1. Optionality in SLA

- **Optionality:** 2 PF for 1 LF

- **SLA representations** (Papp, 2000; Sorace, 1993, 2000):
  - **native-like** (convergent)
  - **near native** (divergent)
  - **incomplete** (indeterminate)

- **Categorical rules** in native grammar

**Scenarios 1-4: Papp (2000:181, her figure 1)**

- **Drawbacks with Papp’s (2000) working definition:**
  - 0-10 scale, difficul to see acceptance vs. rejection

- **Papp’s (2000) analysis is within groups only**

- **Analyses of optionality should include:**
  - native categorical rules:
    - grammatical > ungrammatical
  - negative-positive scale (-5 … 0 … +5)
  - grammaticality judgement tests:
    - sentence (a) = grammatical
    - sentence (b) = ungrammatical
  - native controls needed for comparison
  - within-group + beween-group analyses
Figure 1: Working definition of optionality in SLA

![Diagram showing the working definition of optionality in SLA]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of language (categorical constructions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>native-like (convergent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full native-like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partial native-like</td>
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<tr>
<td>near native (divergent)</td>
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<tr>
<td>incomplete (indeterminate)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>within-</th>
<th>between-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sorace 1993</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuan 1999</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pérez-Leroux &amp; Glass 1999</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertel 2000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsden, to appear</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papp 2000</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parodi 2001</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Contradictory SLA findings?

- **Native-like intuitions** (Hertel, 2000; Hirakawa, 1999; Kanno, 1998; Marsden, to appear; Pérez-Leroux & Glass, 1999)

3. SV / VS free alternation?

- **Strict SV in English**
  (1) a. Una mujer gritó. (SV)
  A woman shouted
  b. Gritó una mujer. (VS)
  *Shouted a woman

4. Neutral contexts: UG

- **Split intransitivity**: UG → Unaccusative Hypothesis (UH) is universal (Burzio, 1986; Sorace, 1993):
  - **Unaccusatives**: subject base-generates in object position (VS). Unaccusatives normally express movement (*arrive, come, go, etc.*).
  - **Unergatives**: subject base-generates in subject position (SV)

3. **Near-native intuitions**: Your friend Manuel and you are at a party at his place. While Manuel is in the kitchen getting a beer, a neighbour you don’t know comes in to complain about the loud music. When Manuel comes back from the kitchen, he asks you: ‘What happened?’ You answer:

   a. *[Un vecino vino]_{vo} (SV)
   b. [Vino un vecino]_{vo} (VS)
   ‘A neighbour arrived’

4. **Unergatives**: You are at a restaurant with your friend Maria. Maria goes to the toilet and in the meanwhile you can see a woman shouting in the street. When Maria comes back, she asks you: ‘What happened in the street?’ You answer:

   a. *[Una mujer gritó]_{vo} (SV)
   b. [Gritó una mujer]_{vo} (VS)
   ‘A woman shouted’

Table 2: Word order in neutral contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unaccusatives</th>
<th>Unergatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish:</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>SV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek:</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>SV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English:</td>
<td>SV</td>
<td>SV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Focused contexts: Foc^0

- **Focused subject**: Bolinger's (1954) generalisation: focused constituents appear in sentence-final position in Spanish: **focus last**:

- **Focus Phrase** (FocP): Belleti & Shlonsky (1995) and Ndayiragije (1999):
- **Focus Criterion** (Rizzi, 1997; Tsimpli, 1995)

\[(5) \quad \text{TP} \rightarrow \text{FocP} \rightarrow \text{Spec} [+\text{Foc}] \rightarrow \text{Foc}^0 \rightarrow \text{VP} \]

(6) **Unaccusatives**: Your friend Manuel and you are at a party at his place. While Manuel is in the kitchen getting a beer, a neighbour you don’t know comes in to complain about the loud music. When Manuel comes back from the kitchen, he asks you: ‘Who arrived?’ You answer:

a. *[Un vecino]_{\text{Foc}} \text{ vino} \quad (**SV**)
b. Vino [un vecino]_{\text{Foc}} \quad (**VS**)

(7) **Unergatives**: You are at a restaurant with your friend Maria. Maria goes to the toilet and in the meanwhile you can see a woman shouting in the street. When Maria comes back, she asks you: ‘Who shouted in the street?’ You answer:

a. *[Una mujer]_{\text{Foc}} \text{ gritó} \quad (**SV**)
b. Gritó [una mujer]_{\text{Foc}} \quad (**VS**)

Table 3: Word order in focused contexts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unaccusatives</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Spanish</td>
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<td>SV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>SV</td>
<td>SV</td>
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</table>

6. Parameterisation of Foc^0

Table 4: Feature strength of the Foc^0 head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Resulting word order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>[+strong]</td>
<td>VS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>[–strong]</td>
<td>SV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>[–strong]</td>
<td>SV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Predictions

Table 5: learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>L2</th>
<th>L3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greek group</td>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English group</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **PREDICTION 1: NEUTRAL CONTEXTS:**
  - Native-like representations due to UG (unaccusative hypothesis):
    - VS with unaccusatives
    - SV with unergatives

- **PREDICTION 2: FOCUS CONTEXTS:**
  - Near-native representations if [F_{L1}] ≠ [F_{L2/L3}]
  - Bechk, 1998; Hawkins & Chan, 1997

- **OPTIONALITY:**
  - L1 [–strong] \ Interlanguage [±strong]
  - Spanish [+strong]
  - VS and SV with unergatives/unaccusatives

8. Previous SLA studies

- No studies on the nature of [±strong] focus head, Foc^0. However:
  - **Hertel (2000)** English learners of Spanish prefer/produce VS with unaccusatives more than with other types of verbs
  - **De Miguel (1993)** English native learners of Spanish produce and accept VS order more with unaccusatives than with any other verb type.
  - **Hertel & Pérez-Leroux (1999)** English native learners of Spanish accept VS order more with unaccusatives than with unergatives.
  - **Hirakawa (1999)** English native learners of Japanese are sensitive to the different interpretation of grammatical subjects with unaccusatives vs. unergatives.
Balcom (1997) Chinese native learners of English preferred passive morphology more with unaccusatives than with any other verb type. 

Zobl (1989) learners of English inverted SV order to VS order with unaccusatives (independent of whether this was possible in their L1).

9. Subjects in our study

English group: L1 English learners of L2 Spanish at the Uni. of Essex (n=17)

Greek group: L1 Greek, L2 English, L3 Spanish at the University of Athens (n=18)

Advanced level (University of Wisconsin PT)

Control group: Spanish natives (n=14)

10. Method

Paired GJT: Example:

You are at a party with your friend Laura. Laura leaves the room and at that moment the police arrive because the party is too noisy. When Laura comes back, she asks you: ¿Quién llegó? You answer:

(a) La policía llegó. -2 -1 0 +1 +2

(b) Llegó la policía. -2 -1 0 +1 +2

Conditions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unergative</td>
<td>SV</td>
<td>VS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccusative</td>
<td>VS</td>
<td>VS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 items for each condition (after ‘Darwin’ test):

Unergatives

Unaccusatives

- bailar ‘to dance’
- gritar ‘to shout’
- dormir ‘to sleep’
- reir ‘to laugh’
- llorar ‘to cry’
- estornudar ‘to sneeze’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
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<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bailar</td>
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<td>gritar</td>
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<td>reir</td>
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<td>llorar</td>
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<tr>
<td>estornudar</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>entrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>llegar</td>
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<tr>
<td>salir</td>
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<td>venir</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>volver</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>escapar</td>
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</table>

All items are randomised (‘blocking’ procedure, Cowart, 1997)

There are 2 versions for each task, so as to minimise order-of-presentation effects.

11. Data analysis

Normality of distribution: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test passed (p>0.05 for each condition in each group).

Within-group: paired samples t-test and

Between-group: independent groups anova with post-hoc Scheffe tests.

12. Results

Figure 2: Neutral contexts: Mean acceptance (VS)

Within groups:

- English: 1.4>0.8
- Greek: 1.6>0.8
- Spanish: 1.3>0.1

Between groups:

- English 1.4 = Spanish 1.3
- Greek 1.6 = Spanish 1.3
- English 0.8 > Spanish -0.1
- Greek 0.8 > Spanish -0.1

Conclusion: scenario (6) partial native-like knowledge, as learners prefer VS with unaccusatives

Figure 3: Focus contexts: Mean acceptance rate (VS)

Within groups:

- English: 1.4>1.1
- Greek: 1.3>1
- Spanish: 1.5=1.4
Between groups:
- English 1.4 = Spanish 1.5
- Greek 1.3 = Spanish 1.5
- English 1.1 = Spanish 1.4
- Greek 1 = Spanish 1.4

Conclusion: unexplained scenario, but learners accept the Spanish [+strong] Foc⁰ setting, allowing grammatical VS.

Conclusion: learners also accept their L1 [-strong] Foc⁰ setting, allowing ungrammatical VS.

Figure 4: Focus contexts: Mean acceptance rate (SV)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Unacc Foc⁰ *SV</th>
<th>Unerg Foc⁰ *SV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>-2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within groups:
- English: 0.9 = 1.2
- Greek: 1.1 = 1.4
- Spanish: 0 = 0.3

Between groups:
- English 0.9 > Spanish 0
- Greek 1.1 > Spanish 0
- English 1.2 > Spanish 0.3
- Greek 1.4 > Spanish 0.3

Conclusion: learners also accept their L1 [-strong] Foc⁰ setting, allowing ungrammatical VS.

13. Conclusion

Predictions confirmed?

Principle of UG (Unac. hypothesis): partial native-like sensitivity

Parameterisation of Foc⁰: optionality
- Learners allow the Spanish [+strong] setting (they seem to have acquired Bolinger’s generalisation).
- BUT learners also allow their L1 [-strong] feature of Foc⁰ (near-nativity).

Conclusion: optionality:
- L1 [-strong] Spanish [+strong] Interlanguage [±strong]

Current theories:
- Beck’s (1998) local impairment hypothesis.

Role of input? Papp (2000):
- Ambiguous L2 PLD ➔ optional L2 grammar (L1/L2 value)
- BUT: prediction: same knowledge of SV/VS distribution regardless of context.

Optionality and interface conditions

14. References


