances of «*en train de*» without any trace of use of the auxiliary *être*. Indeed, it is in the presence of *être* in the periphrasis that we can talk of a finite form.

As the following table shows, we looked in details at the different aspectual choices made by each informant and calculated an average for each acquisitional stage identified for him / her.

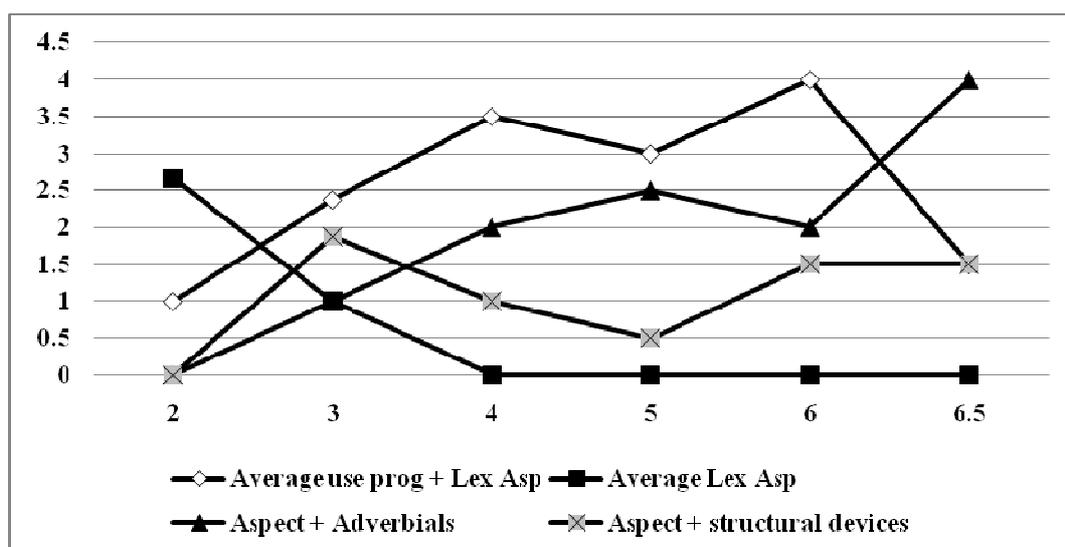
Table 67. Aspectual marking across acquisitional stages

		Pure aspectual marking: Use of the progressive forms (+Lexical aspect)	Pure aspectual marking: Lexical aspect	Aspect + Adverbials	Aspect + structural devices	Total aspectual marking	Average n°
2	A1		5			5	3
2	A5	1	2			3	
2	A8		1			1	
3	A2	3		1	1	5	5.38
3	A3	2	1	1	0	4	
3	A4	5		0	3	8	
3	A6	2		1	1	4	
3	A10	2		0	2	4	
3	A11	1		2	5	8	
3	A12	4		1	0	5	
3	A13	0		2	3	5	
4	A7	3		2	1	6	6.5
4	A9	4		2	1	7	
5	A01	3		1	1	5	6
5	A04	3		4	0	7	
6	A02	4		1	2	7	7.5

		Pure aspectual marking: Use of the progressive forms (+Lexical aspect)	Pure aspectual marking: Lexical aspect	Aspect + Adverbials	Aspect + structural devices	Total aspectual marking	Average n°
6	A03	4		3	1	8	
6.5	A05	1		4	2	7	7
6.5	A06	2		4	1	7	

We mapped the different aspectual styles across the stages after calculating an average for each learner variety (Figure 58). In the basic variety, learners resort to lexical aspect to mark *Sim* given the lack of finite forms in their variety. The form /trẽ/ of the periphrasis appears in one informant's productions, juxtaposing two simultaneous events in his retellings.

Figure 58. Average use of the different aspectual combinations



Notes: Prog: progressive forms – Lex Asp: lexical aspect

We observe a decrease after Stage 3 of the use of lexical aspect in isolation. Indeed, from the intermediate variety (Stage 3), we notice some attempts to produce finite verbal forms to express temporal values. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that from that point on, learners rely on both the lexical contents and the progressive forms to construe simultaneous events. On the other

hand, we observe an increase throughout the stages of the use of aspect in combination with adverbials, which recalls our observation concerning French native speakers. The higher use of aspect in combination with adverbials is accompanied with a decrease in the frequency of pure aspectual marking at the advanced stages. The same applies to structural devices together with aspect to express *Sim*, which decrease starting from Stage 3.

These observations give us an interesting picture of how aspect is exploited throughout the stages of acquisition to express *Sim*. We can conclude that our FrL2 learners are sensitive to aspectual distinctions from the earlier stages of acquisition. They exploit lexical aspect as a primary device before they acquire more formal devices to express *Sim*. They also very soon resort to structural devices, a device that they also very highly exploit in their L1. Their *Sim* marking becomes across the stages comparable to the natives' as they little by little start introducing more adverbials integrating them in their retellings in combination with aspect. The investigation of the types of adverbials in combination with aspectual juxtaposition and contrast provided the results summarised in the following table.

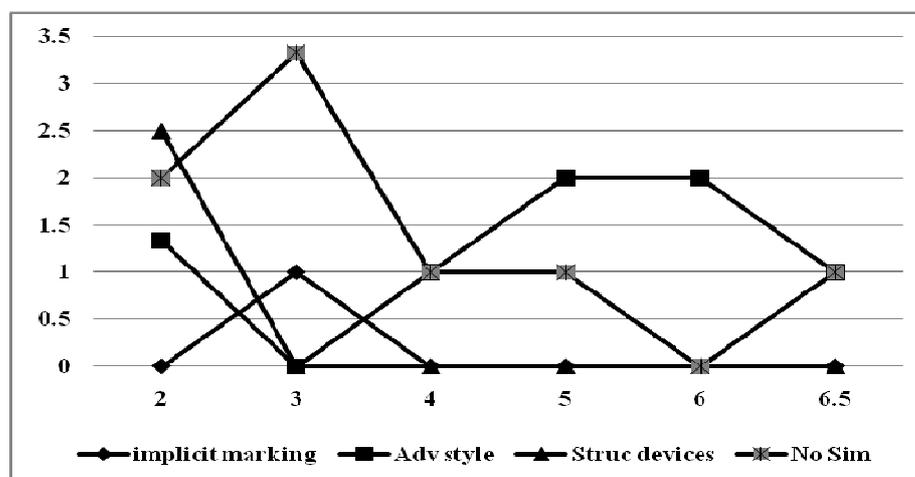
Table 68. Types of Adverbials used in combination with aspectual marking in FrL2

		Contrast	Juxtaposition	Σ	
Aspect +	Spatial adverbials		5	8	13
	Temporal adverbials	Parallelism	2	3	14
		Temporal break	5	1	
		Simultaneity + iterativity (à chaque fois que (Every time))	3	0	
	Total		15	12	27

We clearly notice that spatial adverbials conveying a common spatial context for the two events are highly selected (almost in 50% of the cases), which is comparable to the informants' preferences in TAL1, and dissimilar to those of French native speakers.

We were also interested in examining the different linguistic means used in case aspectual marking is not the chosen device across the acquisitional stages. The results are as follows:

Figure 59. Non-aspectual *Sim* marking



The frequency of adverbial style in FrL2 data augments throughout the stages as opposed to implicit marking that is very limited. The only use of structural devices in the basic variety drops and is completely abandoned in the subsequent stages, in favour of mainly aspectual marking. The average retellings where *Sim* is not at all expressed also declines throughout the stages: It is highest at Stage 3 and drops tremendously at stage 6.

To sum up our findings regarding the aspectual styles selected for this type of verbal task, together with adverbials and other explicit devices expressing *Sim*, we present our contrastive analyses of the three groups of retellings in the following table:

Table 69. Summary of the contrastive analysis of aspectual styles

Features	TAL1	FrL1	TAL1 FrL2
Preferred Aspectual style for contrast	Pure aspectual style Aspect + structural devices	Pure aspectual style + Aspect + adverbials	Pure aspectual style + Aspect + structural devices
Preferred style for juxtaposition	Aspect + structural devices	Pure aspectual marking	Pure aspectual style + Aspect + structural devices
Preferred adverbial complements	Spatial adverbials (61%)	Temporal adverbials (76%)	Spatial adverbials (48%) Temporal adverbials (52%)

As we can see in the summary in Table 69 there are common features (in bold font) between the choices made in the source language, TAL1, and those in the target language, notably the use of

structural devices, by copying the structure from TAL1 in French L2, and also the type of adverbials selected together with aspect. In both TAL1 and FrL2, spatial adverbials are preferred when aspectual juxtaposition is expressed. They help to stage the two events expressing at the same time their temporal and spatial *Sim*.

We turn now to studying the different aspectual styles selected for each video in order to examine how their specificities affect the way the different devices expressing on-goingness are selected in retelling them.

3.2.2.2.2. Which form for which event? A detailed account of aspectual perspectives taken for each video

In this part, we examine whether in describing the two situations presented in the videos as on-going, the informants uphold the marked form (juxtaposing two marked forms abbreviated in the tables as M-M (82)); the unmarked form (U-U (83)), or whether they contrast M-U (84) or U-M forms (85).

(82) *Elle est «en train de» danser et il est «en train de» jouer de la guitare*

(83) *Elle danse et il joue de la guitare.*

(84) *Elle est «en train de» danser et il joue de la guitare.*

(85) ? *Elle danse et il est «en train de» jouer de la guitare.*

The question mark in (85) shows that the example is made up for the sake of illustration, but the question of whether or not it can possibly be produced by a native speaker is answered later in the analysis.

As a reminder, the marked form stands for the construction with the preverbal marker *qa:'id* in TAL1⁴⁶. For FrL1 it is the periphrasis with «*en train de*», and for FrL2, it is any occurrence of

⁴⁶ Given the systematic character of the postverbal marker *fi* under well-known conditions (the presence of a direct object), we focus on investigating the presence / absence of the preverbal marker *qa:'id* in a detailed account of

this periphrasis regardless of whether or not it is acceptable (e.g., /ãtrã/ without *de* as in «*le monsieur /ãtrã &lafé/ la musique*» in A4, *Birds*). The unmarked form however stands for the *présent de l'indicatif* in FrL1 and FrL2, and PV in TAL1. As for aspectual contrast, we pay attention to whether the contrast is expressed by means of the marked form for the first situation (M-nonprg) or for the subsequent one (nonprg-M), or with the unmarked form for the same purposes (respectively U-nonprg, or nonprg-U). Every other case is not included in the following graphic representations. These include retellings where on-goingness devices are not selected to construe at least one of the situations, or even retellings including only one core component, or none. We examine each video separately comparing the three groups of data (TAL1, FrL1, and FrL2). We do so opposing the results of L-educated versus H-educated informants. Detailed accounts for the interface of forms in each video by all the informants are provided in Appendix 11.

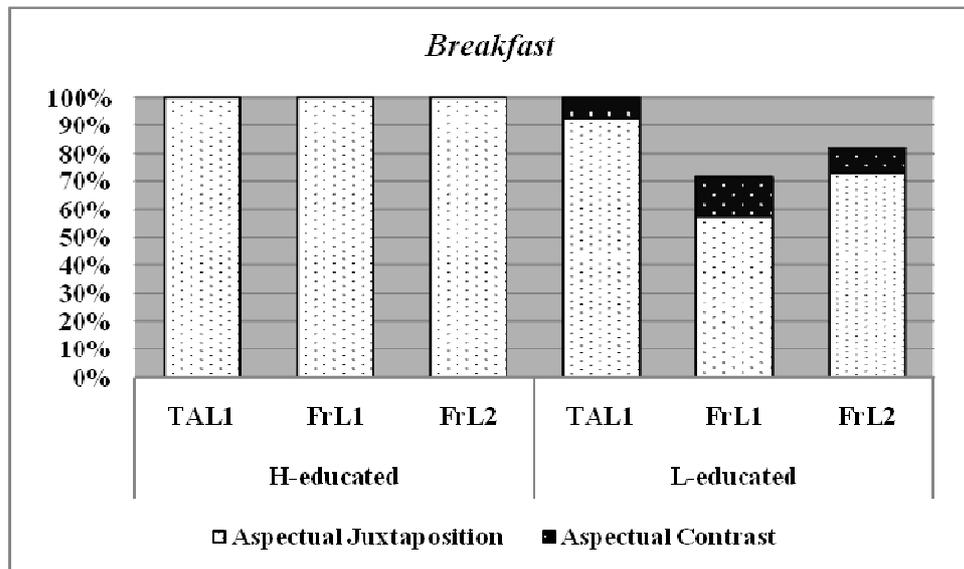
3.2.2.2.2.1. Aspectual styles in *Breakfast* retellings

Most of TAL1 informants in both groups retell the situations in the order in which they are shown in the visual stimuli. All informants construe the two situations as on-going showing their simultaneity. Likewise, all FrL1 informants chose to retell the situations in this video in the order in which they are shown. They set the first situation <a man preparing pancakes> using predominantly the marked form (seven informants out of 11, 63%). We observe a preference in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 for upholding the progressive aspect for both situations in this video.

As clearly represented in the graph below, TAL1, FrL1, and FrL2 informants clearly choose to maintain the progressive aspect to construe both situations of *Breakfast*. In 50% of TAL1 retellings, speakers maintain the progressive aspect contrasting the marked and unmarked forms. In the other half, they contrast them (see Figure 61 below).

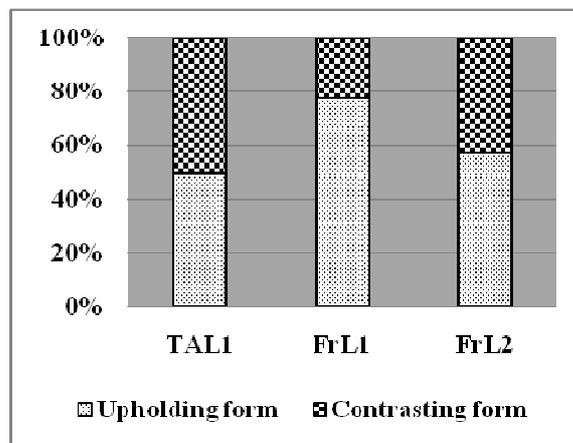
retellings of each video.

Figure 60. Graphic representation of the different aspectual choices in retelling *Breakfast*



Note: Asp.Jux. = Aspectual juxtaposition

Figure 61. Proportions of juxtaposition and contrast of forms



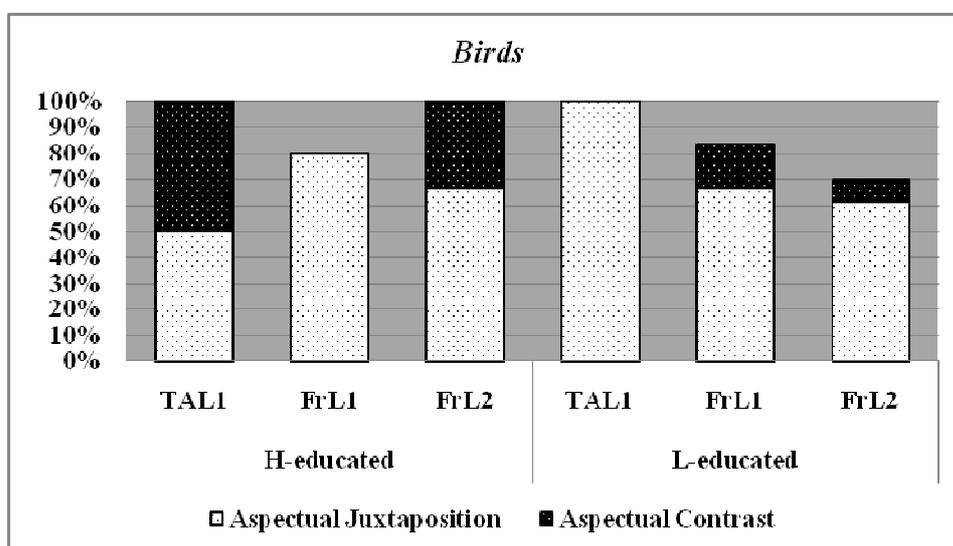
This represents a difference from French native speakers who in about 80% of the retellings choose to uphold the form and only contrast forms in 20% of the cases. While FrL2 informants' choices resemble the natives' in the advanced learners' productions (H-educated group), this is not the case in earlier stages of acquisition (L-educated group). In this latter group, the choices are comparable to the TAL1 choices as far as upholding the forms or contrasting them are

concerned. Furthermore, in all L-educated groups unlike in H-educated ones, regardless of the language or learner variety, cases of aspectual contrast were found.

3.2.2.2.2.2. Aspectual styles in *Birds* retellings

As Figure 62 below shows, in H-educated group, the choices of FrL2 are comparable to those made by the native speakers in the source language. Consider for example the use of aspectual contrast in TAL1 and FrL2. In L-educated group however, FrL2 choices and FrL1 informants are similar.

Figure 62. Graphic representation of the different aspectual choices in retelling *Birds*



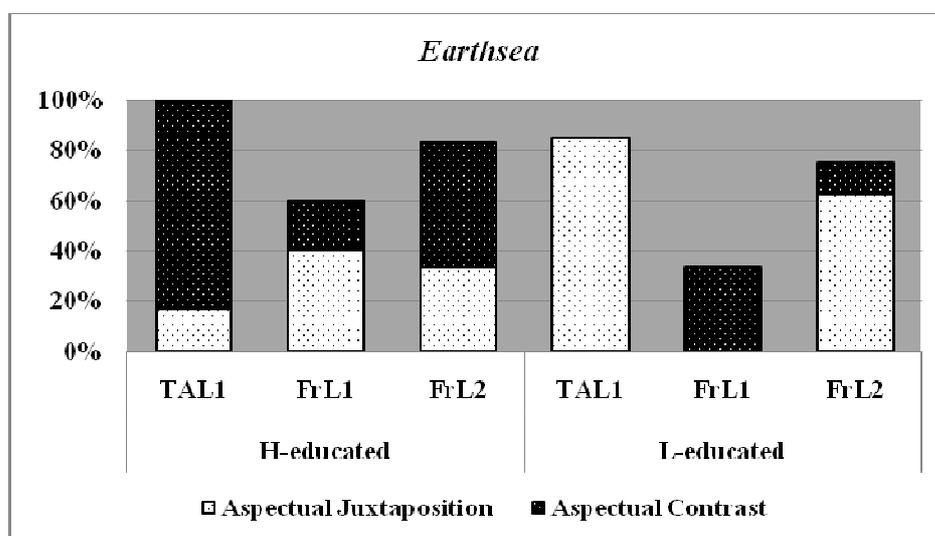
3.2.2.2.2.3. Aspectual styles in *Earthsea* retellings

Earthsea retellings reveal slight differences between the choices made by both groups regarding the forms expressing on-goingness in TAL1. In fact, 5 out of 6 (83%) of H-educated informants contrast aspects to construe the S1 and S2 of the retellings. Most of them choose the construction *qa:’id* for essentially S1. As for L-educated informants, most of them maintain the unmarked form for both situations and only two of them (15%) maintain the marked form.

As Figure 63 shows, H-educated and L-educated groups made clearly different aspectual choices

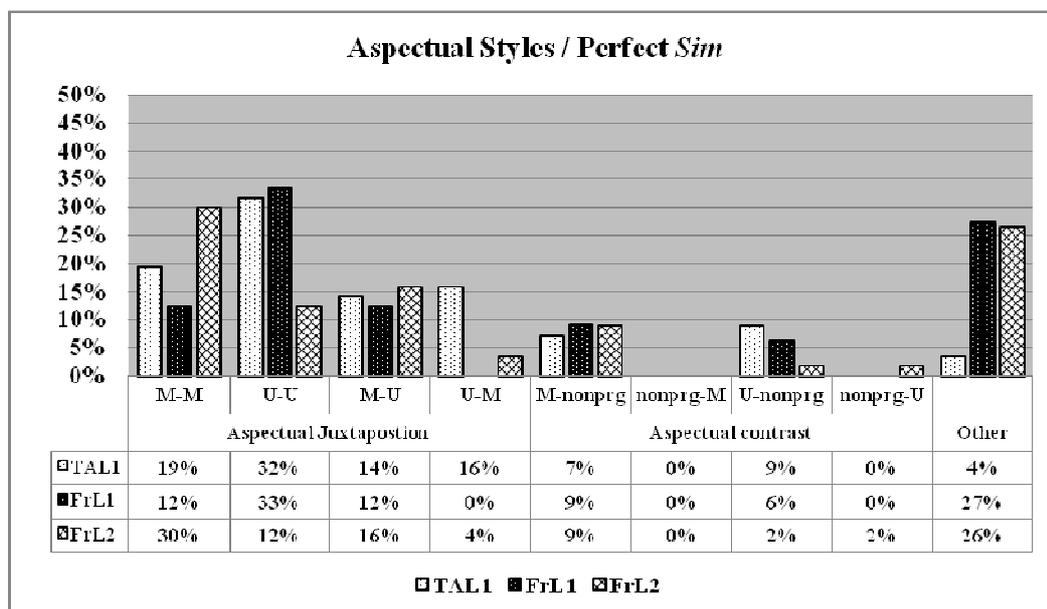
to construe the situations of the video. Most H-educated TAL1 speakers opt for aspectual contrast, while L-educated ones preferred aspectual juxtaposition. The two FrL1 groups made comparable choices. This leads to the hypothesis that the video was less straightforward than *Breakfast* or *Birds*. We also notice in *Earthsea* retellings a bigger proportion where *Sim* was not obvious to verbalise by the different informants. This concerns more than 40% of H-educated FrL1 retellings and more than 60% of L-educated ones.

Figure 63. Graphic representation of the different aspectual choices in retelling *Earthsea*



To sum up the different aspectual styles showing perfect *Sim* (*Breakfast*, *Birds* and *Earthsea*), we notice that aspectual juxtaposition is the most frequently used style by all groups. This is not surprising as aspectual juxtaposition allows the expression of the situations' parallelism (Figure 64).

Figure 64. Aspectual styles in retelling perfect *Sim*



We notice however some differences in the aspectual choices by the three groups. First, in native productions (TAL1 and FrL1), juxtaposing the unmarked form is more frequent than juxtaposing the marked one. Second, contrasting the marked and unmarked forms to construe two simultaneous situations seems to follow a rule: While it is possible for the marked form to be preceded by the unmarked form in TAL1, it is not the case in FrL1. In fact, we have M-U combination in TAL1 and FrL1 and U-M only in TAL1. Third, FrL2 productions show differences from FrL1 productions and some similarities to TAL1 choices. For instance, the juxtaposition of the marked form by FrL2 learners is much higher than the natives' use. In addition, using the U-M combination by FrL2 learners could be explained by the learners' overgeneralisation of the use of «*en train de*». Last, TAL1 speakers rely more on the use of aspect and expressing the progressive value to construe perfectly simultaneous situations, while in French, the possibility of not using the progressive at all is comparable as the rates of non-aspectual styles in FrL1 and FrL2 productions indicate. This leads to the conclusion that French and Tunisian Arabic have inherent specificities, which lead to differences in the use of forms. The question here is how is *Sim* expressed in the absence of the aspectual style in FrL1 and FrL2. We turn to this question later, but now we examine separately the different videos showing

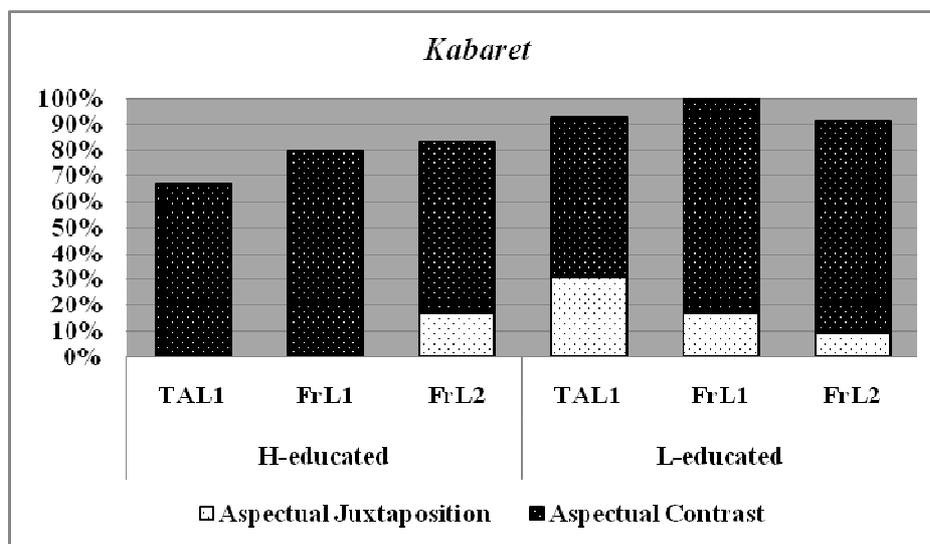
inclusion.

3.2.2.2.2.4. Aspectual styles in Kabaret retellings

TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 informants choose most of the times to contrast two aspectual values to construe S1 and S2. In most of the retellings, they contrast the marked forms with non-progressive expressing bounded events. The bounded successive events of S2 are described focusing on their sequentiality using the narrative present (PV and simple present in TAL1 and FrL1 respectively) or the perfective; with the suffixed verb form (SV) in TAL1 or *passé composé* in FrL1.

Most informants put S1 as the first situation most of them by means of the marked form. S1 has the property of being on-going and more durative than S2. S2 however is made up of short successive bounded events performed by P2 seen later in the video. It seems that the durativity of S1 is here a trigger for setting it as a frame of the 'story'. The aspectual choices are therefore explained by the nature of the stimulus. The use of the marked form (with *qa:'id*) in TAL1 is very infrequent, and it concerns only S1, an on-going and more durative situation than S2. In FrL1 or FL2, «*en train de*» is more frequent. The different frequency of the marked form however separates the learners from the native speakers of French. In most FrL1 retellings, the marked form is selected first. In three FrL2 retellings, learners draw on the marked form later in the discourse subsequent to another form

Figure 65. Graphic representation of the different aspectual choices in retelling *Kabaret*



As the graph allows us to see, aspectual contrast is the preference of all speakers in all groups. Some instances of upholding the progressive are noticed but they are very limited. The proportion of the retellings where *Sim* is not expressed is also very low. We suppose that the nature of the stimulus, presenting a temporal inclusion of one situation withing the TSit of the other makes the temporal relation easier to verbalise.

3.2.2.2.2.5. Aspectual styles in *Wakeup* retellings

The retellings of *Wakeup* reveal an interesting case of expressing on-goingness in TAL1. In fact, S1 is expressed using the active participle of the verb *rqad* (he slept) in nearly all the retellings. This explains the low occurrences of the progressive marked and unmarked forms in TAL1 retellings. The second situation is construed as bounded using the suffixed verb form in most of the cases. The TAL1 contrastive choices are displayed in Figure 66.

Figure 66. Aspectual contrast in *Wakeup* TAL1 retellings: Different combinations

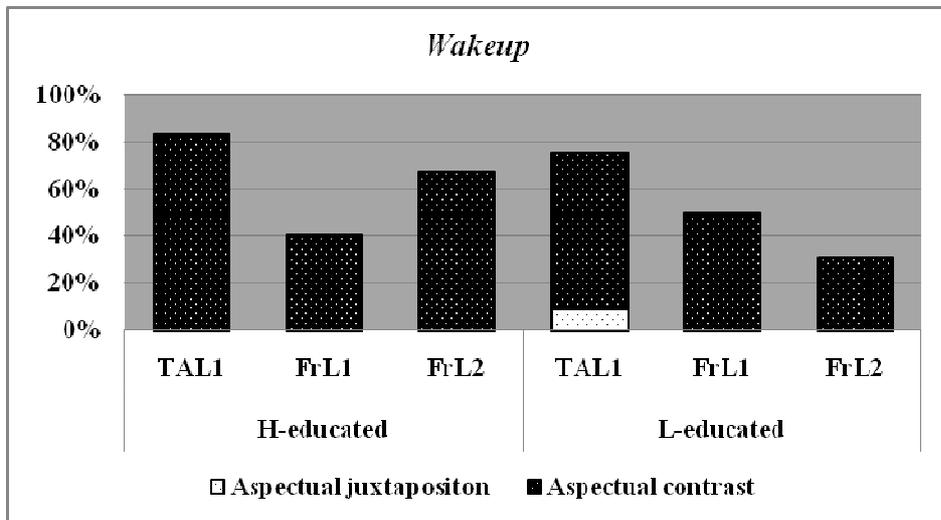
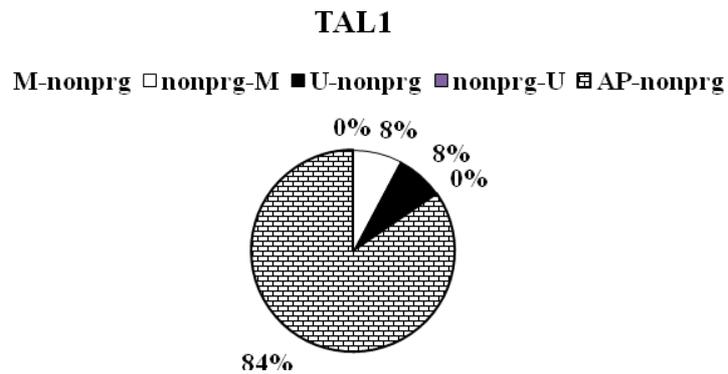


Figure 67. TAL1 aspectual choices in *Fire* retellings



Conversely, in FrL1 and FrL2 retellings, the aspectual contrast (progressive / non-progressive) is frequently used. In both language groups, S1 is set preferably by means of the marked form. The graph below further confirms the similarity of choices noted which is explained by the influence of the task and the stimulus.

3.2.2.2.2.6. Aspectual styles in *Fire* retellings

Like for *Kabaret* or *Wakeup*, most of the informants regardless of the language opt for the

aspectual contrast when they employ the devices expressing on-goingness. However, in most retellings, the marked and unmarked forms were not used, and speakers took other perspectives on the events. Looking at the choice of which situation to set up first, we notice a disagreement between informants as to what situation to set first in the retelling.

In fact, many informants in TAL1 chose to talk first about S2. They also preferred a progressive construction with *qa:’id* to talk about S1.

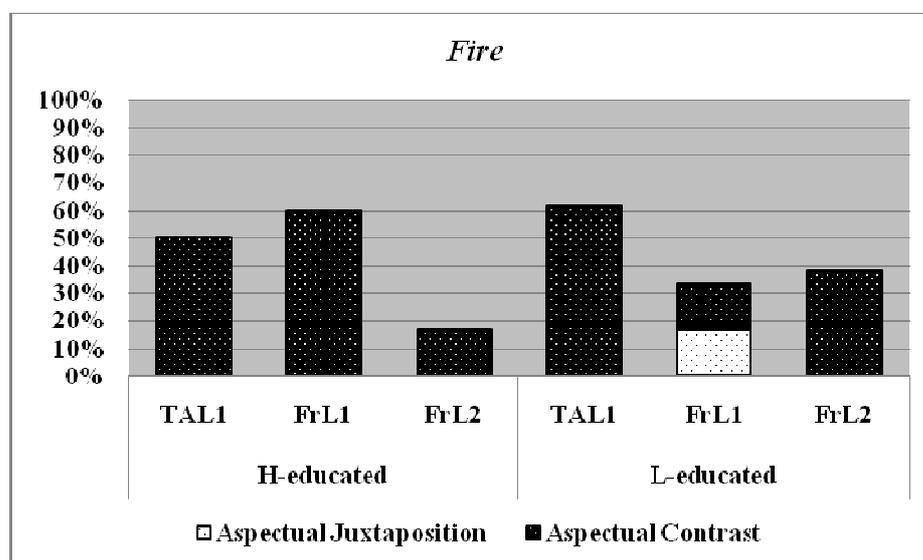
The disagreement is also observed in FrL1 groups. In fact, two informants in H-educated group and 2 in L-educated group mentioned first S2 <a fireman doing successive actions>. Two of them (F03 and F2) describe S2 expressing on-goingness. Only F03 uses the marked form to talk about S2. The situation described, however, is not what is seen in the video but an interpretation of the situation to build an on-going situation (86).

(86) F03, Fire
On voit donc des pompiers une caserne de pompiers
Où ils sont en train d’attendre derrière [S2]
Puis on voit un téléphone
Qui au début on pourrait croire
Que c’est celui qui va sonner
Mais en fait c’est celui par lequel
On va appeler les pompiers
Et on les appelle pas
Il y a un incendie.

What is also worth noting about FrL1 retellings of *Fire*, is that four informants prefer to make an introduction about the way the two situations are shown first before retelling each one. In fact, this choice is not surprising, as what is seen throughout the video is the screen split in two parts and S1/S2 are perceived to happen simultaneously. This might explain why certain informants choose the more dynamic situation <a man doing successive actions> first. Yet the majority of them select the most durative situation, which is focused upon in the stimulus. In fact, the informants see P1, and start to see S1 before P2 appears in the second half of the screen and becomes aware of S2. Only one advanced learner and four L-educated learners out of 19 total learners chose the progressive to construe at least one situation of the stimulus. Furthermore,

they opted for the aspectual contrast (see also Figure 68).

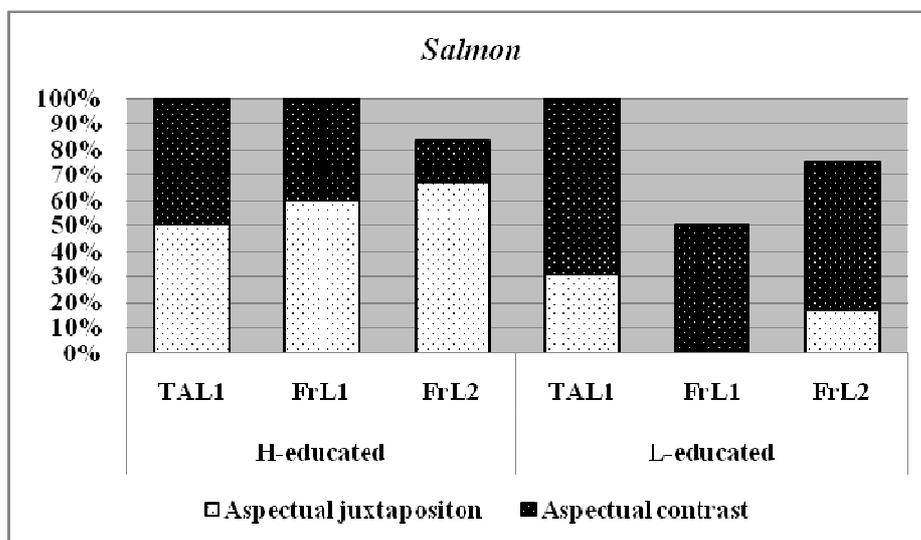
Figure 68. Graphic representation of the different aspectual choices in retelling *Fire*



3.2.2.2.2.7. Aspectual styles in *Salmon* retellings

In the retellings of *Salmon*, S1 <the hands of the cook preparing a meal> which is perceived first, and understood in the course of the video as enclosing S2 <the cat stealing slices of salmon> is retold first by nearly all the informants who include both situations as the core components of their retelling. S1 has the specificity of being durative while S2 is a rather repetitive and bounded activity. In TAL1 as well as FrL1, the marked form is used mostly with S1.

Figure 69. Graphic representation of the different aspectual choices in retelling *Salmon*



As Figure 69 shows, the learners' aspectual perspective is quite similar to the native speakers' with analogous profiles. In fact, FrL2 L-educated speakers made comparable decisions to FrL1 L-educated informants. Likewise, FrL1 and FrL2 perspectives are quite comparable. Interestingly also, TAL1 informants' choices are similar in both H-educated and L-educated groups.

3.2.2.2.2.8. *Aspectual styles in Soup retellings*

The informants in our two first languages made unanimously the choice of retelling the situations of the video in the order of their appearance. S1 <a young man eating soup noisily> is therefore set first, most of the times by means of the marked form. They clearly make of S1 a frame for the second situation <a voice interrupting the young man>. In fact, they express the on-goingness of S1 and contrast it with the sequence of iterative events in S2 expressed by other aspectual values such as perfective aspect. S1 is an obvious choice for a second reason: P2 is not seen and not always identified by all informants, it is a voice. Understanding its origin requires knowledge of tennis rules in order to decode the interaction between the tennis game heard on television and the fact that P1 is eating his soup noisily. As for the aspectual choices made by each group of informants, TAL1 informants in both H-educated and L-educated groups make very similar

choices. In most of the retellings they uphold the progressive for both situations. Only in some retellings do they use the aspectual contrast.

As Figure 70 shows, while FrL1 native speakers contrast aspectual perspectives to construe S1 and S2, FrL2 H-educated speakers choose to uphold the same form for both situations. This means that while FrL1 native speakers (in H-educated group) select the marked and the unmarked form for different situations in this video retelling, two of our FrL2 learners at advanced stages maintain the marked form to describe them.

(87) A05, Soup

Alors on voit un mec sur le lit apparemment dans une petite chambre.

Qui est en train de manger la soupe.

Apparemment c'est une soupe aux oignons.

Une grande marmite juste à côté de lui.

Et il fait beaucoup de bruit en mangeant.

Et il y a quelqu'un dans la même pièce.

Qui est apparemment en train de jouer au tennis un truc comme ça.

Et qui lui demande de faire moins de bruit quand il mange.

Et quand celui qui mange.

Fait moins de bruit.

Ben l'autre il le remercie.

(88) A06, Soup

Donc c'est quelqu'un.

Qui est en train de boire sa soupe.

Il fait du bruit.

En la buvant devant la télévision.

C'est comme si quelqu'un.

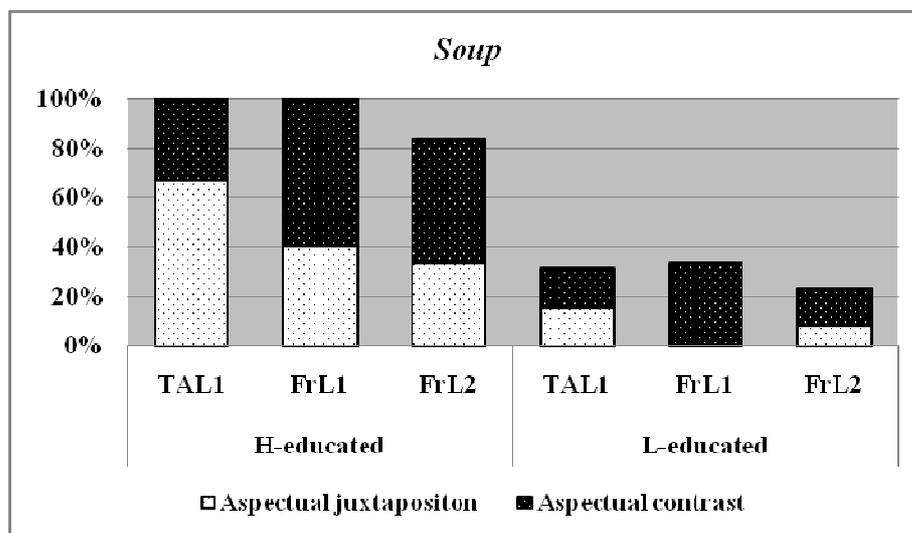
Il est en train de le suivre.

Pour il est en train de voir.

Qu'est-ce qu'il fait.

Il lui conseille de boire sans bruit.

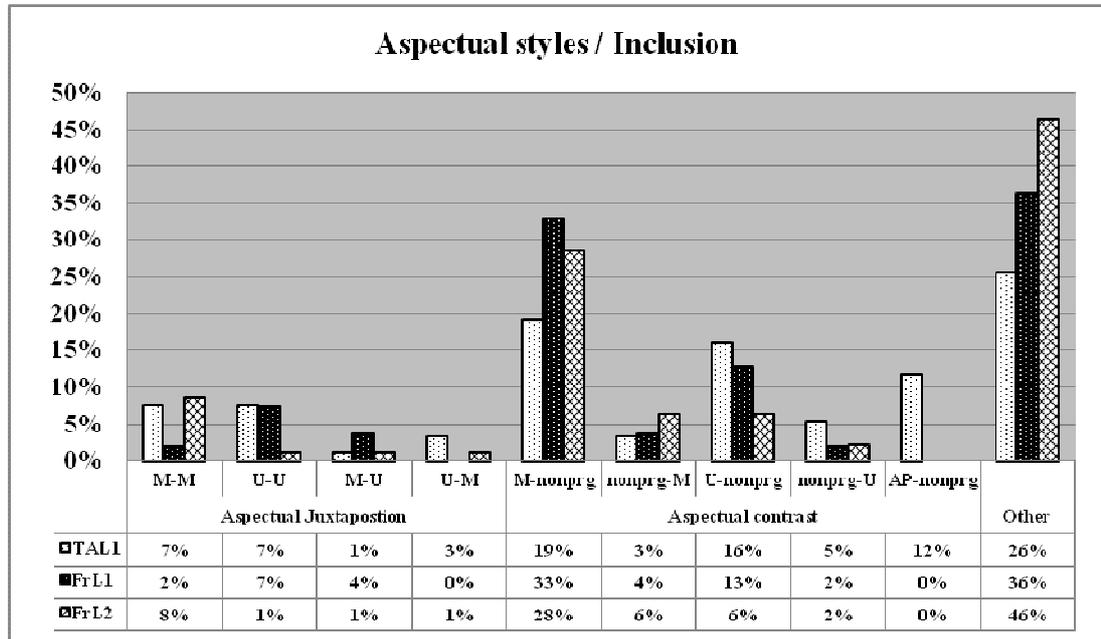
Figure 70. Graphic representation of the different aspectual choices in retelling *Soup*



To sum up, we display all results of the role of aspect to express *Sim* in the following graph below (Figure 71).

Aspectual contrast is preferred in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 in retelling inclusion (see Figure 71 below). The favourite combination in FrL1 to express the contrast is made by opposing «*en train de*» with a non-progressive form. However, we notice that in TAL1, the contrast is made using *qa:’id* or the simple form PV at fairly equal rates. Therefore, unlike the marked form in TAL1, «*en train de*» plays a typically contrastive role. This finding corroborates Leclercq’s (2007, p.281) observation concerning the contrastive role of «*en train de*» in her data.

Figure 71. Aspectual styles used in retelling inclusion

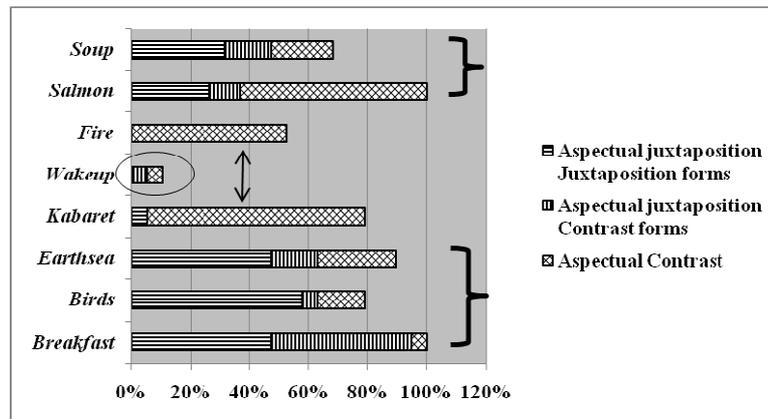


Furthermore, we notice a high frequency of non-aspectual marking in the three sets of productions and higher among FrL2 speakers.

3.2.2.2.2.3. Comparison of TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 informants' use of forms in discourse

Here are summarised our findings about the aspectual perspectives taken in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2.

Figure 72. aspectual perspectives by TAL1 informants in all videos

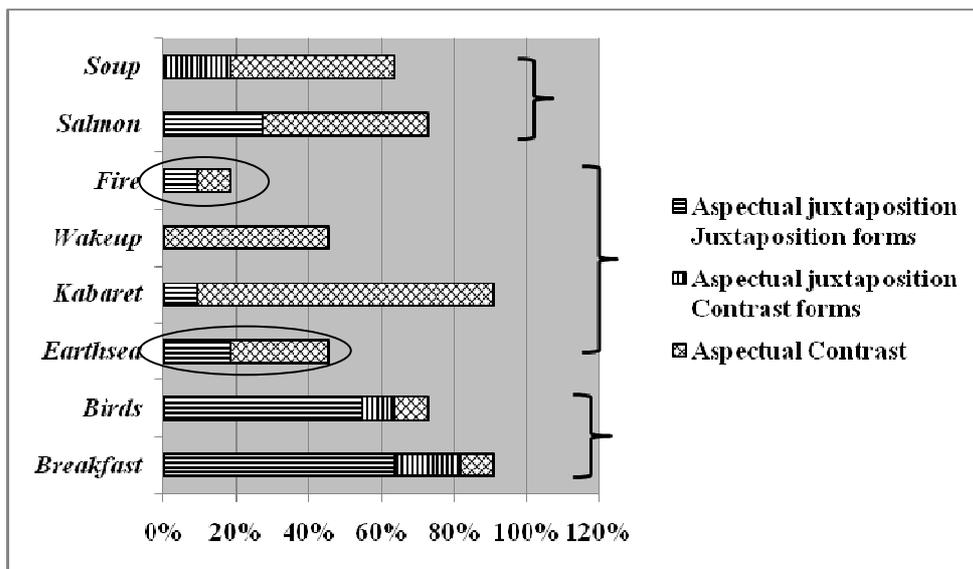


The graph allows us to see some similarities in the perspectives taken for each video retellings, but also differences. We point out to the similarities observed as to the use of the aspectual contrast using different shapes.

Breakfast Birds and *Earthsea* retellings show a preference for upholding devices expressing the progressive. The choice of aspectual contrast is rare. The higher presence of the aspectual contrast in *Birds* and *Earthsea* retellings can be explained by the left onset present in the videos' situations (S2), which TAL1 informants accounted for contrasting the progressive with another aspectual value such as the inchoative. The inclusion type was in turn categorised into three sub-categories, based on the similar aspectual choices observed. In *Kabaret* and *Fire*, aspectual contrast is favoured, *Wakeup*, the progressive marked and unmarked forms are almost not at all used. The last sub-category is that of *Salmon* and *Soup*, which have the common characteristic of having a high percentage (nearly 50%) of upholding the progressive forms, with a high rate of aspectual contrast. This similarity in aspectual choices could be explained by the repetitive character of S2 in both videos, which was often interpreted as a whole.

However, the summary of FrL1 results reveals a different taxonomy as far as the aspectual choices made are concerned (the results are displayed in Figure 73).

Figure 73. Aspectual perspectives by FrL1 informants in all videos

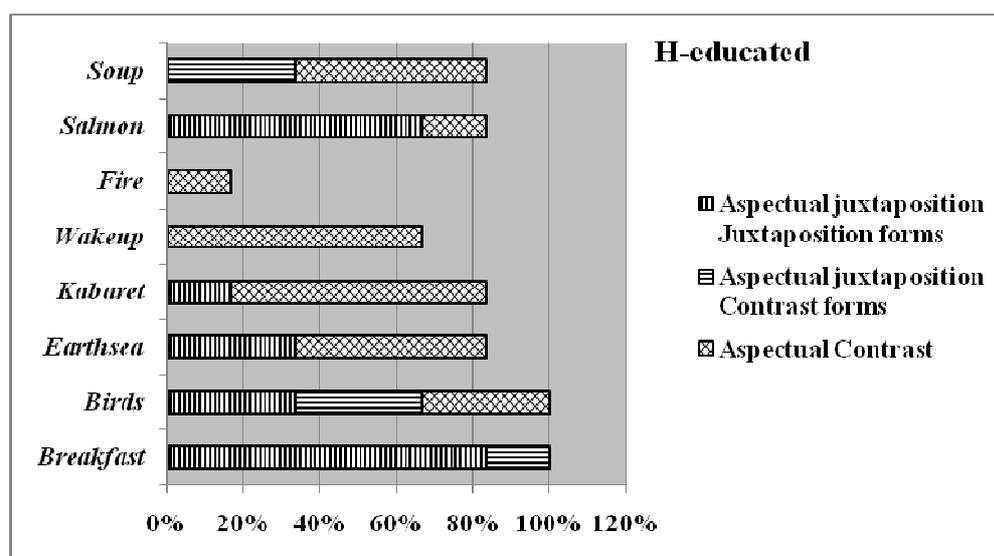


In fact, the different choices group together *Breakfast* and *Birds* that show a preference for progressive upholding and a marginal instances of aspectual contrast. They put apart *Earthsea* retellings in which FrL1 informants opt for either the aspectual contrast or the upholding of forms. *Kabaret* and *Wakeup* are grouped together as they show a clear tendency to use aspectual contrast. In *Salmon* and *Soup*, FrL1 make almost similar choices, by means of aspectual contrast and sometimes progressive upholding. Finally, *Fire* is left apart because of the very low frequency of the progressive in general.

We can therefore conclude that the similarities observed demonstrate the impact of the stimulus on the choices made to complete the task. This is of course an expected result. The other interesting result is that the divergence of choices of TAL1 and FrL1 and of the different taxonomies found (as reported in Figure 72 and Figure 73) leads to claim that language specificities and the aspectual properties of the respective languages also constitute a distinguishing factor that partially determines the way informants go about their choice of perspectives.

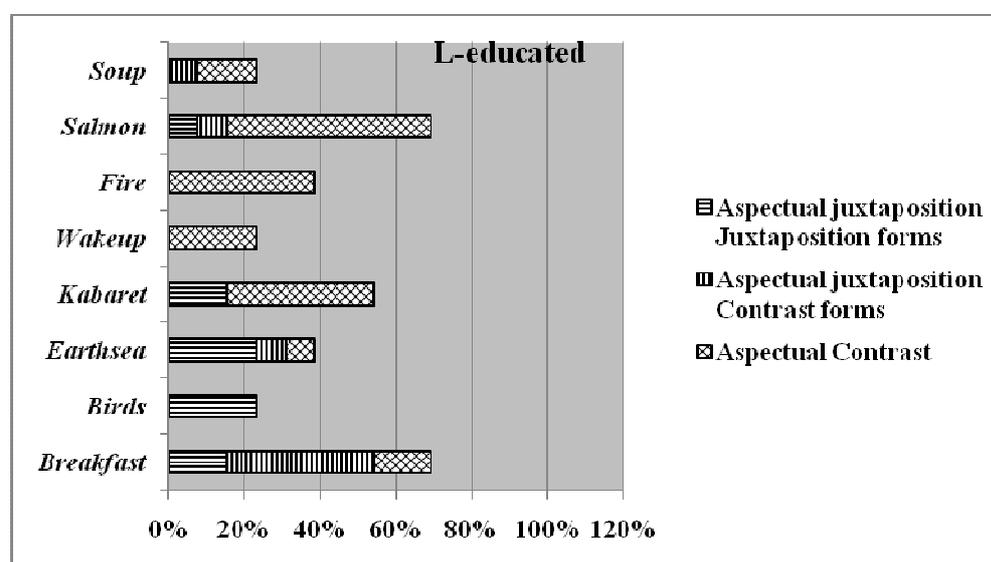
Now we may compare these results with the FrL2 learners' aspectual choices. In order to do so, we compare the H-educated and L-educated groups' choices.

Figure 74. Aspectual perspectives by H-educated FrL2 informants in all videos



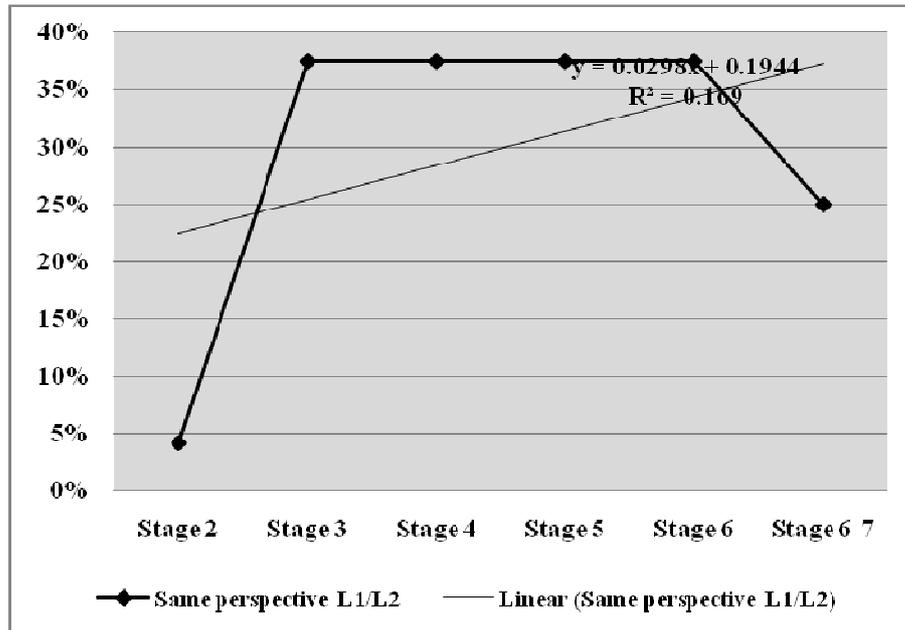
We notice that H-educated speakers' aspectual choices are interestingly very similar to those of French native speakers (Figure 74). Since the TAL1 speakers' aspectual perspectives taken on events are different from those by FrL1 informants, we hypothesise that there is little interaction between the choices they make in their L1 and those they make in FrL2 on the same task. This hypothesis will be verified when we deal with each learner's aspectual choices separately. Conversely, the aspectual choices made by L-educated group represent tendencies, which remind of TAL1 choices, and those by French native speakers (consider Figure 75 below).

Figure 75. Aspectual perspectives by L-educated FrL2 informants in all videos



When we calculated the averages for each acquisitional stage of the L1 / L2 retellings showing the same aspectual choice, we observed the following tendency (Figure 76):

Figure 76. Similar L1/L2 aspectual perspectives across stages



The tendency to use the same aspectual choice for the same video in L1 and L2 is very high (about 40%) across four stages from Stage 3 to Stage 5. It drops slightly at the stage 6-7 to reach 25%.

This could be interpreted by the influence of the stimulus material. Furthermore, the same perspective in L1 and L2 could also be explained at the level of the conceptualiser, as the speaker conceptualises the situations shown in the videos, and tries to verbalise them by the same means in both languages regardless of their specificities. In this case, making the same choices in the L1 and L2 can be possibly described as a transfer case.

3.2.2.2.5. Functions of each form in the discourse of simultaneous events

At a second stage of the analysis of the forms' interface and the choice of aspectual perspectives, we examined what function each form fulfilled in the discourse to construe the simultaneous situations involved in each video. Our analysis pays attention to the following five roles found to be played by the marked and unmarked forms in FrL1 and FrL2 and by the constructions with versus without the preverbal marker *qa: 'id* in TAL1:

- Introducing the first situation of the discourse (symbolized as Sit₁);
- Marking a change from one situation to the other (while maintaining the same form as in the precedent proposition) along with a switch from the first protagonist to the second (represented as Δ_{sit});

We illustrate using the following example the two functions

(89) F01, Salmon
Bon là je pense.
Que c'est une publicité aussi.
Et donc on voit les mains d'un cuisinier.
Qui prépare (Sit1) un poisson.
Qui l'a découpé.
Et un chat qui guette (Δsit) la scène.

- Changing the form with no change of situation in the description / narrative (Δ_{form});
- Changing the situation and the form, for example, in French switching from the marked form with «*en train de*» to the unmarked form, the simple present and vice versa (represented with the symbol (Δ_{sit+form}). The following example illustrates the Δ_{sit+form} function.

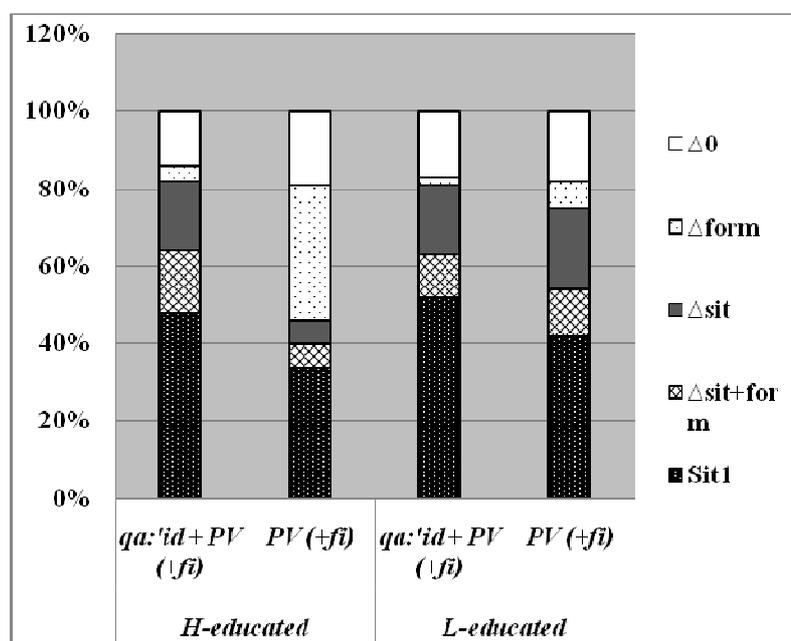
(90) F02, Birds
Donc dans cette scène on voit deux personnages un musicien rasta.
Qui est «en train de» (Sit1) jouer de la guitare électrique un air assez entraînant oui un air peut être du reggae.
Ça y ressemble en tout cas.
Et un musicien noir rasta et à côté de lui il y a une petite fille.
Qui avec une jupe et un collier d'inspiration tahitienne qui danse (Δsit+form).

- Introducing no change, this means that the situation, the protagonist and the form are maintained in adjacent propositions (Δ0). This means that the speaker chooses one form to talk about one situation of the video and employs it in more than one proposition talking about the same situation.

3.2.2.2.4.1. TAL1

We aim to verify whether the selection of the preverbal marker *qa:'id* is triggered by some properties attached to the situations in question and / or to the way they are perceived and conceptually represented by informants. We also would like to check if it plays a special discursive role linked to staging two different simultaneous situations, in which case it would occur in a different distribution from the other devices. Figure 77 presents a detailed analysis of the functions of each of the four constructions in the TAL1 retellings.

Figure 77. Use of progressive constructions and their function in TAL1 discourse



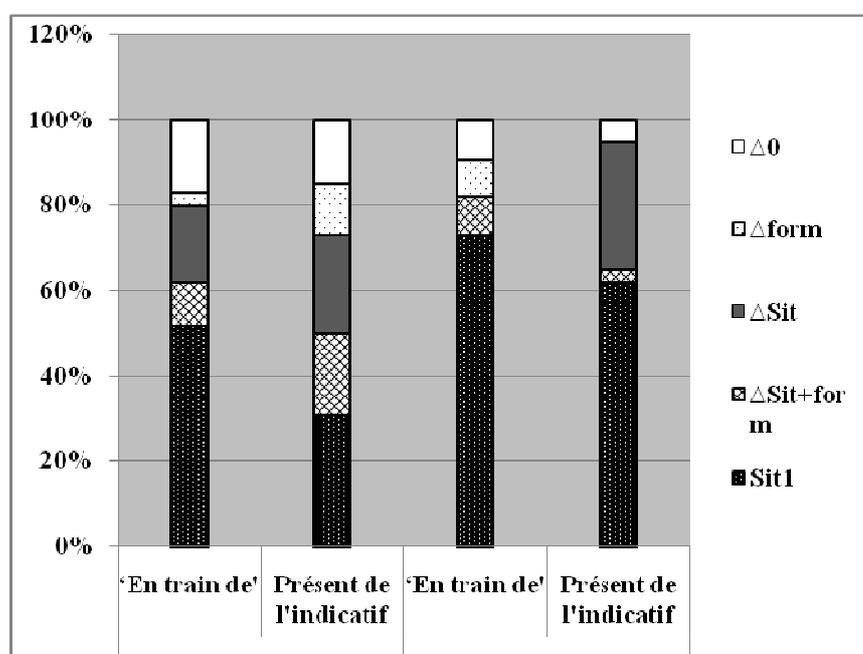
The graph shows that both H-educated and L-educated informants favour the constructions containing *qa:'id* to set up the first situation of their retelling more than the forms without. Furthermore, the constructions with *qa:'id* are favoured by H-educated speakers to play certain roles, such as marking a switch of form (for a change of situation / protagonist). In this group, the preverbal marker is more used as a contrastive tool than in L-educated retellings where contrasting forms is less frequent, and the change from one situation to another is equally done by means of constructions with or without *qa:'id*.

To sum up, we have seen in this part of the analysis that the interaction of forms with or without the preverbal marker *qa:'id* in the discourse of simultaneous events in TAL1 reveals that this marker does not have clear-cut settings where it is exclusively employed, even though we observed some interesting tendencies. In fact, the marker *qa:'id* was found to be used with more systematicity by H-educated group. Indeed, the differences between the ways the two groups of informants draw on the forms indicated that the different speaker profiles affected the ways they used *qa:'id* or not in discourse. Among H-educated speakers, *qa:'id* was highly employed with the global discursive functions of setting up the first situation in the discourse and marking contrasts of forms and situations. We can claim that *qa:'id* plays a contrastive role with PV used for the same aspectual value in discourse.

3.2.2.2.4.2. FrL1

Now, we turn to examining the interaction between the marked form «*en train de*» and the unmarked form *présent de l'indicatif* in FrL1 retellings (See for ample details for each retelling Appendix 10). The findings are presented in Figure 78:

Figure 78. Use of «*en train de*» and *Présent de l'indicatif* in the retellings



In general, H-educated informants select «*en train de*» to set up the first situation more frequently than the unmarked form. Furthermore, setting up the first situation in the discourse is the role that is most frequently played by this construction in the expression of simultaneous situations. The same findings are verified with L-educated informants despite the lower frequency of the unmarked form. In fact, 73% of propositions containing «*en train de*» are used to set up the first situation in the discourse. The marked form therefore plays a special role in the discourse.

Despite this common feature, the role of «*en train de*» by the two groups shows a discrepancy: in H-educated retellings, it rather serves to move from one situation to another (28%, 10% of which is accompanied by a change from the unmarked form). In L-educated retellings however, it is never used to contrast between situations only. This means that if one event is verbally represented using «*en train de*», the change from that situation to another is accompanied by a change of form (Δ_{form}) from «*en train de*» to *présent de l'indicatif*.

The detailed analysis of each retelling confirms that H-educated informants apply the discursive strategy of contrasting the marked form with the unmarked one more frequently than L-educated group. What is more interesting to observe in all retellings by both groups is that when the marked form is selected to set up the first situation in the discourse (Sit₁), it can be followed by the unmarked form focusing on a contrast and introducing the second protagonist and situation (see for example F01 and F2, *Breakfast*; F02 *Salmon*). When the informants set up the first scene using the unmarked form, (*présent de l'indicatif*) they cannot switch to the marked form to highlight a contrast or mark such a change. This validates the hypothesis made above where we observed that the combination U-M (unmarked then marked form) was not possible in FrL1.

Examining which situation is chosen to be described first, i.e. is talked about first by the informants already gives us interesting insights about the use of «*en train de*» to organise the discourse using a temporal frame into which another situation comes to be interlocked. Yet, occurring first in the discourse is not the sole property attached to the marked form used as an organisational tool. In fact, we find two instances in the retellings, where «*en train de*» occurs in the middle of the discourse, here are the excerpts:

(91) F3, Kabaret
 Là il avait dû boire du rhum ou quelque chose [E2]
 Parce que dans l'état ou il était
 Et puis il allait embêter la fille [E2]
Qui était en train de lire le journal. [E1]

The use of «*en train de*» in this retelling does not invalidate our previous hypothesis about the role of the marked form in discourse. In fact, the marked form makes *lire un journal* a framing event opening an interval of time within which the event of *embêter la fille* is interlocked. F3 does not verbalise E1 first but by means of «*en train de*» construes it as a durative event which constitutes a frame for E2, enclosing it.

Another similar occurrence is found in the retelling F05, *Fire*. Through subordination, the proposition with «*en train de*» expresses a framing situation that encloses the situation retold in the previous propositions [E2]. In fact, F05 starts the retelling with pointing out that both situations are happening in parallel, talks about P1/S1 with the imperfective aspect, talks then about P2/S2 using the unmarked form followed by the marked form describing P1/S1.

(92) F05, Fire
 Alors on est dans une caserne de pompiers
 Et il y a un camion garé
 Dans ce qui doit être le garage des pompiers
 Et sur un des murs, un téléphone est posé
 Enfin un téléphone mural est fixé
 Et au bout de quelques secondes de la fumée apparaît
 Le téléphone prend feu
 Tandis que les pompiers s'affairent autour de leur camion
 Sans se rendre compte que le téléphone est «*en train de*» brûler

In this retelling, two devices are used: the unmarked form and the marked form. Though the marked form appears in a proposition that is subsequent to the one containing the unmarked form in the discourse, the selection of the marked form clearly indicates that the proposition *le téléphone est en train de brûler* functions as a temporal frame for the proposition *les pompiers s'affairent autour de leur camion*. This makes us refine our hypothesis regarding the role of «*en train de*» in discourse as follows: if the marked form and the unmarked form are used to verbalise two simultaneous events E1 and E2 then, the proposition (Pr) containing a marked

form (Pr_{mar}) generally precedes the one containing an unmarked form (Pr_{unmar}). The exception is the case when it is explicitly expressed that Pr_{mar} construes E1, which acts as a temporal frame that encloses E2. It means that E1 includes the Time during which the situation construed with Pr_{unmar} takes place (see (92) above).

Consequently, the periphrasis with «*en train de*» opens a temporal frame that lasts longer than the one expressed using *présent de l'indicatif*. While both forms express that a situation is ongoing, the event for which the marked form is used is supposed to envelop the second one, opening a temporal frame bigger than the one that the unmarked form conveys.

3.2.2.2.4.3. FrL2

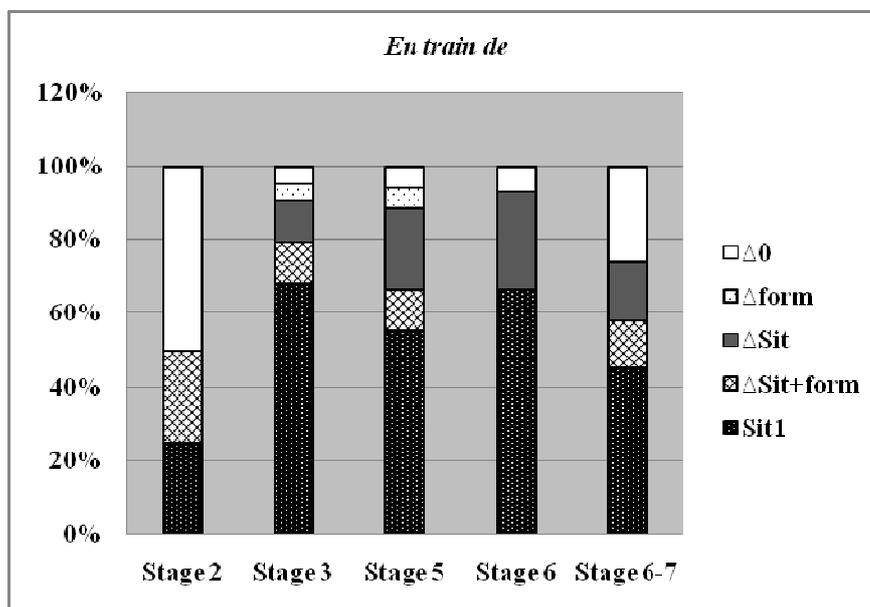
Our investigation of the interface and staging of forms in the discourse in TAL1 and FrL1 has resulted in some interesting findings. In fact, the comparison of the results in both languages helps formulate a few preliminary hypotheses concerning how «*en train de*» is employed by FrL2 speakers in discourse, and whether there are similarities between our learners' use of the progressive marker *qa:'id* in TAL1 and of «*en train de*» in FrL2. We are therefore interested in examining whether the informants' L1 influences their FrL2 as far as the expression of progressive events in this task is concerned.

We hypothesise that

The use of «en train de» by FrL2 learners would be different from the natives' even at very advanced varieties, due to the discourse function highlighted above which is different from the way the progressive aspectual marker is employed in TAL1.

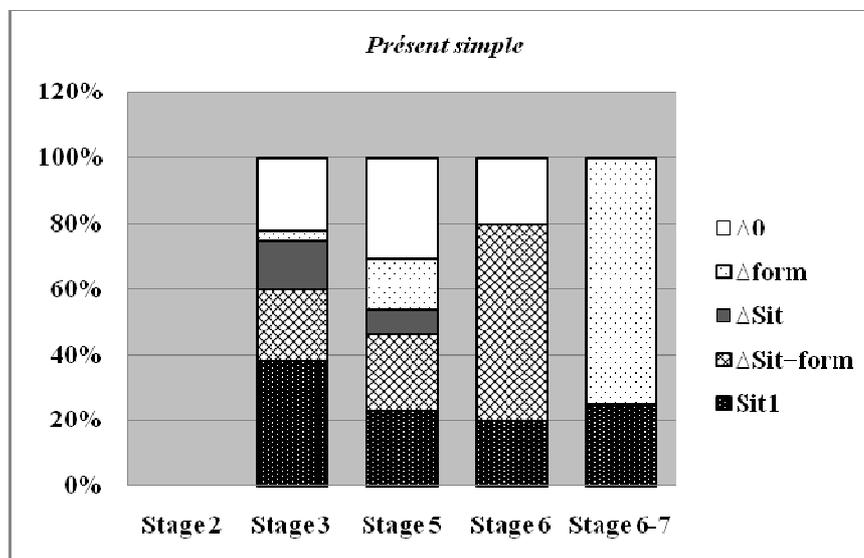
Our analyses of the staging of the marked and unmarked forms across the different acquisitional stages reveal interesting results.

Figure 79. Functions of «en train de» in building the discourse of simultaneous situations in FrL2



At Stage 2, the recourse to the marked form to set up Sit₁ is low. It plays this function in discourse increasingly at Stage 3 to attain 70% of its total occurrences. At the other stages, it continues to play this role at most times. The *présent de l'indicatif* experiences an opposite fate, as its use to set Sit₁ drops throughout the stages.

Figure 80. Functions of the *présent simple* in building the discourse of simultaneous situations in FrL2



We can therefore conclude that «*en train de*» appears in the basic variety as a non-analysed chunk to express that some event is on-going. In the discourse of simultaneous events. A5, the only informant who produces it at the basic variety tries to emulate native speech unaware of its functions in the discourse of simultaneous events. He generalises its distribution and applies it to any event regardless of the way they are staged in the discourse. Awareness of its role in that organisation increases throughout the stages, when the productions display increasing awareness of its discursive functions.

What is also worth looking at is the role of «*en train de*» to mark a change of form and of situation. We have argued above that when two simultaneous situations are construed by means of two forms of the progressive, «*en train de*» for one of them and *présent de l'indicatif* for the second, «*en train de*» describes the event whose TSit opens a time frame within which TSit of the second one occurs. In other words, «*en train de*» normally selected preceding *présent de l'indicatif* can happen subsequently to the unmarked form only in special cases, one of them being subordination. We have seen an illustration of this in (92) above. Examining the instances where the marked form is employed subsequently to the unmarked form expressing a switch from one situation / protagonist to the second reveals interesting findings about the way L2

learners use «*en train de*» in discourse.

We counted exactly 14 instances of «*en train de*» playing $\Delta_{\text{sit+form}}$ function in the discourse. This coding includes all cases when there is a change from any form to the periphrasis with «*en train de*». All the possibilities are listed in the following table:

Table 70. Use of «*en train de*» for a change of situation and form in retelling simultaneous situations in FrL2

$\Delta_{\text{sit+form}}$	Examples
Gérondif / « <i>en train de</i> »	A01, <i>Earthsea</i> : <i>et un ami à elle vient la chercher.</i> <i>et tout d' un coup en entendant les paroles.</i> <u><i>qu' elle était «en train de» citer.</i></u> <i>il s' est mis à pleurer</i>
Passé composé / « <i>en train de</i> »	A01, <i>Kabaret</i> : <i>après il s' est mis sur la chaise.</i> <i>il a attrapé la première chaise.</i> <i>il était vraiment saoul.</i> <i>bon il s' est assis juste à côté de la dame.</i> <u><i>qui est «en train de» lire un journal.</i></u>
BF / « <i>en train de</i> »	A4, <i>Earthsea</i> <i>Un monsieur là.</i> <i>peut être sa copine.</i> <i>et elle /&esakite/ (le quittait / voulait le quitter...).</i> <u><i>et lui il est «en train de» pleurer.</i></u> <i>et et peut être elle /&areste/ avec elle quelques minutes.</i> <i>ou /&Sepa/.</i> A4, <i>Salmon</i> <i>Le monsieur /&ile &prepare/ sa plat de poisson un plat de poisson.</i> <u><i>et le le chat il est «en train de» manger sa les morceaux de la de poisson.</i></u> <i>et lui peut être il /&save/ pas.</i> <i>&kil son chat il /&amāze/ le poisson</i> <i>voilà.</i>
Présent simple (progressive) / « <i>en train de</i> »	A4, <i>Breakfast</i> <i>euh la dame on voit la dame</i> <i>elle fait le sport.</i> <u><i>et le monsieur là il est en train de faire la crêpe.</i></u>

The table gives a view of all the possible changes found to bring about «*en train de*» in the

middle or towards the end of the discourse. For each possibility, we have supplied an example. In the first two ones, «*en train de*» construes the second situation in the retelling, while the first one is verbalised using the gerund or the perfective aspect. In both cases, «*en train de*» describes an event that lasts longer than the one preceding one it in the discourse. Subordination in this case allows for this.

In the examples A4, *Earthsea* and A4, *Salmon* are ambiguous. The verbal elements written here in phonetics can be interpreted to account for bounded events as follows [our interpretation is put between brackets]:

(93) A4, *Earthsea*

Un monsieur là. [there is a man here]

Peut être sa copine et elle /&esakite/. [May be his girlfriend has left him]

Et lui il est en train de pleurer. [and he is crying]

Et et peut être elle /&areste/ avec elle quelques minutes. [and may be he stayed with her some minutes]

Ou /&Sepa/.

(94) A4, *Salmon*

Le monsieur /&ile &prepare/ sa plat de poisson un plat de poisson. [il avait préparé / il préparait un plat de poisson = He had prepared / is preparing a meal with fish]

Et le le chat il est «en train de» manger sa les morceaux de la de poisson.

Et lui peut être il /&save/ pas.

&kil son chat il /&amāze/ le poisson voilà.

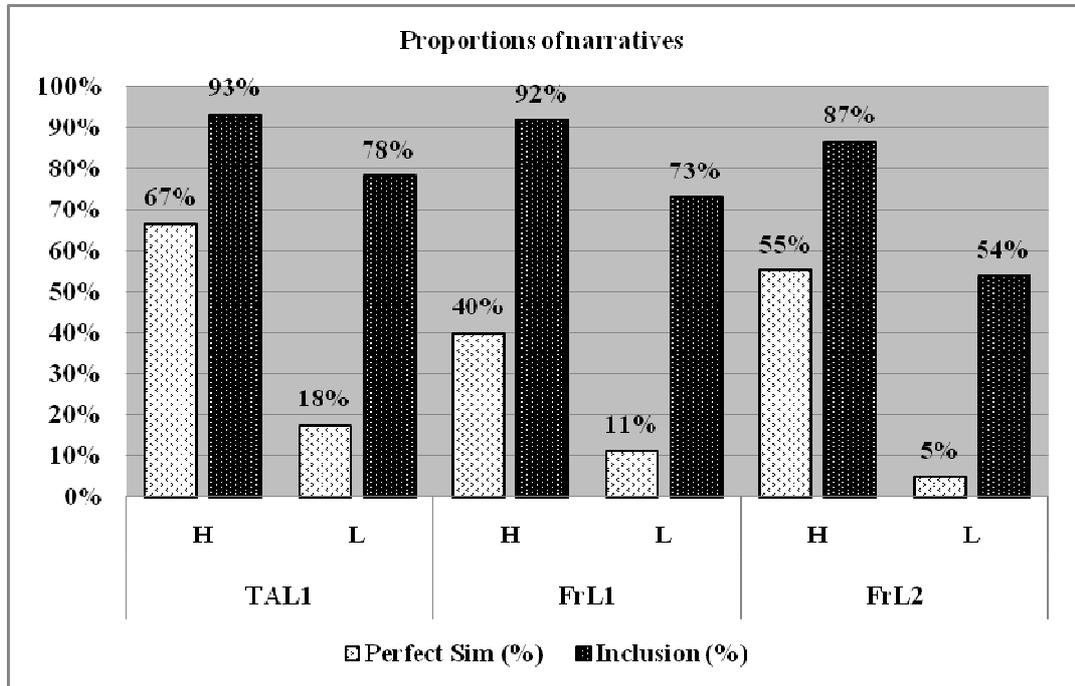
In both examples, «*en train de*» focuses on the event that is part of the main skeleton of the retelling (we shall return to the organisation of discourse in the next section). Therefore, «*en train de*» is not selected for a proposition construing an event that is parallel to another one preceding it in the discourse. This is the case of our last example in Table 70. This type of organisation of forms is not found in the productions of French natives. «*En train de*» in similar productions occurs before the simple present. We can therefore claim that at this stage of acquisition (Stage 3), the use of «*en train de*» in discourse can present differences from the natives' even though juxtaposing the unmarked and marked form in this order makes perfect sense. Therefore, awareness of its distribution and of the discursive constraints it obeys when we have parallel situations develops later in the acquisitional process.

Now that we have seen in detail how the different forms expressing on-goingness are used to express the types of *Sim* of events, we investigate the other explicit devices which, in combination with aspectual styles or alone help to express the same temporal relation. As mentioned before, the former case is called the “weaker aspectual style” and the latter “the adverbial style” by Schmiedtová (2004).

3.2.2.3. Structuring of the discourse

As a reminder, every text a speaker produces is an answer to an implicit or explicit question, which is called the *quaestio* (von Stutterheim & Klein 1989; von Stutterheim & Klein 2002; von Stutterheim et al. 2009). The *quaestio* guides and determines most of the choices made by the speaker throughout the text / discourse. The explicit elicitation of our retellings was made by means of the question translatable into “What happened in this scene?” As established earlier, the retellings of the videos are of two types: descriptive accounts of events and narrations. To remind the reader about the proportions of narratives for each video and in each language and learner variety, we supply the following graph based on Table 39.

Figure 81. Proportions of narratives



As we have argued before, the proportions of narrative texts produced in each group (TAL1, FrL1, and FrL2) are quite comparable (The remaining productions are called descriptive accounts of events). Narrations seem to be affected by the following factors.

The first obvious factor is the type of simultaneity shown in the visual stimuli. In fact, it was easier for informants, regardless of the language spoken to produce narrations out of videos showing a situation whose TSit is included / interlocked in the TSit of another one. Producing narrations out of two situations going on in parallel was less easy. In addition, the profile of the informants affects the type of texts they choose to produce as an answer to our question (what happened?). Indeed, H-educated informants, in the three groups managed to make narratives for perfectly simultaneous situations. L-educated informants chose that perspective less and produced descriptive accounts more frequently out of the events they conceptualised.

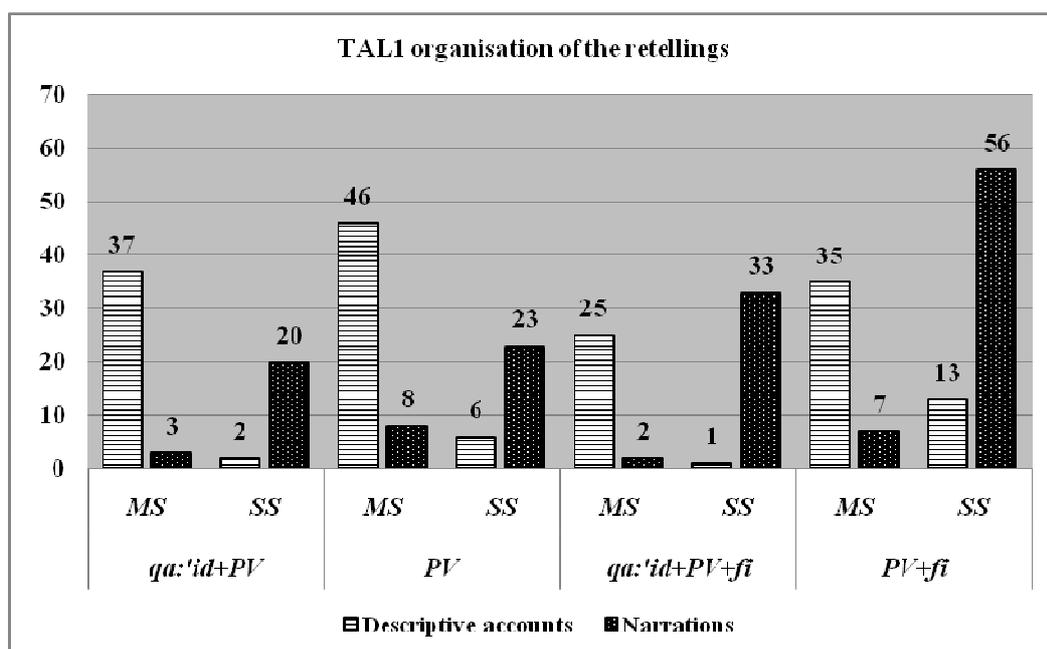
For the inclusion type, the results of H-educated informants are analogous. As for perfect *Sim* type, however, Tunisian informants produced more narratives in their mother language, TAL1 and in FrL2, compared to French native speakers in the H-educated group who produced

narratives only in 40% of the cases. The learners' productions therefore represent a tendency in between the source language TAL1 and the target language FrL1. We can also hypothesise a possible link between some cultural differences between France and Tunisia affecting the way events shown in videos are retold.

We account separately for the two types of retellings, descriptive accounts of events and narrations, in our analysis of the structuring of the discourse into main structure and side structures. In fact, a descriptive text has a different organisation from a narrative one (Klein & von Stutterheim 2002; Starren 2003). We have examined where the marked and unmarked forms in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 descriptive accounts and narrations were used, in the main structure (MS) or the side structures (SS). We deal with each group of languages separately.

2.5.1. Structuring of TAL1 retellings

Figure 82. Discourse structuring and the different forms in TAL1



The graph confirms that the organisation of the retellings is different in the descriptive accounts and in the narrations. Furthermore, the progressive devices are used differently in each type of production. In fact, all four forms are most frequently set in the main structure of the descriptive

accounts (MS) and in the side structures of narrations (SS)

However, PV and «PV+*fi*» constructions show some flexibility as some of them are used the other way around, i.e., we find occurrences in the MS of narrations, and in the SS of descriptive accounts. Constructions with *qa:'id* («*qa:'id* + PV + (*fi*)»), however, show a stricter distribution, which means, they are very rarely part of the MS of a narration or in the SS of a description. The following is an illustration of a narrative (MS is in bold font):

(95) A01, *Kabaret*

famma wehid .
There-is one
There is a guy

qa:'id fi bla:ša .
PRG in place
Sitting in some place

yomkon ma na-'raf-sh fi-t-tri:q walla ma na'raf-sh .
May-be NEG PS1-know-NEG in-the-street or NEG PS1-know-
NEG
May be in the street but I am not sure

te'ib huwa e-(r)-ra:jil .
Tired him the-man
He is tired

masraḥ elakt^hariyya masraḥ
Theatre most-likely Theatre
Most likely in a theatre

bon ena huw je l-bel-i besh y-g^hanni .
So PS1 PS3M come-PS3M to-mind-mine PAR PS3M-sing
I thought he was going to sing

ama yo-dhor .
But PS3M-seem
But it seems

shedid waḥda dabbu:za mta' shra:b .
Handle&AP&PS3M one bottle of alcohol

He has a bottle of alcohol

da:hir ka:n huwa yo-shrob 'al-exir .
Seem&AP&PS3M AUX PS3M PS3M-drink on-end
He seems to be a real drunkard

akahaw
That is it

lqa mra .
Find-PS3M woman
He found a woman

ma'ne-ha .
Meaning-it
meaning

qa:'da ta-qra fi-l majalla .
PRG PS3F-read PRG-the magazine
She was reading the magazine

q'ad yo-g^hzor-l-ha .
PRG-PS3M PS3M-look-to-her
He kept looking at her

In this extract, the introduction to the narrative, corresponding to the orientation in the Labovian framework, ends by a transitional element *akahaw* (translatable into ‘that is it!’). In TAL1 the expression marks the transition from one part of a story to another, hence the end of the previous part. It also functions here as marking the referential movement from the background of the story to the main structure. The movement is also indicated by an aspectual contrast between the perfect (use of the active participle) describing states (*shedid dabbouza*, ‘holding a bottle’) to the perfective (use of SV form).

The following example illustrates the occurrence of progressive constructions more in the MS of the retellings:

(96) A05, *Kabaret*
bon keyin komedien

Then Aux&AP&PS3M comedian
So there is a comedian

mais huwa keyin ma'ne-ha
But PS3M Aux&AP&PS3M meaning-it
But he is I mean

sherib .
Drink&AP&PS3M
drunk

w keyin keyna baħd^he-h madame .
and Aux&AP&PS3M Aux&AP&PS3F near-him lady
and there is a lady next to him
hiya *ta-gra* *fi-l* journal .
PS3F PS3F-read PRG-the newspaper
She is reading the newspaper

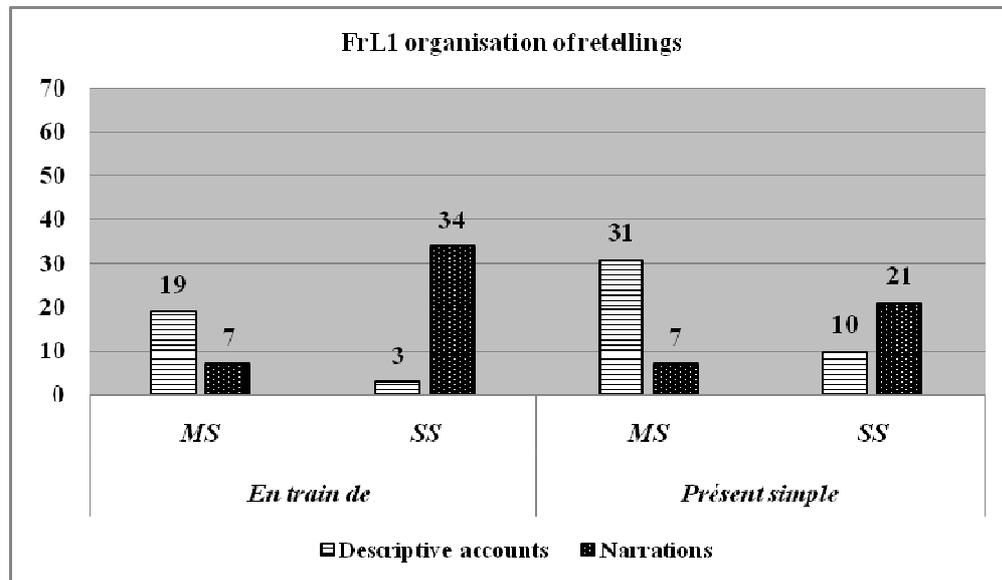
w huwa ma'neha *y-shu:ffi*-ha .
And PS3M meaning-it PS3M-read PRG-her
And he is looking at her

y-qallaq fi-ha .
PS3M-bother PRG-her
And is bothering her

2.5.2. Structuring of FrL1 retellings

The use of the marked form en train de in FrL1, however, reveals different results from TAL1 ones as revealed by Figure 83 below.

Figure 83. Discourse structuring and the different forms in FrL1



In fact, «*en train de*» is located in the MS of narrations. We have very few instances of «*en train de*» occurring in the background of a descriptive account.

(97) F04, *Breakfast*

Donc dans cette scène on retrouve les le garçon et la vieille dame de tout à l'heure.

Donc là il y a le garçon qui a le crâne rasé.

Enfin qui est chauve.

Il est en train de faire des crêpes ou des pancakes.

Il est dix heures moins dix.

Donc la il a réussi à se lever clairement.

Et il y a la vieille dame.

Qui est en train d'écouter la radio.

Ou regarder la télé.

Et elle est en train de suivre.

En train de danser en fait.

«*En train de*» is used to account for the on-going situations shown in the video *Breakfast*. The speaker introduces the protagonists by means of the presentative twice «*Il y a ...et il y a*» placing both of them in a particular space (there is). He nevertheless tries to enrich the account by describing the protagonists in the side comments.

In FrL1 narrations however, «*en train de*» is more frequently placed in the SS (98).

(98) F01, kabaret
 Donc là c'est une scène de théâtre.
 Donc au début on voit une jeune femme.
 En train de lire un journal.
 Qui a l'air assez coincée.
 On va dire.
 Et bon je comprends pas trop ce public.
 Qui rigole mais bon.
 Et puis on voit un clochard mais un homme habillé pas très proprement et complètement saoul.
 Et puis qui voit cette femme.
Et qui va s'approcher d'elle.
 En titubant.
 Parce qu'il est complètement bourré.
Et il va faire une espèce de jeu de séduction.
 On s'attend.
 À ce qu'il drague en fait la jeune femme coincée.
 Et à côté de qui il s'est assis.
 Et au final on se rend compte.
 Que c'était juste.
 Pour faire partir cette femme.
 Et récupérer les chaises.
 Pour se coucher dessus.

«En train de» is also possibly used in the MS of narrations. The example (99) is an illustration. The marked form expresses the simultaneity of the two situations observed in the video *Breakfast*. The same situation is already mentioned in the SS of the narrative, and then brought to the foreground, to express its parallelism to the situation, which is put in the main structure.

(99) F01, Breakfast
 Ok donc là on revient sur les deux personnages.
 Qu'on a qu'on a vus tout à l'heure.
 Donc le jeune homme qui avait du mal à se réveiller.
 Et sa mère je pense.
 Qui qui qui tire dehors avec son fusil pour le réveiller.
 Et là donc il est réveillé.
 Il est en train de se faire son petit déjeuner.
 Et pendant ce temps il y a sa mère dans sa chambre.
 Qui fait de la gymnastique.
 En écoutant une émission à la radio.
 Je crois.
 Qui qui l'incite à faire des mouvements.

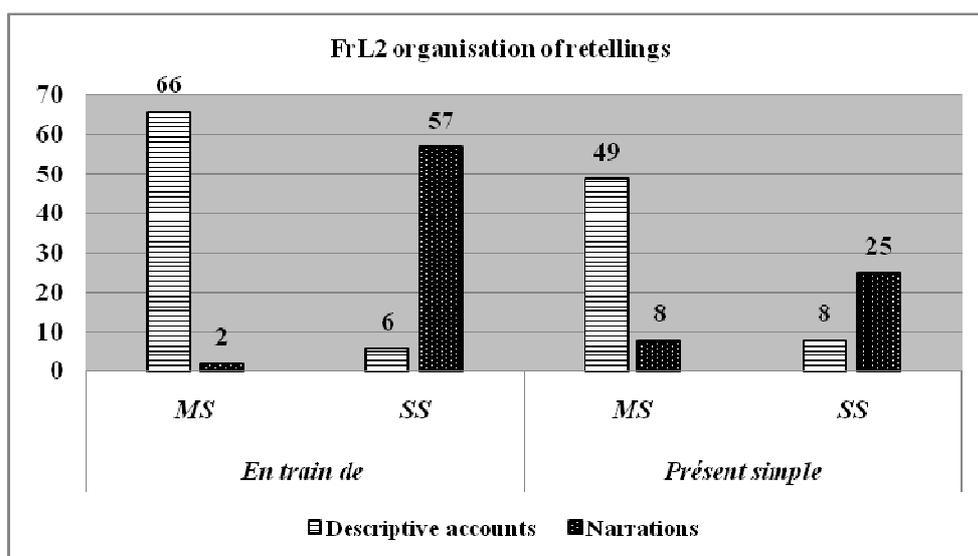
*Et donc on la voit bouger tranquillement des pieds.
 Et puis au fur et à mesure elle se met à danser.
 Et en parallèle son fils dans la cuisine qui est en train de faire cuire voire brûler des crêpes.*

In FrL2, as we will see in the next part, «*en train de*» is more straightforwardly used than by French native speakers. In fact, it is almost exclusively set in the background of the narratives, and in the foreground of descriptive accounts.

2.5.3. Structuring of FrL2 retellings

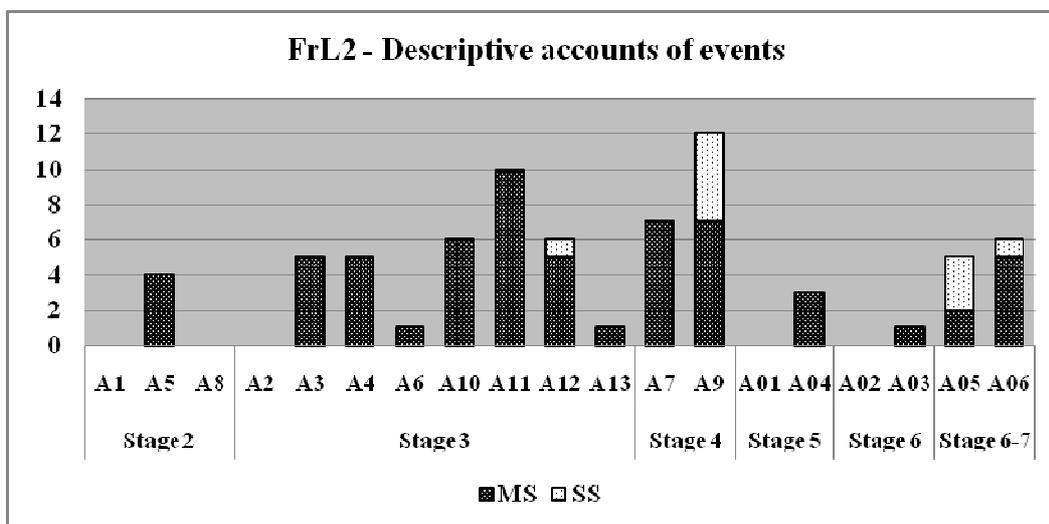
«*En train de*» seems to be the property of side structures in narratives in FrL2 retellings. We have some occurrences of «*en train de*» in the MS of descriptive accounts as well (six occurrences):

Figure 84. Discourse structuring and the different forms in FrL2



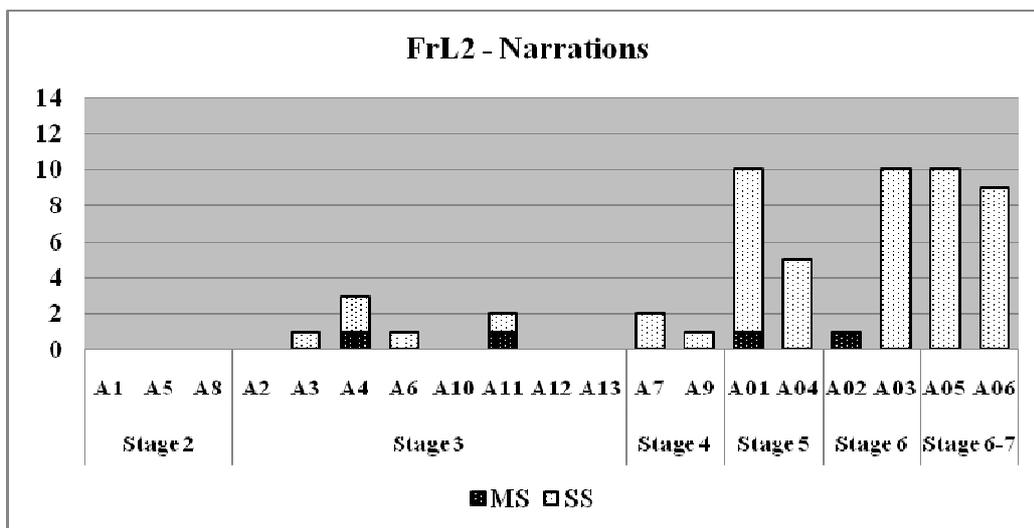
We examined in detail the structuring of «*en train de*» by each of our L2 learners. The investigation resulted in the findings displayed in Figure 85 and Figure 86 below.

Figure 85. Structuring and «en train de» in descriptive accounts of events



As Figure 85 shows, only four learners use «en train de» in the SS of the descriptive accounts. A9 seems to apply «en train de» frequently in SS and MS. We can talk about a case of generalisation of the marker as far as the construction of discourse is concerned. Figure 86 shows some occurrences of «en train de» in the MS of narratives, by mainly four informants. All the others' use of the progressive marked form follows a clear pattern.

Figure 86. Discourse structuring and «en train de» in FrL2 narratives



Conversely, employing the marked form in the background of a narrative seems to be more

possible at later stages of acquisition. Consider the higher frequency of «*en train de*» in narratives at the advanced stages, more precisely, beyond Stage 5 (Figure 86).

2.6. Conclusions

Based on the analyses detailed above, the conclusions we draw are as follows:

In TAL1 all four forms are most frequently placed in the foreground of the descriptive accounts (MS) and in the background of narrations (SS)

However, PV and «PV+*fi*» constructions show some flexibility as some of them are used the other way around, i.e., we find instances of their occurrence in the MS of narrations, and in the SS of descriptive accounts. Constructions with *qa:'id* («*qa:'id* + PV + (*fi*)»), however, show a stricter distribution, which means they are very rarely set in the MS of a narration or in the SS of a description.

«*En train de*» is structured in the SS of FrL1 narrations. Conversely, we have very few instances of «*en train de*» occurring in the background of a descriptive account.

In FrL2, «*en train de*» is used more straightforwardly than by French native speakers. In fact, it is almost exclusively part of the background of the narratives, and of the foreground of descriptive accounts.

With these conclusions, we close the analyses chapter of our project. We have narrowed down our presentation of the analyses of the role of aspect in expressing temporal *Sim* from the proposition level to the discourse level. We have dealt in the first section with the different on-goingness devices, the lexical contents attached to them, and in the second one with the different aspectual styles by the different speakers, the staging of the on-goingness devices in discourse, and we finished the account with the analysis of the organisation of the discourse. We reconsider in the following chapter the main findings discussing them with the available literature in order to propose some explanatory factors of the different results.

CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.0. Introduction

In this research project, we aimed at investigating how *Sim* relation of events is expressed using on-goingness devices in discourse in TAL1, French L1 and L2 by Tunisian learners at different acquisitional stages, from the basic variety to the very advanced / near-native stage. At the same time, the investigation of retellings of simultaneous events informed us about the distribution of the marked and unmarked devices for expressing on-goingness in each native language and learner variety. This contributes to the understanding of how on-goingness is expressed in Tunisian Arabic, an area of research that has received very limited attention to date. We chose to investigate the on-goingness devices at two levels of the oral productions. Indeed, we examined the forms at the proposition level, focussing mainly on the frequencies of forms and the lexical contents selected for them; and the discourse level where we went beyond the adjacent context of on-goingness devices to examine the interface and interaction of forms in order to convey the relation of *Sim* between events.

In this chapter, we will present the main findings of our research investigation. First, we will summarise how Tunisian and French native speakers exploit the marked and unmarked forms to express the simultaneity of events in their productions. We will therefore perform a comparison of the results of the two languages we investigated, which will help us interpret our findings regarding the productions in L2 French. We will also recapitulate the main results of analyses of FrL2 by Tunisian learners. We will complete the analysis by providing an overview of the observed similarities and differences across our languages as to the role of the marked and unmarked forms in expressing *Sim*, and we will compare our results with the existing research on the questions investigated.

4.1. Conclusions on the role of aspect in expressing simultaneity: Comparing Tunisian Arabic L1 and French L1

In this project, we compared the oral retellings produced in TAL1 and French L1 in relating the simultaneous situations showed in eight different videos.

This verbal task allowed us to elicit the expression of on-goingness in the two languages. In fact, our study confirms - following research by Leclercq (2007) or Schmiedtová (2004) - that retelling simultaneous events allows the elicitation of progressive forms. For example, Leclercq (2007; 2008) shows that «*en train de*» is highly used in the context of simultaneity. Schmiedtová (2004, pp.41-42) argues that aspectual marking as in the example 'Mary was closing the window, Peter came into the room' indicates unambiguously temporal simultaneity.

Our verbal task indeed allowed us to study all the possible means to express on-goingness in TAL1 and in FrL1. We examined the most frequently selected ones in the context of the single proposition as well as in the context of discourse. We have therefore exploited this verbal task to find out about the specificities of the different devices expressing on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic, and taken the opportunity to deepen our understanding of how «*en train de*» is employed in discourse.

Here, we present the results of our contrastive analysis of these two languages. Our investigation revealed very interesting similarities between FrL1 and TAL1 productions in the task of retelling simultaneous events from visual stimuli but also revealed many striking differences.

4.1.1. Similarities

4.1.1.1. Use of on-goingness devices in expressing simultaneity of events

Both TAL1 and French native informants exploit the devices marking on-goingness to express simultaneity of events. Indeed, in both languages, informants tend to uphold the progressive aspect to express perfect parallelism of the videos' situations described, and aspectual contrast in order to express that one situation is interlocked with the second.

Both TAL1 and FrL1 possess many lexical possibilities to express that a particular event is on-going. They have what we have called following Leclercq (2009) ‘marked’ and ‘unmarked’ forms.

The most frequently selected device in French is the unmarked form, *le présent simple*. The periphrasis (*être*) «*en train de*» is the second most used device and is labeled the marked form since it can only occur in progressive contexts. This confirms Leclercq's (2007) finding regarding the frequency of the periphrasis in French native speech.

As for the most frequently chosen on-goingness devices in TAL1, we identified the four following constructions, whose main element remains the prefixed verb form (PV):

(i) PV

(ii) «PV + *fi*»

(iii) «*qa:’id* + PV»

(iv) «*qa:’id* + PV+ *fi*»

Except PV, the constructions contain markers of on-goingness, namely *fi* and *qa:’id*.

The progressive value attributed to the PV in some contexts is attested in some studies (e.g., Carroll *et al.* (2004)). *qa:’id* is identified in some studies to be a preverbal marker of on-goingness in some SALs, (e.g., (e.g., Al Nasser (1991) for Kuwaiti Arabic; Cuvalay (1991) for the SAL of Tunis and Hmidani (2010) for Gulf Arabic)). However, the post verbal marker *fi* was hardly mentioned in any work. We believe this forms part of our original contribution to the understanding of the expression of on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic (see also Saddour (forthcoming)).

We established the obligatory contexts of the use of *fi*. It is necessary when the speaker views a particular event as in progress at a certain reference time, the speaker uses in utterance a

transitive verb that requires a direct object complement. However, it was observed that the use of *qa:'id* in the data manifested itself less systematically. Therefore, in our contrastive analysis of the two languages, we can hypothesise that both share a common feature regarding the expression of on-goingness. This similarity is the optional character of the markers *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» in TAL1 and FrL1 respectively. This makes the expression of on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic different from its neighbouring language, Algerian Arabic, reported to be more similar to that of English in the study of Carroll *et al.* (2004), when they say:

«The pattern of event construal in English is also found in Algerian Arabic, a language which also codes on-goingness grammatically on the verb.»

A review of the literature revealed a real gap in research on *qa:'id* and on Tunisian temporality in general, while for French research is more available and informative about the uses of «*en train de*» in the context of discourse (e.g., Leclercq 2007; Mortier 2005; Mortier 2008; Pusch 2003).

We have examined the roles and contexts of distribution of each form for both languages in order to find some systematicity in their apparently random conduct. We were therefore able to conclude as follows.

qa:'id as well as «*en train de*» play discursive roles that go beyond the proposition level. They are used in the retellings of two simultaneous situations to set up the event, which acts as a frame to the rest of the events. For instance, 73% of informants select «*en train de*» to set up the first situation in discourse.

Therefore, *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» are selected by native speakers of the two languages more than the other possible forms to establish the aspectual contrast implying the *Sim* of a durative event with a bounded event. This means that they generally construe events that are open across longer intervals of time. Actually, when we relate two simultaneous events, «*en train de*» is used for an event that opens across a larger interval of time. Our finding highlights new paths for exploration as far as this aspectual marker is concerned. Indeed, the durative reading of this

aspectual marker cannot completely be ruled out contrary to what some studies suggest (e.g., Bertinetto 2000; Mortier 2005). Our finding corroborates Leclercq's (2007) when she points out to the close affinities she observes between the periphrasis with «*en train de*» and the selection of durative predicates.

Another interesting similarity about *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» is that they are more used in rich and elaborate retellings. In fact, we found them more in the productions by H-educated rather than L-educated informants. This is what we develop in the following point of our summary.

4.1.1.2. The informants' response to the complex task of relating simultaneous events

The two groups' retellings were different regarding length and complexity, as demonstrated by the narrative complexity analyses we conducted. In fact, when we compared the general characteristics of the productions of the two sub-groups in TAL1 and FrL1, we found striking similarities related to the profiles of the informants chosen for the task. Our groups of informants in each L1 are made of very Low educated as well as highly educated informants. The profiles in each language were very comparable. The retellings revealed that the profile of the participants affected the way they went about retelling simultaneous events and the way they responded to the task. These distinctions are very systematic and concern nearly all the features studied including: the length of the retellings, the number of propositions, the degree of narrative complexity, the type of retellings produced and the types of progressivity devices used. The only feature on which the two groups of L-educated and H-educated informants did not differ much was the measurement of *Vocd*. Both groups in each language showed a similar use of the lexicon. Some low *Vocd* scores of certain TAL1 informants were explained by the lack of exposure to L1. This observation is not very surprising. In fact, multilingual speakers are known to typically face certain difficulties speaking in their mother language when their exposure to it is rare or inexistent. The extreme case is called “first language attrition”, and it is the “non pathological” loss of L1 (Schmid 2002; 2004).

In summary, regardless of the language, perhaps not surprisingly, H-educated informants

produced longer and richer retellings than L-educated informants. Furthermore, retellings in both groups vary in narrative complexity and generally H-educated informants produced retellings that are more complex. We statistically demonstrated that this variance in complexity resulted from the profile of the informants rather than the nature of the scenes used for the task, and that the dispersion in the complexity of narratives was higher among H-educated speakers. In addition, H-educated informants produced more narratives than L-educated groups even about the videos that do not show any obvious progression on the time line.

Systematic differences between L-educated and H-educated groups were also observed in the choice of the core components. H-educated informants opted for an organisation that matches the visual stimuli while L-educated informants start with the situation with which the visual material ends, which is more easily retrievable in terms of memory. They opt for easier options of retrieval from memory (S2 first or talk about one situation only). They also account for a lesser degree of granularity than H-educated speakers do. Sub-events are more frequent in TAL1 retellings than in FrL1. Here we raise the question as to why this is the case by considering what can make H-educated speakers account more for the granularity of events? Furthermore, why TAL1 speakers segment events more than French native speakers do?

The research into granularity attests that segmentation is important to human perception and understanding. In fact, «Just as segmenting in space is important for understanding objects, segmenting in time is important for understanding events» Zacks & Swallow (2007, p.80). In physical sciences, two factors affecting event segmentation into bounded events are demonstrated by Zacks & Swallow (2007, pp.81-82). These are “sensory features” of the visual input as well as “conceptual features”. They explain them as follows:

«How does the brain perform this segmentation? Evidence indicates that the brain and mind track features of one’s environment and that when a salient feature changes unpredictably an event boundary is perceived [...] The critical features may include sensory features, such as color, sound, and movement, and conceptual features, such as cause-and-effect interactions and actors’ goals. Sensory features likely are processed in a primarily bottom-up fashion, in which the nature of the processing is determined primarily by perceptual input. Processing conceptual features,

however, likely relies on top-down processing that integrates an observer's representation of the current event with previously stored knowledge. For example, segmenting events based on an actor's goals requires maintaining a representation of those goals over time and often will depend on prior knowledge about the actor's dispositions and abilities. »

In other words, both physical movement features, such as changes in location and conceptualisation of the changes in actors' goals play important roles in the segmentation of activity into events. Zacks & Swallow (*ibid*) attest however, that other factors may play a role in whether or not a speaker chooses to segment an activity. They point out to the individual attention and roles in completing a particular task.

«There is evidence that observers can adapt their performance of the buttonpressing segmentation task based on situational needs. For example, observers adjust the temporal grain of their segmentation based on explicit instructions, the sort of information they are trying to learn from stimulus and how much they know about the activity they are watching. » (*ibid*, p.81)

This might provide an explanation of why L-educated informants account less for granularity in their productions than H-educated informants, if we link this finding to the overall results related to the differences between the two subgroups. We already know that their responses to the tasks were different. Their attention and perception of the events involved might also have been different.

The possibility that the conceptualisation of an event and its segmentation is affected by social conventions is not to be ruled out.

«We believe that a number of little-studied features, from purely sensory to purely conceptual, must be important for event segmentation. Toward the sensory end are features such as sound, lighting, and contact between actors and objects. Toward the conceptual end are features such as goals and social conventions. In the middle are features such as sequential statistical structure - that is, the order in which events tend to occur. The systematic exploration of these bases for segmentation is a second important research goal. » (*ibid*, p.83)

Therefore, we can hypothesise that the differences observed between TAL1 and FrL1 productions as to event segmentation can be rooted in some social norms of retelling events.

Finding out that the selection of the progressive markers *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» was also different by H-educated and L-educated informants represents an original discovery. This finding can be easily related to the features outlined above of the retellings by this sub-group. Concisely, H-educated speakers produce more elaborate, more complex and longer retellings in which they select more «*en train de*» than L-educated informants do. This could imply that the selection of «*en train de*» is affected by the overall discursive choices made, not only by the type of events construed or by the nature of the task.

The difference observed between H-educated and L-educated groups in our L1 languages regarding the use of on-goingness devices is rather puzzling. In the literature, we have evidence that the reading ability in a language might affect the oral skills of a particular speaker, and more specifically his / her narrative abilities. More specifically, Eme *et al.* (2009) compare narratives produced by literate informants with those narratives by illiterate ones and reach this conclusion. They define after Baydar *et al.* (1993) illiteracy as follows :

« L'illettrisme désigne l'absence de maîtrise de la langue écrite chez des adolescents et des adultes qui ont été scolarisés. Il qualifie des individus qui peuvent signer de leur nom, remplir les demandes d'informations personnelles d'un document et utiliser un programme de télévision, mais qui ne sont pas à même de remplir un chèque ou un bulletin d'inscription ni de lire la notice d'un médicament (Baydar et al., 1993). L'illettrisme correspond donc à un échec de l'acquisition fonctionnelle de la langue écrite. Les personnes en situation d'illettrisme sont dites 'illettrées' » (Eme et al. 2009, p.124)

They note that illiterate speakers produce less rich narratives, characterised by a significantly different use of vocabulary, adjectives and prepositions and a simpler syntax and clause chaining. Illiterate people are also reported to produce rather descriptive accounts whenever they are asked to make a narrative. It means that they do not necessarily seek to build a story each time they are asked to. Conversely, literate people produce elaborate narratives characterised by clear spatio-temporal references as well as more use of pronouns, and relative clauses. We insist

nevertheless that our data do not necessarily involve cases of illiteracy. We did not measure or establish literacy profiles of informants per se. However, we have evidence that many of our L-educated informants in TAL1 and FrL1 are literate. We have learnt during discussions before and after the recordings with some of our informants that these latter read the daily press and refer to famous local newspapers when talking about the news and the political system in France. This allows us to discard the generalisation that the difference observed between H-educated and L-educated informants could be explained by literacy.

Our explanatory factor is the direct and indirect impact of schooling on the speakers' general skills regarding their response to a certain task. In fact, due to the regular exposure to assignments and different tasks on almost a daily basis, what we would call in French "*l'exercice scolaire*", students acquire and develop their awareness of the importance of the good completion of a certain task. This includes demonstrating good organisation and presentation of their ideas, from conceptualisation to verbalisation, to borrow Levelt (1989)'s terminology. This also involves the capacities of elaboration and development of those ideas and structuring them within a global text/discourse. These factors might well explain why it is more 'natural' for H-educated speakers to respond to a similar task. They were able to overcome the intricacies of talking about two events happening at the same time and being left free to find the way to do it. Most of them managed to build a narrative, even though the situations presented were not helping with any progression on the time axis. They also used more linguistic resources to make their retellings more elaborate. The same factors might also explain why many of the L-educated speakers started the task by laughing, ironising, repeating the question we asked, and pointing out that what they had just seen in the videos was nonsense "*n'importe quoi*", undecipherable "*c'est du japonais*" or empty "*le désert*", "*pas grand chose*". Here are some examples to illustrate the way L-educated speakers responded to the task:

(100) A4, *Birds*

*EXP: *Qu'est ce qui s'est passé dans cette scène ?*

*SUI: *n'importe quoi là.*

Le monsieur en train & la femme la musique.

Et la meuf là elle est en train & la danse.

C'est tout.

(101) F4, *Birds*

*EXP: *Qu'est ce qui s'est passé dans cette scène ?*

*SUJ: *Oui alors là chais pas.*

Un guitariste pas grand chose.

Pas grand chose.

Il y a une petite fille qui danse.

Une petite pre ado avec un guitariste.

J'ai rien vu d' autre.

102) F4, *Earthsea*

*EXP: *Qu'est ce qui s'est passé dans cette scène ?*

*SUJ: *ben je vais dire.*

C'est du pur japonais là.

&Se pas.

Je dirais pas grand chose.

Vraiment c'est pour moi un désert

La situation la situation beau paysage.

Le soleil se lève dans un champ.

Je suppose à kyoto ou.

Un homme qui pleure.

Ce qui est incroyable.

Parce qu'on doit pas pleurer.

Une femme qui non c'est même pas une femme.

Attends.

C'est même pas des ados d' ailleurs.

Je pense qu'ils sont encore.

C'est des pré ados.

Bon ben voilà et les couleurs sont très belles.

The differences observed between the responses of our two populations to the same task; L-educated, manual workers and H-educated occupying highly skilled professions, recall the contemporary debate about the impact of social belonging on language skills. In fact, research of Labov (1977), or Bourdieu's concept of "cultural capital" (Collins 2000, p.68), Bernstein's (1971; 1973; 1977) "code theory" or else Gee's (1996)⁴⁷ "Discourse" made significant contributions. All of them make a distinction between "primary socialisation" developed in intimate contexts and in peer groups and "secondary socialisation", developed in educational and

⁴⁷ Cited in Collins (2000).

professional contexts. Bernstein (1971, p.143) postulates in the first of the three volumes of his book *Class, Codes and Control* that belonging to a particular social group shapes the way we communicate. In particular, he emphasises the centrality of social position in language and consciousness (Collins 2000) and links communication skills to the nature of the work activity and work relations of the speakers:

«If a social group by virtue of its class relation, that is a result of its common occupational function and social status, has developed strong communal bonds; if the work relations of this group offers little variety or little exercise in decision-making; if assertion, if it is to be successful, must be a collective rather than an individual act; if the work task requires physical manipulation and control rather than symbolic organisation and control; if the diminished authority of the man at work is transformed into an authority of power at home; if the home is overcrowded and limits the variety of situations it can offer; if the children socialize each other in an environment offering little intellectual stimuli; if all these attributes are found in one setting, then it is plausible to assume that such a social setting will generate a particular form of communication which will shape the intellectual, social and affective orientation of the children.»

The professional activity of a particular speaker partly determines the “social role” he or she learns. This “social role” controls the speech process, from conceptualisation to verbalisation and communication skills in turn inform about the social role as pointed out in the following quote (the italics are the author’s choice).

«Individuals come to learn their social roles through the process of communication. A social role from this point of view is a constellation of shared, learned meanings through which individuals are able to enter stable consistent and publicly recognised forms of interaction with others. *A social role can then be considered as a complex coding activity controlling both the creation and organisation of specific meanings and the conditions for their transmission and reception.* » (Bernstein 1971, pp.144-145)

Speech is, according to Bernstein (1971, pp.144-146), influenced by contextual and cultural controls. He distinguishes between two linguistic codes, the “elaborated code” and a “restricted code”, without making them the only possible linguistic codes. The elaborated code implies

larger use of a “wide range of syntactic alternatives” and flexibility in the use of those alternatives, “greater lexical differentiation of certain semantic fields”, greater facility of making “subjective intent” explicit and longer verbal planning of the message than the restricted code. The restricted code however implies “simplification and rigidity of syntax”, “narrow range of semantic fields” to draw vocabulary from, unelaborated verbal intentions”, “reduced articulatory clues”, “discontinuous meanings”, “a low level of syntactic and vocabulary selection” and an implicit subjective content.

These features echo our findings regarding the characteristics of verbal productions of the L-educated and the H-educated groups. Some features discussed above are found to characterise one group or the other. These descriptions help understand the differences between our two groups’ productions.

What is interesting to explore in Bernstein's (1971; 1973; 1977; 2000) theory is why exactly is the restricted code associated with rigidity of syntax and simplification, and why the elaborated one is associated with elaborate style and content. The four major social forces that influence the development and of the two codes are (i) the family, (ii) the age group / peer group, (iii) the school and (iv) the work. The two latter, i.e., school and work, constitute variables that we manipulated when we selected the informants. In fact, educational level is a discriminatory factor separating our two sub-groups for the two L1s investigated. Bernstein (1977, p.185) defines education as a

«...class-allocatory device, socially creating, maintaining and reproducing non-specialised and specialised skills, and specialised dispositions which have an approximate relevance to the mode of production. »

Our finding about the different way of responding to the task between the sub-groups brings to mind the notion of “performance rule” he develops.

Therefore, we can conclude that our findings show affinities with Bernstein’s code theory with specific relation to the impact of schooling and profession on speakers’ response to a particular task. Though quite aged now, Bernstein's (1971; 1973; 1977; 2000) theory is still supported by

more recent work as referenced, such as Bourdieu's.

Because of this finding, and in line with von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009), we postulate that in order to study the specificities of aspectual markers in a specific language, the investigator should deal with a number of factors affecting speech. Not only does he /she need to examine the utterances in the context of their occurrence, but also to diversify the sample of informants as their linguistic profiles are affected by their socio-professional profiles. This is rarely taken care of effectively when a particular L1 is dealt with, as we tend to speak about it as a homogeneous unit that applies to all those who are born speaking it. Following our observations, there are as many varieties of a native language as there are speakers, which is not a new idea. We insist however that we should take care of the use of native speech, paying special attention in our sampling and interpretation of research findings to the fact that a different native speakers' group could use it differently.

Another similarity noted between TAL1 and FrL1 is related to the lexical contents selected with the different forms. When the unmarked forms are chosen (PV and *présent de l'indicatif*), dynamic 1-State lexical contents are generally selected. When speakers select 2-State lexical contents to construe a particular event, they also select the progressive marker *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» more often. This could imply that both *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» are used differently from the simple unmarked forms in the respective languages. The marked forms serve to open a time interval in the otherwise bounded lexical contents. They allow the expansion of the verb used to accommodate the perspective taken on the events. This finding is supported by Leclercq's (2007) observation about the lexical contents she found with the French marker «*en train de*». Indeed, she split Klein's (1994) category of 2S contents into two sub-categories accommodating those that are durative and generally selected with «*en train de*» (2-State durative contents) and those that are punctual.

As far as the use of forms to structure the discourse is concerned, we observed similarities between the languages. All the forms expressing on-goingness were found to be placed in the main structure of the descriptive accounts and in the side structures of narrations. Some forms in TAL1, PV and «PV+fi» constructions show some flexibility as some of them are distributed the

other way around, i.e., we find instances in the main structure of narrations, and in the side structures of descriptive accounts. Constructions with *qa:'id* («*qa:'id* + PV + (*fi*) »), however, show a stricter distribution, which means, they are very rarely set in the MS of a narration or in the SS of a description. «*En train de*» is used in the MS of narrations. We have very few instances of «*en train de*» occurring in the background of a descriptive account.

4.1.2. Differences

Even though the languages have very different temporal systems, we observed some similarities as to the role of progressive markers *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» in the retelling of simultaneous events. We also noted considerable differences between both languages. One difference is that overall, Tunisian H-educated informants produced more narratives in their mother language (83%) compared to French native H-educated group who produced narratives in 73% of the cases. We focus here on the differences in on-goingness marking summarising first those with relation to the linguistic entities selected and then the differences between the ways aspectual perspectives are taken to respond to the task in the two languages in the wider context of the discourse of simultaneous events.

4.1.2.1. Expression of on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic and in French native productions

4.1.2.1.1. Different lexical origins of *qa:'id* and «*en train de*»

We showed that TAL1 as well as FrL1 speakers have many linguistic options in their languages to express that a particular event is on-going at a certain reference time. In fact, progressive periphrases, containing *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» in TAL1 and FrL1 respectively compete and are contrasted with the non-marked expression of on-going events. Nonetheless, the nature and lexical origins of these means are different. Originating from the verb *q'ad* (he sat), *qa:'id* conveys a static state of affairs (sitting, staying still). It is therefore comparable to the progressive marking in Italian or Spanish with the use of *stare* and *estar* auxiliaries respectively (Haßler 2002; Squartini 1998). However, «*en train de*» with its main component “*train*”

indicates movement, progress and dynamicity (Lachaux 2005; Mortier 2005; Mortier 2008).

4.1.2.1.2. Different discursive functions of *qa:'id* and «*en train de*»

Even though *qa:'id* plays a discursive function in retelling simultaneous situations, setting in the majority of the cases the first event in the discourse, there are many exceptions to this rule, unlike «*en train de*» which seems to follow an unambiguous rule when used to build two simultaneous events. Indeed, if the marked form and the unmarked form are used to verbalise two simultaneous events E1 and E2 then, the proposition containing a marked form (Pr_{mar}) generally precedes the one containing an unmarked form (Pr_{unmar}). The exception is the case when it is explicitly expressed that Pr_{mar} construes E1, which acts as a temporal frame that encloses E2. It means that E1 includes the Time during which the situation construed with Pr_{unmar} takes place. Consequently, the periphrasis with «*en train de*» opens a temporal frame that lasts longer than the one expressed by means of the unmarked form. While both forms express that a situation is on-going, the event for which the marked form is used is supposed to enclose the second one, opening a temporal frame bigger than the one that the unmarked form conveys. No exception to this rule is found in our data. Employing *qa:'id* however, shows more flexibility of use in the context of discourse.

4.1.2.1.3. *fi* as aspectual marker in Tunisian Arabic

Another difference in the expression of on-goingness in the two languages is of course the existence of a postverbal progressive marker *fi* in Tunisian Arabic. *Fi* developed progressively from a locative / spatial preposition “in” to an aspectual marker indicating that the TT is included in the TSit. *fi* is in other contexts still used in TAL1 as a proposition indicating location in space as in (103) but also in time (104).

(103) Hani fi(j)jarda
 Here-I-am in-the-garden
 I am in the garden)

(104) Wsil-t fi ‘ashra dqa:yaq
 Arrive-PS1 in ten minutes

I arrived in ten minutes

The differences between *fi* as in example (104) and the progressive marker, are as follows: Firstly, the temporal preposition *fi* introduces a propositional phrase whereas the progressive marker integrates a direct object complement, losing the prepositional function. Secondly, and regarding the temporal meaning of the two entities, the preposition *fi* englobes the whole TSit, while the marker focuses on only a time interval within the TSit. The former's equivalent in English would be the preposition *in* as in "He did it in two hours".

Therefore, *fi* seems to have followed a grammaticalisation process from a grammatical form (preposition) to a "more grammatical" form (Prévot & Fagard 2007). As showed by the analyses, this marker has very clear-cut settings: in progressive contexts in the presence of direct object complements. In such contexts, *fi* is no longer part of a prepositional phrase, but part of the object complement. It can in some propositions be used as an affix, fused with the object complement as in the example *f-esh ta3mal?* i.e., "what are you doing?"

Following the definition of grammaticalisation by Hopper and Traugott (2003, p. 18)⁴⁸,

«Change whereby lexical items and constructions come in certain linguistic contexts to serve grammatical functions and, once grammaticalized, continue to develop new grammatical functions.»

We can say that *fi* underwent a change and developed from a grammaticalised item to another grammaticalised item playing a new function, which expresses an event in progress. This process is not specific to TAL1 only. In fact, *fi* has some counterparts that also developed in other spoken Arabic languages to express on-goingness. Consider for instance the marker *bi-* in Egyptian Arabic (Mitchell 1962, p.81), which developed from the locative preposition *bi*.

«*bi-* is used when reference is to continuative or habitual action, e.g. *biti'mil eeh?* what are you doing? *biyoxroj min shoghlu badri-f ramadaan* he leaves work early during Ramadan, *ana ba'rafu min mudda tawiila awi* I've know him for a very long time, *biykkallim 'arabi kwayyis* he

⁴⁸ Cited in Comajoan & Saldanya (2005, p.45)

speaks Arabic well.»

Of course, the difference between *fī* in TAL1 and *bi-* in Egyptian Arabic is that *bi-* precedes the verb whereas *fī* follows it. The phenomenon is not to be confused with a shift from an accusative construction to a prepositional phrase, a phenomenon that was described by Kinberg (1981). In fact, the presence of *fī* does not simply transform direct objects into the accusative with indirect objects introduced by prepositions, a phenomenon that is observed by Kinberg (1981) in Hebrew and in Classical Arabic. In other words, we suppose that the aspectual marker *fī* does not introduce a prepositional phrase in the context of on-going events. It is attached to the direct object complement and is part of it as an aspectual marker.

The development of a locative entity into an aspectual marker of progressive is rather a familiar case of grammaticalisation in languages. In fact, in Dutch for instance, marking the progressive is possible using the construction preposition *aan het* + infinitive (*at the* + infinitive) which occurs with *zijn* (to be) as in “*een man is viool aan het spleen*” (a man is violin at the play) (von Stutterheim et al. 2009, p.173). However, its post-verbal position and possible combination with the preverbal marker *qa:’id* is rather atypical. One would wonder, if Tunisian Arabic has many lexical ways to refer to an event as on-going at a particular reference time, why should it be combined with yet another marker preceding the object complement with transitive verbs? *Fi* may indeed appear redundant.

We therefore hypothesise that when a predicate involving two arguments (an agent and a patient) construes an on-going event, it is not only the event that is represented as being in progress, but also the object affected. So in *yaqra fī kteb* (reading (in) a book), the book is represented unfinished as opposed to *yaqra kteb* (he reads a book) where reading the book is represented as completed, and so is the book: “finished”.

We hypothesise with regard to these findings that the notion of on-goingness in TAL1 is expressed not only in verbs but also in NPs. Due to the presence of *fī*, they are ‘temporalised’ in accordance with Klein's (1994, pp.221-224) hypothesis about ‘temporalised’ NPs. They can therefore be seen as completed or in progress (in a book).

We also put forward this very tentative assumption that while *qa:'id* marks the TT as included in TSit, *fi* establishes establishes some sort of a container (which is a reminder of its original locative meaning) whereby TT is contained in TSit.

With regard to these differences between the learners' L1 and the target language, we could build some hypotheses about the FrL2 retellings by the same TAL1 informants. A summary of the results on FrL2 retellings is provided in the following section.

4.1.2.2. Aspectual styles in expressing simultaneity

We identified in our data two broad categories of aspectual perspectives: aspectual upholding when the progressive is expressed for both simultaneous events and aspectual contrast when it is used for only one event and contrasted with a non-progressive aspect. As part of the first type, two possibilities could be observed: upholding forms or contrasting different on-goingness devices.

While the general aspectual strategies are similar in TAL1 and in FrL1 from the perspective that both groups of native speakers resort to aspectual juxtaposition and contrast, depending on the type of *Sim* represented and on individual choices, the frequency and method of their use was different across languages. In the case of aspectual upholding, TAL1 informants tend to contrast forms expressing on-goingness more often than FrL1 do. French native speakers tend to select the same form for both situations more often than they contrast forms. In the second case, aspectual contrast is achieved most of the time through the opposition between the progressive and the Suffixed verb form (SV) expressing perfectivity in TAL1. In FrL1, the progressive aspect is contrasted with the narrative present.

As for the differences between the way TAL1 and FrL1 speakers apply aspectual contrast and juxtaposition to construe simultaneous events, we notice that pure aspectual style is more frequently chosen in Tunisian Arabic than by FrL1 speakers who have very often recourse to the combination of aspect with adverbials. TAL1 speakers opt, in most cases, for aspect in isolation or in combination with what we called structural devices.

We remind the reader here that in Schmiedtová's (2004) study comparing Czech, German and English productions, many aspectual styles are possible to express *Sim*. The «stronger aspectual style» is when speakers oppose or juxtapose two aspectual forms such as the perfective and imperfective or the progressive form and the simple form as in English, in order to construe the two simultaneous situations in discourse. The “weaker aspectual style” is when the two aspectual forms occur in combination with adverbials to express *Sim*. The last possible style is the pure “adverbial style” which consists in the only recourse of adverbials to express *Sim* relation of two situations. She found that L1 speakers of diverse languages manifest different preferences in aspectual marking. For instance, Czech speakers tend to highly draw on aspectual marking by means of the stronger aspectual style more often than English speakers do, and German speakers do the perfective and imperfective forms which are grammaticalised categories perfective or imperfective form, the speakers usually opt for the adverbial style. English speakers however, apply more often the weak aspectual style (Schmiedtová 2004, p.228).

If we interpret our findings in the light of Schmiedtová's (2004) results using her terminology, we can say that TAL1 speakers prefer the stronger aspectual style while FrL1 opt for the weaker aspectual style. We consider that the frequent structural devices in TAL1 do not “weaken” the aspectual style in the way that adverbials do in FrL1. In fact, adverbials can convey the idea of *Sim* in a straightforward manner, thus sharing the expression of *Sim* with aspectual marking while structural devices can only do so indirectly.

We can say that our findings echo those of Schmiedtová (2004) in the sense that we have a language where aspectual distinctions (in general) are clearly grammaticalised (such as the case of TAL1 with the prefixed and suffixed verb forms) such that speakers opt for the pure aspectual style to express *Sim*. FrL1 does not primarily express aspectual oppositions and we see that aspect is combined with adverbials to express *Sim*. The problem is that our two L1s have comparable devices (i.e., lexical) to express *Sim*. The fact that in TAL1 the aspectual marking can stand alone while in FrL1 it needs to be combined with adverbials means that the devices have different properties in spite of their shared characteristics.

By studying the types of adverbials selected in combination with aspectual marking, we noticed

interesting differences between our two languages. In fact, while TAL1 speakers show preference for spatial adverbial complements, FrL1 speakers favour temporal devices.

Generally, we can say that aspect is most of the time sufficient in TAL1 to convey temporal *Sim*. The extra lexical means added (via adverbials) convey another dimension related to *Sim*, which is space. In French, aspect does not seem to be enough to convey the temporal relation, *Sim*; speakers often need additional temporal devices to convey it. They indeed resort to temporal adverbials to insist that the two events construed are sharing an interval of time.

The choice of temporal adverbials in combination with aspectual devices confirms the findings of Leclercq (2007, pp.293-295). Indeed, she identifies different types of adverbial complements used in FrL1, expressing notably temporal break – what she calls “*rupture temporelle*”, juxtaposition or parallelism.

The higher frequency of spatial devices in TAL1 retellings in addition to aspect can be interpreted as the outcome of a different conceptualisation of *Sim*. Furthermore, TAL1 and FrL1 have two different formulators that might explain the combination with on-goingness devices with different types of adverbials. In other words, and as explained by Levelt (1989, pp.103-105), the differences observed are related to “language-specific requirements” on what is encoded in each language to complete the verbal task of relating simultaneous events. These requirements are represented in the conceptualiser’s base of procedural knowledge. That is why we speak about different conceptualisations of the *Sim* relation between events instructing the formulator according to the available means in the two languages. In other words, *Sim* of the situations in our videos is a temporal relation. It is also spatially established in the visual field. The differences can also be explained by “cognitive, social or cultural habits”, one of the four constraints of the speakers’ options in the description of an event as expressed by von Stutterheim *et al.* (2009, pp.165-166).

Bringing these observations together with our previous one concerning the linguistic means selected for the task, namely on-goingness devices, directional, movement-oriented for French (Mortier 2008; Squartini 1998) and static for Tunisian Arabic, we find interesting concurrences

of the types of the means used for this task. Indeed, TAL1's on-goingness marker *qa:'id* suggests posture is therefore anchored in space. The adverbials preferred in the retellings of TAL1 speakers are spatial. FrL1 marker, «*en train de*», however indicates movement, and it is non-static, moving, certainly in space, and probably on the time axis too. The adverbials selected by French speakers are mostly temporal. We can hypothesise that when it comes to *Sim*, TAL1 calls on the two domains of space and time (by means of aspectual marking and spatial adverbials) whereas FrL1 appeals to the domain of time (through aspectual marking and temporal adverbials).

Actually, time and space are two interconnected referential domains of human cognition (Klein 1994; Klein & Nüse 1997). We are also aware that space plays a crucial role in the human understanding of time (Radden 2004). Therefore, it is not at all surprising that spatial reference in TAL1 helps with the expression of temporal *Sim*, given that *Sim* in each video of our visual stimuli is a temporal relation between two situations that also share space.

In her PhD thesis, Hamdi (2007) discusses the relationship between the two domains when analysing metaphors in both English and Arabic in order to identify differences and similarities in the conceptualisation of time in both languages. She observes that the metaphor of Time as Space is common between the two unrelated languages. In other words, in English, just like in Arabic, "time is understood in terms of space, i.e., that the structure of the source domain (SPACE) is mapped onto the target domain (TIME), and thus can be seen as structuring it" (Hamdi 2007, p.92). However, she also points out that given the differences that she identifies between the two languages Arabic, unlike English conceptualises time in terms of depth and width in some metaphors:

«While sharing the generic conceptual metaphor TIME AS SPACE, Arabic differs from English in conceptualising time in terms of depth and width. Divergence in conceptual metaphors of time between the two languages is explained as stemming from physical and historical differences between the two cultures/nations» (*ibid*, p.3)

Depth and width are linked to space, infact they are spatial characteristics of an object.

Hamdi (2007) definitely provides an interesting finding about the spatial representation of time in Tunisian Arabic where most of her data has been taken from Tunisian newspapers.

4.2. Conclusions on learners' expression of simultaneity using aspect

Our analyses of the FrL2 retellings by Tunisian informants allowed us to make interesting observations. The first one is that the verbal task used for this study is not an easy one. Learners' retelling abilities increase with acquisitional stages. For instance, the more advanced the learner, the longer the retellings and the higher he / she scores for narrative complexity. In other words, in later stages of FrL2 acquisition, learners produce longer and more complex retellings with a richer lexicon. Furthermore, FrL2 learners are more likely to produce narratives out of the videos showing the inclusion type of *Sim*. Parallel situations are less likely to generate narratives at the earlier stages of language acquisition. This finding makes the productions of L-educated in both L1 groups and those in earlier stages of FrL2 acquisition comparable.

These results are not at all surprising, and quite predictable. The statistical calculations give further confirmation for the stages identified in the methodology section for each informant. Therefore, our results indirectly support the general tendencies of learner varieties as described in previous research (Bartning 1997; 2009; Bartning & Schlyter 2004; Bhardwaj *et al.* 1988; Dietrich *et al.* 1995; Klein & Perdue 1992; Klein & Perdue 1997). One could link these observations about narrative complexity and richness of the lexicon to the limited linguistic resources available to the learners at each stage. However, this explanation is easily invalidated by the FrL2 analysis of some learners' productions. For example, A9 who scores very high on *Vocd* and *INC* values does not produce any narrative for perfect *Sim* videos despite his developing language competence. We hypothesise therefore given the general tendencies that the nature of the task constitutes a strong constraint for the speakers. They do not always stick to the *quaestio* based on the explicit question provided by the researcher. Their deviation from it is interesting as it could be explained by the difficulty to create progression on the time line to retell simultaneous events. It is worth noting here that we do not necessarily consider deviation from the *quaestio* as the result of particular constraints but also the result of individual choices. In general, deviating from the *quaestio* is not an unusual phenomenon, as Klein & von

Stutterheim (2006, p.31) assume:

«Three points should be noted, however. First, the QUAESTIO of a text need not be identical with the real question which may have elicited the text in the given case: but very often, there is no explicit question at all. Second, it may be more appropriate for some texts to characterise them by a pair or even a triple of QUAESTIONES, rather than by one. And third, for some texts of a more loose nature (small talk, for example), it does not make much sense to characterise them by a QUAESTIO at all. This corresponds to the fact that they have no, or only a very weak, global structure: their organisation is merely local. »

Furthermore, deviation from the *quaestio* can be of many types as von Stutterheim & Klein (2002, p.77) explain:

«It is up to the speaker to which extent he accepts the constraints defined by the *quaestio*. He may, to begin with reject the entire communicative task, at the risk of more or less severe social consequences. He may also take on the task but redefine it in its own sense, for example by telling a long-winded story instead of giving an argument, when an argument was asked for. These are radical deviations from the *quaestio*. What is more interesting are "local deviations"; they occur when the speaker accepts the *quaestio* and its constraints in principle, but deviates from them from time to time. There are two such cases. First, the speaker might include a full proposition, or even a sequence of propositions, which is not an answer to the *quaestio*. This leads to what has been called side structures. From a communicative point of view, these may be no less important than the main-structure utterances...The other cases are minor deviations within a main-structure utterance. The speaker may for example initially accept the position imposed on him by the question, but they present the entire story from a different vantage point. Normally such changes must be explicitly marked»

However, learners' deviation from the *quaestio* seems to persist up to a certain level of acquisition. Speakers deviate from the implicit / explicit *quaestio* deliberately or due to some constraints. However, individual variation is a factor that cannot be ruled out. Some speakers are chattier or have a better capacity of concentration than others have. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the educational background can play a role in shaping those skills.

Undeniably, the concept of the *quaestio* is closely related to the global text organisation.

To summarise, learners at different stages of acquisition respond unsurprisingly differently to the task. The productions, at each learner variety identified, present variations that are affected by constraints related to the linguistic profile and repertoire but also to personal choices, namely the way the *quaestio* is used and the perspectives taken on events.

As far as the use of the marked form «*en train de*» is concerned, overall, FrL2 learners select the progressive marker more frequently than FrL1 speakers do. They also employ less *le présent simple* than native French speakers do.

To give details, based on our data, about the emergence and development of «*en train de*» throughout the acquisitional stages from the basic variety to the very advanced stage, we could postulate that «*en train de*» evolves and develops slowly across the acquisitional stages in a systematic and organised way, moving from a single entity to a multiple complex structure. It can emerge, but not necessarily, in the basic variety. Indeed, only one out of the three informants in the basic variety uses «*en train de*» in a non-analysed chunk that has an invariant form /trɛ̃/ base form (V). This occurrence is a mere imitation of target language picked up from the language input and does not have a temporal value.

«There is no inflection in the basic variety, hence no marking of case, number, gender, tense, aspect, agreement by morphology. Thus, lexical items typically occur in one invariant form. It corresponds to the stem, the infinitive or the nominative in the target language; but it can also be a form which would be an inflected form in the target language. Occasionally, a word shows up in more than one form, but this (rare) variation does not seem to have any functional value: the learners simply try different phonological variants.» (Klein & Perdue 1997, p.320)

Reconsidering the inventory of all the verb forms (Table 21) used by the same informant shows that no inflectional morphology indicating tense is observed, but only a few ‘boundary markers’. The informant selects lexical items, forms of the verbs *commencer* and *arrêter* (‘to begin to’ and ‘stop’, respectively). We do not find any complex constructions in the productions of A8 or A1 belonging to the same variety. We hypothesise therefore that the appearance of forms of «*en train de*» in earlier learner varieties goes hand in hand with the mastery of other aspectual

distinctions. This involves the expression, by lexical means, of phases of processes such as marking the onset and end of a particular event. «*En train de*» emerges as a formulaic sequence (Bartning & Forsberg 2006; Wray 2002), a non-finite form, without auxiliary and also without the preposition *de*.

Its use as a formulaic sequence persists even with the emergence of the auxiliary, as demonstrated by A6's productions (Intermediate stage) where we find instances like /ãtragarde/, a non-analysed form of «*en train de regarder*».

The informants' production of «*en train de*» in subsequent varieties increases throughout the acquisitional stages. Along with the development of their chunking abilities, i.e., the ability to distinguish and separate parts of a speech utterance, the sequence starts to accommodate more elements starting the left then the right adjacent sides. The appearance of the auxiliary is the last step after the emergence of all the elements «*en train de*» and their utterance in an articulate native-like manner.

As for the lexical contents used, the unmarked form has more affinities with 1-State verbs but it is increasingly selected with lexical contents presenting a change of state. Learners' choices regarding the selection of lexical contents with the marked form are comparable to the choices made by French native speakers.

As far as the discursive function of «*en train de*» is concerned, we discovered that at Stage 2 (basic variety), the recourse to the marked form to set up Sit₁ is low. The rate of its use to play this function in discourse increases at Stage 3 to attain 70%. At the other stages, it continues to play this role in most of the occurrences. The simple present undergoes an opposite fate, as it becomes less frequent to set Sit₁ throughout the stages. This implies that awareness of the marker's discursive role develops across the stages.

FrL2 learners' use of «*en train de*» even at very advanced stages of acquisition manifests divergences from the natives' use. In fact, learners apply different rules to the distribution of this

periphrasis. For instance, they use it to construe sub-events of “multiphase”⁴⁹ events, which is never observed in French native productions, and recall the TAL1 productions, where *qa:’id* is possibly selected for both globalising events and sub-events.

When we examined the aspectual perspectives taken on events in the retellings, we discovered that Tunisian learners of FrL2 are sensitive to aspectual distinctions from the earlier stages of acquisition. They exploit lexical aspect as a primary device to express *Sim*. They very soon start to apply structural devices, emulating the structural organisation of two parallel propositions in their mother language. The more advanced the learners, the more likely they take different aspectual perspectives in their L1 and L2. Their *Sim* marking develops across the stages to become comparable in the advanced stages to the French native speakers’. Indeed, they master more and more aspectual juxtaposition and contrast in combination with adverbials at the advanced stages. The nature of adverbials they select however, recalls the ones they use in their TAL1, even though they select a lot more temporal adverbials than they do in their native speech. The nature of adverbials used demonstrates a difference between the conceptualisation and event construal in FrL1 and FrL2 by Tunisian learners. We can therefore conclude that instances of influence of the L1 on the productions in L2 could be observed, but generalising this to talk about transfer is a hypothesis that needs more research to be proven.

Finally, and concerning the structuring of the discourse and the distribution of forms, L2 learners use «*en train de*» more systematically than French native speakers. In fact, they almost exclusively set it in the background of the narratives, and in the foreground of descriptive accounts.

To sum up and compare TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 use of on-goingness devices to express simultaneity of situations, we have found many similarities between the two source languages under investigation. The nature of the task was also found to affect the perspectives taken. The informants deviate less from the question asked in the H-educated groups and at more advanced

⁴⁹ Broccias (2008)

stages of L2 acquisition. This implies that the task of producing retellings of simultaneous events is not an easy one. The overall narrating abilities and profile of the informants affect the way they approach the task.

Only in later stages of acquisition, can learners overcome the constraint of the task and stick to the *quaestio*. In other words, when presented with different stimuli and asked to produce narratives, learners in earlier acquisitional stages (and up to Lower advanced level) managed overall to make narrations out of the facilitating components of the stimuli (i.e., temporal progression in case of inclusion); but not always of the constraining ones. Therefore, they stuck to the *quaestio* when videos showed temporal progression, and deviated from it making descriptions when there was no progression. At later stages (from medium advanced stage onwards), they managed to make narratives out of the majority of the videos they were presented with, regardless of whether or not they include a facilitating component.

In the light of this description, we can interpret that our informants' deviations are constrained by the stimuli and are also the result of individual choices. The general failure to produce a narrative for perfectly simultaneous situations might challenge the question we asked the informants to answer "*What happened in this video?*" Overall, H-educated speakers in TAL1, FrL1 and in FrL2 show a greater ability to make narratives and less tendency to deviate from the *quaestio* to retell what happened in the videos presented to them than L-educated speakers. This leads us to conclude that all productions on this task were generally affected by the nature of the videos presented, and the situations along with the type of temporal relation involved. However, one group (H-educated) in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 managed to make more narratives than the L-educated group, showing less deviation from the original *quaestio*.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

5.1. Back to our initial research questions

In this chapter, we link the findings summarised in Chapter four with the research questions asked in Part one, Chapter two. We consider each question providing our answer to it in the light of the analyses of our data.

We hope to have brought a contribution to research on some questions related to the domain of temporality. We hope to have been able to clarify how simultaneity relation of events can be expressed in discourse in TAL1, FrL1 and FrL2 using aspectual perspectives. We aimed to bring new insights into the languages and learner varieties we have studied. Even though TAL1 and French were generally reported to have different systems as to the expression of temporality, in this study we found many similarities as to the expression of on-goingness. The differences however are also multiple.

(1) What happens if we have the two types of progressive markers within one language; one fully grammaticalised and one in an on-going process of grammaticalisation, which is the case of TAL1; what are the contexts of use of the less fully grammaticalised one?

We have found some key elements that could provide an answer to the question (1). The marker *fi* in TAL1 is obligatory to express the progressive aspect in certain contexts, with a transitive verb and in the presence of a direct complement. As such, *na'mal fi xobz* would literally mean, “I am *in* the process of making bread”. The picture becomes more confusing with intransitive verbs, when *fi* is not needed for the progressive marking. We have seen in our data that *qa:'id* sets up the general scene where events are on-going. It opens a time span due to its inherent meaning (*qa:'id* = sitting). We could therefore imagine that while the event could be dynamic as it is on-going, the protagonist of the event is rather still, as if motionless. The existence of the two types of markers gives more options to the speaker. While *fi* focuses only on a portion of the proposition (the patient / the affected entity), *qa:'id* focuses on the whole context of occurrence of an event. In TAL1, we have a way to say something is happening to something (using *fi* only), and another one to say something is happening and continuing, since the protagonist is still at it (with the use of *qa:'id*). While the presence of *fi* in combination with *qa:'id* appears to be

redundant, it gives an extra understanding of on-goingness in Tunisian Arabic. The notion of incompleteness is shared between the event in progress and an object (patient) that is also in progress, as it is incomplete at a certain reference time.

(2) If both FrL1 and TAL1 code on-goingness lexically, will that result in similar aspectual perspectives taken on events in the verbal task of expressing simultaneity?

To the second question, the answer is not straightforward. We have concluded that *qa:'id* and «*en train de*» are lexical means that code on-goingness. They have similar uses in the context of the discourse, notably structuring the discourse of simultaneous events. We could also postulate that this could be related to the nature of the marker, that is a lexical and a non-systematic marker of on-goingness. The marker, competing with other simple forms in the language play special roles that transcend the simple context of the proposition, while the simple forms play different ones.

Yet we have also found many disparities in the use of both means. *En train de* in French proved to obey stricter rules than the use of *qa:'id* in discourse. It could be hypothesised that the origins of the markers could explain their different behaviours.

(3) Does the educational background of informants in the respective L1s affect the way they complete the task?

Our answer to the third question is simple: *yes*. The educational background as an indicator of many inherent disparities between L-educated and H-educated groups in the two L1s does affect the way they retell simultaneous events. The productions of the two sub-groups reveal many differences: namely, length, complexity and richness. More interestingly, the informants' profiles affect their choice of forms for expressing on-goingness. This finding is challenging to the generally held view. In fact, within a sample of native speakers, many profiles exist, and many abilities and features of the same language can be identified.

(4) Does the L1 of Tunisian learners of FrL2 influence the way they use aspectual marking in retelling simultaneous situations?

The answer to the last question is again complex. Our investigation of the different learner varieties on this task allowed us to make many interesting observations about the developmental process of using aspect in expressing simultaneity. In line with the observations made about the basic variety in the ESF project, our basic variety proved to develop independently from the source language or the target language (Perdue 1993b). We have also seen that discourse organisation devices preceded grammatical ones across the acquisitional stages. For instance, the use of structural devices decreased throughout the stages and the use of aspect conversely decreased. Some phenomena observed at later stages could recall the specificities of the L1, notably, the exploitation of both the domain of time and space in the expression of *Sim*. Furthermore, the lack of mastery of the discursive role of «*en train de*» even at advanced stages and its overgeneralisation could be explained by the lack of those rules in TAL1 regarding the marker *qa:'id*. Finally, structural devices to organise the two simultaneous events in discourse, as well as the nature of the adverbials selected could also echo the devices learners used in their L1. Overall, we could observe some resemblance between TAL1 and FrL2 features while they differed from French native speakers' choices. These concerned more the general choices in discourse, an observation that corroborates Leclercq's (2007; 2009) results regarding the influence of the L1 on near-native speech.

Overall, we could hypothesise based on some compelling observations that the conceptualisation of simultaneity in our two unrelated languages is different and the source language could affect the target language accordingly. *Sim* expression in either language draws on the two referential domains of space and time in a different manner: Tunisian Arabic draws on time and space, whereas French L1 draws more on the temporal domain. We found evidence for Tunisian Arabic learners' Appeal to the spatial domain in relating two simultaneous events in discourse.

5.2. Limitations of this study

In this project, we studied the specificities of the most frequently used on-goingness devices in TAL1 and in FrL1 in the context of the proposition and at the level of the discourse of two simultaneous events. We also examined the same points in the FrL2 retellings by the same Tunisian informants.

Due to the complexity of the phenomena raised by our data, many areas of this investigation will be subject of a follow-up study.

First, in order to encompass as many learner profiles as possible, we aimed initially to include informants who had just started their FrL2 acquisition. We could find informants who had not spent a lot of time in France (like A1, 2 months), but given the amount of exposure to French language also in Tunisia, it was impossible to find informants in the pre-basic variety in our data collection. Including a larger number of informants and an even number at each acquisitional stage would present an interesting opportunity to explore in more depth what we have investigated in this project.

Furthermore, the number of female informants in the basic variety and at intermediate stage was limited to only one informant. Women with the profile we desired are generally women who immigrate to France in order to join their husband / families, through a process of *regroupement familial*. These women are simply not accessible, unless they start taking French lessons. Diversifying the sample to include more females would be an advantage in future investigation.

Finally, our study of the expression of on-goingness in L2 French was based on cross-sectional data. It gave valuable results regarding the use of the aspetual periphrasis at different acquisitional stages. One of our conclusions is that it emerges as a non-analysed sequence before it develops into a complex analysed one. More analysis of those formulaic sequences can be a topic of a follow-up study. In fact, it would be very interesting to study the pauses and other prosodical features of those formulaic sequences at those earlier stages. Additionally, it would be ideal to verify our results in a longitudinal study, where we would know more about the emergence of «*en train de*».

Despite these limitations, we believe we have brought a valuable and original contribution to the study of on-goingness in French as well in Tunisian Arabic. We have significantly contributed to understanding the temporal system in Tunisian Arabic based on empirical data. We have also enriched the previous investigations of «*en train de*» shedding new light into its use with two on-going events sharing an interval of time. Finally yet importantly, we have contributed to

understanding the use of aspect in expressing two different types of simultaneity.

Our results give further evidence of the necessity of dealing with aspectual marking in the context of discourse. The results of this study also demonstrate the importance of dealing with comparable data when we compare data in a second language with those of the native speakers' control group.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Informants' profiles

	Code	Date of recording	Place of recording	Age	Gender	Profession	Education	Other training	Duration of stay in France
TAL1 H-educated	A01	3/31/2008	In a café -Couronnes-Paris (isolated space)	33	F	Commercial Agent	BTS commerce		4 years
	A02	3/26/2008	At her place - Montrouge	33	F	Translator: Fr-MSA	Bachelor of English	Translation	5 years
	A03	04/04/2008	At her place- Paris	29	F	Assistant of French			5 years
	A04	01/04/2008	In a café in belleville – Paris (isolated space)	24	M	Waiter	3rd year Maths		5 years
	A05	3/26/2008	At his place -Montrouge	33	M	Independent jazz piano player	Bachelor of English	Musical studies	6 years
	A06	3/30/2008	In his car- Montparnasse-Paris	27	M	Manager BNP	Engineering		6 years
TAL1 L-educated	A1	01/04/2008	In a café Belleville-Paris (isolated space)	28	M	Hairdresser	Primary education		2 months
	A2	01/04/2008	In a café Belleville –Paris (isolated space)	28	M	Worker in building	Primary education		14 months
	A3	06/04/2008	At his place inMantes-la-Jolie	40	M	Worker in building	Primary education		18 months
	A4	3/31/2008	In a café Couronnes –Paris (isolated space)	29	M	Hairdresser	Primary education		19 months
	A5	3/31/2008	In a café Couronnes –Paris (isolated space)	24	M	Hairdresser	Primary education		20 mois
	A6	01/04/2008	In a café Belleville-Paris (isolated space)	24	M	Worker in building	Primary education		24 months
	A7	01/04/2008	In a café Belleville-Paris (isolated space)	40	M	Plumber	Primary education		36 months
	A8	01/04/2008	At a school of languages-Paris	34	F	Unemployed	Primary education	6 months of language class	4 years
	A9	26/03/200	In the building site –	31	M	Worker in building	Primary	Training in French,	4 years

		8	Choisy-Le-Roi (isolated space)				education	DILF	
	A10	26/03/2008	In the building site – Choisy-Le-Roi (isolated space)	35	M	Artisan	2 nd primary school	Technician	4.5 years
	A11	26/03/2008	In the building site – Choisy-Le-Roi (isolated space)	29	M	Building site manager	Primary education	BTS construction	4.5 years
	A12	3/31/2008	In a café Couronnes-Paris (isolated space)	36	M	Waiter	Primary education	Caricaturist	8 years
	A13	3/31/2008	In a café- Couronnes-Paris (isolated space)	35	M	Cleaner	Primary education		10 years
FrL1 H-educated	F01	02/04/2008	In her office –Montreuil-Paris	37	F	Secretary of the manager	Bac +2		
	F02	02/04/2008	In her office –Montreuil-Paris	44	F	Consultant	Bac+5		
	F03	02/04/2008	In her office –Montreuil-Paris	26	M	Consultant	Bac+5		
	F04	02/04/2008	In her office –Montreuil-Paris	27	M				
	F05	02/04/2008	In her office –Montreuil-Paris	37	M	Consultant	Bac+5		
FrL1 L-educated	F1	02/04/2008	In a café Montreuil-Paris (isolated space)	55	F	Waitress in a restaurant	“Certificat d'études”		
	F2	02/04/2008	In a café Montreuil-Paris (isolated space)	60	F	Cashier	“certificat d'études”		
	F3	02/04/2008	In a café Montreuil-Paris (isolated space)	49	F	Unemployed	College		
	F4	02/04/2008	In a café Montreuil-Paris (isolated space)	52	M	Light Technician	College		
	F5	02/04/2008	In a café Montreuil-Paris (isolated space)	58	M	Retired	Technician		
	F6	02/04/2008	In a café Montreuil-Paris (isolated space)	44	M	Waiter in a café			

Appendix 2. Properties of the situations (between brackets are represented with non-finite predicates)

		P1/S1 and P2/S2	Properties of the situations
C1	Breakfast	P1/S1: a young man <make pancakes> P2/P2: an old lady <exercise>	P1/S1 is shown first, then P2/S2 then the scene alternates between the two situations; with music in the background conveying a shared space and enhancing the perfect simultaneity of the two situations
	Birds	P1/S1: a young man <play the guitar> P2/P2: a girl <dance>	P1 and P2 are shown together in the same setting, S1 is on-going, S2 starts slightly after the first instant and the video puts more focus on P2/S2 which is more dynamic than S1 which remains homogeneous
	Earthsea	P1/S1: a girl <sing> P2/S2: a boy <cry>	S1 is perceived before seeing any of P1 and P2. The hand of P1 is seen before P2/S2 is shown. P1 is finally presented towards the end of the video and both P1 and P2 are seen together in the last scene
C2	Kabaret	P1/S1: a young lady <read the newspaper> P2/S2: a drunken man <enter the stage, walk by P1, push P1 from the chairs, lie on them to sleep>	P1/S1 is shown first, then P2 performs dynamic successive activities (S2) while P1/S1 stays homogeneous
	Wakeup	P1/S1: a young man <sleep, stop alarm, go back to sleep>, P2/S2: an old lady <wake P1 up, go to the other room, bring a rifle and shoot out of the window>	P1/S1 is shown first, then P2 performs dynamic successive activities (S2) while P1/S1 stays homogeneous until there is a change and S1 stops
	Fire	P1/S1: a telephone <burn> P2/S2: a fireman <walk to the track, open the door, take a newspaper, close the door and walk away>	S1 and S2 are shown at the same time on a split screen. P1/S1 is shown from the start; P2/S2 appears slightly later and is visible with P1/S1.

	Salmon	P1/S1: hands of a cook <prepare a meal> P2/S2: a cat <steal pieces of fish>	P1/S1 is shown first, P2 is shown later. The video alternates P1/S1 and P2. S2 is attributed to P2 by inference.
	Soup	P1/S1: a young man <eat soup> P2/S2: a voice <address P1>	P1/S1 is shown first, S2 happens in the course of S1. P2 is not seen but inferred as a human voice heard among other noises generated by television. S2 interrupts P1/S1 and affects its course.

Appendix 3. Results of statistical tests

- Statistical result of the T-test (<http://glass.ed.asu.edu/stats/analysis/t2test.html>)

VOCD values of TALI

Group A Summary Statistics

- Enter sample value of the Group A: **Mean** =
- Enter sample value of the Group A: **Standard Deviation** =
- Enter the sample size for Group A: **n** =

Group B Summary Statistics

- Enter sample value of the Group B: **Mean** =
- Enter sample value of the Group B: **Standard Deviation** =
- Enter the sample size for Group B: **n** =

Results of the t-test: The difference between 124.72 and 104.84 with standard deviations of 49.08 and 30.85 and sample sizes of 6 and 13, respectively, is not significant at the .05 level. The value of the t-statistic for this test was 1.08.

VOCD values of FrLI

Group A Summary Statistics

- Enter sample value of the Group A: **Mean** =
- Enter sample value of the Group A: **Standard Deviation** =
- Enter the sample size for Group A: **n** =

Group B Summary Statistics

- Enter sample value of the Group B: **Mean** =
- Enter sample value of the Group B: **Standard Deviation** =
- Enter the sample size for Group B: **n** =

Results of the t-test: The difference between 74.24 and 73.67 with standard deviations of 11.46554185 and 12.23607399 and sample sizes of 5 and 6, respectively, is not significant at the .05 level. The value of the t-statistic for this test was 0.08.

VOCD values of FrL2

Group A Summary Statistics

- Enter sample value of the Group A: **Mean** =
- Enter sample value of the Group A: **Standard Deviation** =
- Enter the sample size for Group A: **n** =

Group B Summary Statistics

- Enter sample value of the Group B: **Mean** =
- Enter sample value of the Group B: **Standard Deviation** =
- Enter the sample size for Group B: **n** =

Results of the t-test: The difference between 57.99 and 40.52 with standard deviations of 9.47 and 15.40 based on sample sizes of 6 and 13, respectively, is significant at the .05 level. The value of the t-statistic for this test was 2.54.

- **WMW results (<http://faculty.vassar.edu/lowry/utest.html>)**

TALI: Index of Narrative complexity:

Mann-Whitney Test: $n_a = 13$; $n_b = 6$ / Fri Dec 25 2009 13:59:29 GMT+0000 (GMT Standard Time)

count	Ranks for		Raw Data for	
	Sample A	Sample B	Sample A	Sample B
1	1.5	19	4	9.5
2	4	16	4.5	8.75
3	5.5	12.5	4.875	6.5
4	7	17	5.5	9
5	5.5	18	4.875	9.125

6	12.5	9	6.5	6
7	9		6	
8	14		6.75	
9	15		8	
10	3		4.25	
11	9		6	
12	1.5		4	
13	11		6.25	

Mean Ranks for	
Sample A	Sample B
7.6	15.3

Note that mean ranks are provided only for descriptive purposes. They are not part of the Mann-Whitney test.

$$U_A = 70.5 \quad z = -2.72 \quad P_{(1)} = 0.0033 \quad P_{(2)} = 0.0065$$

Critical Values of U for $n_a=13$; $n_b=6$

	Level of Significance for a		
	Directional Test		
	.05	.025	.01
	Non-Directional Test		
	--	.05	.02
lower limit	19	16	12
upper limit	59	62	66

FrLI: Index of Narrative complexity:

Mann-Whitney Test: $n_a = 6$; $n_b = 5$ // Fri Dec 25 2009 16:21:37 GMT+0000 (GMT Standard Time)

	Ranks for		Raw Data for	
count	Sample A	Sample B	Sample A	Sample B
1	5	9	5.5	8.5
2	7	11	6.5	9.75
3	2	6	3.5	5.75
4	1	10	2.625	9.5
5	3	8	3.75	8.25
6	4		4.75	

Mean Ranks for	
Sample A	Sample B
3.7	8.8

Note that mean ranks are provided only for descriptive purposes. They are not part of the Mann-Whitney test.

$$U_A = 29 \quad z = -2.46 \quad P_{(1)} = 0.0069 \quad P_{(2)} = 0.0139$$

Critical Values of U for $n_a=6$; $n_b=5$

	Level of Significance for a		
	Directional Test		
	.05	.025	.01
	Non-Directional Test		
	--	.05	.02
lower limit	5	3	2
upper limit	25	27	28

Appendix 4. Construal of the two simultaneous situations in discourse: Use of forms by H-educated TAL1 informants

V	S	A01	A02	A03	A04	A05	A06
Breakfast	1	S2/qa:'id+fi	S1/PV+fi sb1/SV	S1/qa:'id+fi	S1/PV+fi	S1/PV+fi sb1/PV+fi	S1/PV+fi
	2	S1/qa:'id+fi	S2/qa:'id +fi	S2/qa:'id	S2/qa:'id S2/PV S2/PV+fi	S2/qa:'id+fi sb2-(imp)	S2/PV+fi S2+PV
Birds	1	S2/PV	S1/PV	S1/PV	1: S1/qa:'id	S1/qa:'id	S1/qa:'id
	2	S1/qa:'id	S2-(ich)	S2-(pct) S2-(ich)	2: S2/qa:'id	S2-(imp) S2-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)	S2/PV+fi S2/qa:'id
Earthsea	1	S1/PV	S1/PV S1/PV+fi	S1/qa:'id	S1/qa:'id+fi	S1/qa:'id+fi	S1/qa:'id S1/PV
	2	S2-(per-SV)	2: S2-(per-SV)	S2-(ich)	S2-(per-SV) S2-(ich)	S2-(imp) S1- tkammal-PV S1-(imp) S1-(imp)	S2/PV S2/qa:'id
Kabaret	1	S2-(per-SV)	S1/PV+fi	S1/qa:'id+fi	S1/PV+fi	S1/PV+fi P2-(pct)-ap	S1/PV+fi
	2	S1/PV S2-(per-SV) S1-(per-SV)	S2/q'ad-PV S1-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)	S2-(ich) S1-(imp) S2-(imp)	S2-(per-SV)-sv S1-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)	S2-(per-SV) S1-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)	S2-(per-SV) S2-(ich)-bda-PV
Wakeup	1	S1-(per-SV)	S1- AP	S1-AP	S1-AP S1-(per-SV)	S1- AP	S1-AP S1-(per-SV)
	2	S2-(imp) S2-(per-SV)	S2-(per-SV) S1-(per-SV)	S2-(imp)	S2-(per-SV) S1-(per-SV)	S2-(imp) S2-(imp)	S2-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)
Fire	1	S2-(per-SV)	S2-(per-SV)	S1-(ich)	S2-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)	S1/qa:'id S1/PV	S2-(per-SV)
	2	S1-(ich)- S2((per)	S1-(per-SV) S1-(ich)	S2/PV+fi S1/qa:'id	S1-(per-SV)	S2-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)	S1/qa:'id

V	S	A01	A02	A03	A04	A05	A06
Salmon	1	S1/PV sb1-(imp)	S1/PV sb1-(per-SV)	S1/PV+fi	S1/qa:'id+fi sb1-(pct)	S1/qa:'id sb1-(ite)	S1/qa:'id Sb1-(per-SV)
	2	S2-(ite)	S2-(per-SV) S2-(ite)	S2/qa;'id+fi S1-(imp) S2-(ich)	S2-(ite) sb1-(ite) S2-(ite) sb1-(ite) S2/qa:'id	S2-(ite) S2-(imp) S2-(per-SV)	S2/qa;'id+fi S2/PV
Soup	1	S1/qa:'id S1/PV+fi	S1/qa:'id+fi	S1/qa:'id+fi	S1/qa:'id	S1/PV+fi	S1/qa:'id+fi
	2		S2/PV S2-(imp) S2-(per-SV)	S2-(imp) S1-(pct) S2-(imp)	S2/qa:'id S2-(imp)	S2-(imp) S1-(per-SV) S2-(per-SV)	2: S2/qa:'id

Appendix 5. Construal of the two situations in discourse: Use of forms by L-educated TAL1 informants

	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13
Breakfast	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2	1: P2/S2 2:P1/S1- (imp) P2/S2	1: P1/S2 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2 P2/S2	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2	S1/PV+fi 2: P1/S1 P2/S2	1:P1/S1 Sb1- (imp) 2:P2/S2 P2/S2 P2/S2	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2
Birds	S1/PV 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 S1/PV 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 S1/PV 2: P2/S2	S1/PV 2: P2/S2	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P1/S1 P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P2/S2- (ich)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P2/S2	1: P1/S1 P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	S1/PV 2: P2/S2 P2/S2
Earthsea	1:S1 2: P2/S2	S1/PV 2: P2/S2	S1/PV 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 S1/PV 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 1: P1/S1- (ich) 2: P2/S2- (ich)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P1/S1	S1/PV 2: P2/S2	S1/PV 2: P2/S2 P2/S2- (per)	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2 P2/S2- (per)	S1/PV+fi 2: P1/S1 P2/S2	S1/PV P1/S1 2: P2/S2	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2	P1/P2
Kabaret	1: P1/S1- (pct)-AP P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (per) P2/S2	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1 P2/S2- (per)	P1/P2 1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1(per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (per)	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2 P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- prg- q'ad-pv	P2/S2- (per)	S1/PV+fi 2: P2/S2- (per) P2/S2- (imp) P1/S1-	1:P1- (pct)-ap P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (per) P1/S1- (imp)	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (imp)	1: P1/S1- prg-phs P2/S2- (imp)-pv	1: S1 2: P2/S2- (imp) P1/S1- (imp)

						P2/S2 P2/S2-(per)		(imp) P2/S2-(per)	P1/S1-(per)		P2/S2-(imp) P2/S2-(imp)		P2/S2-(imp)
Wakeup	1: P1/S1-prg-AP 2: P2/S2-(per)	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1-(imp) P2/S2-(per)	1: P1/S1-(imp) 2: P2/S2-(per)		1: S1-(per) P1/S1-(per) 2: P2/S2-(per) P2/S2-(per) P2/S2-(per) P2/S2-(per)	1: P1/S1-prg-ap 2: P2/S2-(per) P1/S1-prg-q'ad-ap 2: P2/S2-(per) P2/S2-(per) P1/S1-(per)	1: P1/S1-prg-ap 2: P2/S2-(per) P2/S2-(per) P1/S1-(per)	1: P1/S1-prg-ap 2: P2/S2-(per) P1/S1-(ite)- 'a:wid-rja'rqad 2: P2/S2-(per) P1/S1-(per)	1: P1/S1-prg-ap 2: P2/S2-(per) P2/S2-(per)		1: S1-(imp) 2: P2/S2		1: P1/S1-prg-ap 2: P2/S2-(imp) P1/S1-(imp)
Fire	1: P2/S2-(per) 2: S1	1:S2-(per) 2: P1/S1-(imp)	P2 1: S1-(imp) 2: P2/S2	1:P1/S1-(per) 2:P2/S2-(imp)	S1-(imp) P2	1: P2/S2-(per) 2: S1	1: S1 2: P2/S2-(per) P2/S2-(per)	1: P2/S2 2: S1-(imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2-(per)	P1/S1	P2 P1/S1	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2-(per) P2	1: S1 2: P2/S2-(per)

Salmon	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P2/S2- (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (imp) P1/S1- (per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P2/S2- (per)	1: P1/S1 Sb1- (per) 2: P2/S2- (per)	1: P1/S1 Sb1-(per) 2: P2/S2- (imp) Sb1- (imp) P2/S2- (imp) P2/S2- (per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P1/S1- (per)	1: P1/S1 Sb1 2: P2/S2- prg P1/S1- (imp) P2/S2- (imp) P1/S1- (ite) P2/S2- (ite) P1/S1- (per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (pct)	1: P1/S1 Sb1 2: P2/S2 P2/S2- (per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: S1 P1/S1 2: P2 P1/S1- (imp) P2/S2- (imp)
Soup	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2(imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2- (imp)	1: P1/S1	1: P1/S1 P1/S1 2: P2/S2 P1/S1- prg- kan-pv P1/S1- (ich)	P1/S1 P1/S1 P1/S1- (imp)	P1/S1 P1/S1 P1/S1	P1/S1	P1/S1 P1/S1	P1/S1	P1/S1	P1/S1 P1/S1

Appendix 6. Construal of the two simultaneous situations in discourse: Use of forms by H-educated FrL1 group

		F01	F02	F03	F04	F05
Perfect Sim	Breakfast	P1/P2 1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 1: P1/S1 (imp) - sb1 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 - Sb2	1: P1/S1 (imp) Sb1 2: P2/S2
	Birds	1: S2	P1/P2 1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2
	Earthsea	P2 1: P1/S1	P1/P2 1: P2/S2 (imp) 2: P1/S1 (ich)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	P1/P2 1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	P2 1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (ich)
Inclusion	Kabaret	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (aller-V)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)
	Wakeup	1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)
	Fire	1: P1/S1 (ich) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	S1/S2 1: P2/S2 (imp) 2: P1/S1	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1 (imp)	S1/S2 1: P1/S1 (ich) 2: P2/S2 (per)	S1/S2 1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 - P1/S1 (introduced as S1- tandis que)
	Salmon	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 - sb1: (per, imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 - sb1 (per) 2: P2/S1 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 - P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2
	Soup	1: P1/S1 P1/S1 2: S2 - P1/S1 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp) - P1/S1 (imp) - P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 - P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)

Appendix 7. Construal of the two simultaneous situations in discourse: Use of forms by FrL1 Less-Ad group

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
Breakfast	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 - P2
Birds	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1 (inf)	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1	1: P2/S2 - P2/P1	1: S2 2: S1 - P1/S1 - P2/S2	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1
Earthsea	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/P2 2: P2/S2	- P2 1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (impf)	1: P2/S2 - P1	1: P1/S1 (per) - P2	1: P1/S1 - P2
Kabaret	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P2/S2 2: P1/S1	1: P2/S2 (impf) 2: P1/S1	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)
Wakeup	1: P1/S1 - P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (aller- V, imp)	1: P1/S1 - P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp, Aller +V)	1: P1/S1 - P1/S1 (per) 2: P2/S2 (per)	1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (per)	1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp)
Fire	1: P1/S1 (imp) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	- P2 1: P2/S2 2: P1/P2	- S2 1: P1/S1 (per)	- S1/S2 1: P1/S1 (impf)	1: P2/S2 (per) 2: P1/S1 (impf) (pendant ce temps)	1: P1/S1
Salmon	1: P1/S1 - Sb1 (per) 2: P2/S2 (per)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (ite)	1: P1/S1 - P1/S1 2: P2/S2	1: P2/S2 (ite)	1: P1/S1 (ite) 2: P2/S2 (imp)	- P2
Soup	1: P1/S1 P1/S1 (imp)	1: P1/S1 2: P2/S2 (imp)	1: S1 (inf) 2: S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1	1: P1/S1 2: S2 (imp)	1: P1/S1 (imp)

Appendix 8. Interface between the constructions with *qa:'id* and those without it in H-educated TAL1 retellings

		A01	A02	A03	A04	A05	A06
Perfect <i>Sim</i>	Breakfast	s1 cps cps	<u>s1</u> cpsf	<u>s1</u> cpsf	<u>s1</u> cps cf <u>0c</u> cpsf	s1 cf cf cpsf	s1 cps cf
	Birds	s1 <u>cpsf</u>	s1	s1	s1 cps	s1	s1 <u>cpsf</u> cf
	Earthsea	s1	s1 <u>0c</u>	s1	s1	s1	s1 cf <u>cpsf</u> <u>0c</u>
Inclusion	Kabaret	<u>s1</u> cps	<u>s1</u> cpsf	s1	s1	s1	s1
	Wakeup		s1	s1	s1	s1	s1
	Fire			<u>cpsf</u> cpsf		s1 cf	cpsf
	Salmon	s1	s1 cps	s1 cpsf	<u>s1</u> cps	s1	s1 <u>cps</u> cf
	Soup	s1 cf <u>cf</u>	<u>s1</u> cps	s1 0c	s1 cps	s1 0c	<u>s1</u> <u>0c</u> cps

Notes: cpsf: Δ_{sit} - 0c : Δ_0 - cps: Δ_{sit} - cf: Δ_{form} -Italics are used when the unmarked form is used, regular font is used when the marked form is used

Appendix 9. Interface between the constructions with *qa:'id* and those without it in L-educated TAL1 retellings

		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	
Perfect Sim	Breakfast	<u>s1</u> cpsf	<u>s1</u> cps	<u>s1</u> cpsf	s1 cpsf	s1 cps cf	<u>s1</u> cpsf	s1 cps	<u>s1</u> 0c cps	s1 0c <u>cf</u> cps 0c <u>0c</u>	<u>s1</u> cpsf	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1 cpsf	
	Birds	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1 cps	cpsf	<u>s1</u> cps	s1 cps cpsf cps	s1 cpsf	s1 cpsf	s1 cps cf	s1 cf cps	s1 cps	s1 cpsf	s1 cps 0c	
	Earthsea	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1 cps		s1 cps cps	s1 cpsf	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1 0c cps	s1 cf cps	<u>s1</u> cps		
Inclusion	Kabaret	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1	s1	s1 cps 0c	s1 cps <u>cf</u> <u>0c</u>		s1	s1	s1 cps	s1	s1	s1	
	Wakeup	s1	s1					<i>s1</i> cps	s1	s1	s1		s1 cpsf	s1	
	Fire	cpsf		cpsf			cpsf	s1	<u>cf</u>	s1 0c 0c	s1	s1	s1	s1	
	Salmon	<u>s1</u> cpsf	s1	s1	s1	s1 cps	s1 <u>0c</u>	s1	s1	<u>s1</u> cpsf 0c 0c	s1 <u>cf</u> cpsf	s1	s1 0c cps	s1 cps	s1 cf
	Soup	s1	s1 cps	s1	s1	s1	s1 0c cps cpsf	s1 cf	s1 0c 0c 0c	s1 0c 0c	<u>s1</u> cf	s1 0c	s1 0c	s1 0c <u>0c</u> <u>0c</u>	

Notes: cpsf: $\Delta_{sit} - 0c$: $\Delta 0$ - cps: $\Delta_{sit} - cf$: Δ_{form} -Italics are used when the unmarked form is used, regular font is used when the marked form is used

Appendix 10. Interface between the marked and unmarked forms in FrL1 retellings

		H-educated					L-educated					
		F01	F02	F03	F04	F05	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6
C1	Breakfast	s1 <i>cpsf</i> cpsf	s1 cps 0c	s1 0c	s1 cps 0c cps 0c	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1 cpsf	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1	s1
	Birds	0c	s1 cpsf	s1 cps	s1 cpsf cpsf	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1	s1 cps	s1	s1 cps cps cps	s1 cps
	Earthsea	0c		s1 cps	s1 cps	s1	s1	s1 cps		s1	cf	s1
C2	Kabaret	s1	s1 cpsf		s1	s1	s1	s1 cps	cpsf	s1	s1	s1
	Wakeup				s1 0c	s1	s1	s1	s1			
	Fire	0c	cpsf 0c	s1		cps		s1 cps				s1
	Salmon	s1 cps	s1 0c cpsf	s1	s1 cps	s1 cps	s1	s1	s1 0c			
	Soup	s1 cf	s1 cpsf cf	s1	s1 0c cf	s1 cf cps	s1	s1		s1 0c 0c	s1	

Notes: cpsf: Δ_{sit} - 0c : Δ_0 - cps: Δ_{sit} - cf: Δ_{form} -Italics are used when the unmarked form is used, regular font is used when the marked form is used

Appendix 1 Interface of forms in retelling the videos

Breakfast

Aspectual style		Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
Aspectual juxtaposition	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M	A4, A11, A12 A01, A03	F02, F04, F05	A01, A03, A04, A05, A06, A7, A9, A11
		U-U	A5, A7, A8, A06	F03, F1, F3, F4	
	Contrast of forms	M-U	A9, A13	F01, F2	A02, A3, A10, A13
		U-M	A1, A3, A6, A10, A02, A04, A05		A4, A12
Aspectual contrast		M-nonprg		F5	
		nonprg-M			
		U-nonprg	A2		
		nonprg-U			A6
Other				F6	A1, A5, A8, A2

Birds

Aspectual style		Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
Aspectual juxtaposition	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M	A9, A11, A04, A6		A9, A11, A04, A06
		U-U	A2, A1, A3, A4, A5, A13,	F03, F05, F1, F3, F5, F6	A2, A01, A6, A7, A02, A13,
	Contrast of forms	M-U	A10, A12, A7, A8, A06	F02, F04	A10, A12
		U-M	A01		
Aspectual contrast		M-nonprg			A4, A03
		nonprg-M			
		U-nonprg	A02, A03, A05	F2	A05
		nonprg-U			A1
Other				F01, F4	A8, A3, A5,

Earthsea

Aspectual styles		Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
Aspectual Juxtaposition	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M	A1, A6	F04	A7, A9, A11, A03, A06
		U-U	A2, A3, A4, A8, A9, A10	F03	A2,

Aspectual styles		Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
	Contrast of forms	M-U	A06, A12		A12
		U-M	A7, A11		
Aspectual contrast		M-nonprg	A03, A04, A05	F05, F3	A01, A04, A05, A4
		nonprg-M			
		U-nonprg	A01, A02	F1	A02
		nonprg-U			
Other			A5, A13	F02, F01, F2, F4, F5, F6	A5, A3, A6, A10, A13, A1, A8

Kabaret

Aspectual styles		Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
Aspectual juxtaposition	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M	A6		A01, A5
		U-U	A2, A5, A10	F2	
	Contrast of forms	M-U			
		U-M			
Aspectual contrast		M-nonprg	A4, A8, A11, A12, A03,	F01, F02, F04, F05, F1, F6	A03, A04, A05, A06, A6, A9, A11, A12, A13,
		nonprg-M		F3	A4, A7, A10
		U-nonprg	A1, A3, A9, A13, A04	F4, F5	
		nonprg-U	A01, A02,		A2
Other			A05, A06, A7	F03	A02, A3, A1, A8
No <i>Sim</i>					

Wakeup

Aspectual styles		Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
Aspectual juxtaposition	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M			
		U-U			
	Contrast of forms	M-U	A12		
		U-M			
Aspectual contrast		M-nonprg		F04, F05, F1, F2, F3	A03, A04, A05, A06, A7, A9, A11,
		nonprg-M	A6		
		U-nonprg	A2		A13, A02

Aspectual styles	Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
	nonprg-U			
	AP-nonprg	A4 A7, A8, A9, A10, A13, A01, A02, A03, A04, A05		
Non-aspectual style		A1, A3, A5, A06,	F01, F02, F03, F4, F5, F6	A01, A4,
No <i>Sim</i>				A1, A2, A10 A3, A5, A6, A8, A12

Fire

Aspectual style	Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2	
Aspectual juxtaposition	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M			
		U-U		F2	
	Contrast of forms	M-U			
		U-M			
Aspectual contrast	M-nonprg	A05 , A9, A12, A13,	F03	A03 , A3, A4, A9, A7	
	nonprg-M	A06 , A11,	F02	A11	
	U-nonprg	A7, A8,	F4		
	nonprg-U	A3, A6, A03 ,	F05		
Non-aspectual style		A1, A01, A02,	F01, F04, F1, F5	A01, A02, A05, A12,	
No <i>Sim</i>		A5, A10, A2, A04 , A4	F3, F6	A04 , A06 , A1, A2, A5, A6, A8, A13, A10	

Salmon

Aspectual styles	Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2	
Aspectual juxtaposition	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M	A11, A12, A06	F04	A03, A04, A05, A06
		U-U	A5, A02	F01, F05	A1,
	Contrast of forms	M-U			A10
		U-M	A1, A03		
Aspectual contrast	M-nonprg	A3, A6, A7, A9, A13, A04 , A05	F02 , F2, F3	A3, A9, A11, A12	

Aspectual styles	Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2
	nonprg-M			A01, A4
	U-nonprg	A2, A4, A8, A10, A01	F03 , F1	A13
	nonprg-U			A2
Other			F5, F4, F6	A02, A8, A5, A6, A7

Soup

Aspectual styles	Combination	TAL1	FrL1	FrL2	
Aspectual maintain	Juxtaposition of forms	M-M	A6, A04, A06		A05, A06
		U-U	A2, A02		
	Contrast of forms	M-U		F01, F05	
		U-M	A01,		A11
Aspectual contrast	M-nonprg	A4, A03	F02, F04, F2	A03, A04	
	nonprg-M				
	U-nonprg	A1, A05 ,	F03 , F5	A02 , A2, A4,	
	nonprg-U				
Non-aspectual Style					
Other		A3, A5, A9, A11, A12, A13, A7 A8, A10	F3, F1, F4, F6	A01 , A1, A3, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10, A12, A13,	