An exploratory study of discourse organisation in French L1, Dutch L1, French L2 and Dutch L2 written narratives

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Abstract

Three major questions are dealt with in this contribution: (i) what principles of discourse organisation do French and Dutch native speakers use when writing narratives?; (ii) what strategies do (pre-)advanced French-speaking learners of Dutch and Dutch-speaking learners of French display in their texts?; and (iii) to what extent do the interlanguages differ from the source and target languages, and resemble each other? Our analyses reveal that it is not so much the degree of packaging, nor the use of subordinate clauses that distinguishes French from Dutch narratives, but the frequency of non-finite clauses and the use of present participles in secondary predication. Furthermore, the impact of target and source language on the learner's interlanguage differs according to the construction that is being examined. The most striking differences were the absence of secondary predication in French L2 and the frequent use of complement clauses in Dutch L1. Finally, no clear organisational pattern typical of (pre-)advanced interlanguage was evident.

1. Introduction

This article is concerned with cross-linguistic differences in discourse organisation and, more specifically, with the way in which foreign language learners deal with them. Previous studies have suggested that French and Dutch show different preferences in terms of their principles of discourse organisation. Our aim is to explore to what extent these claims hold for unprepared written film retellings. Secondly, we examine whether similar reports by (pre-)advanced learners of French and Dutch display a distinctive interlanguage organisation, whether they show signs of the transfer of discourse organisation principles from the writers' native language, or whether the system of the target language has already been acquired. Discourse organisation is studied through an analysis of the number of clauses per sentence, the use of parataxis and hypotaxis, and the use of integrated structures (finite and non-finite clauses) with special emphasis on the kinds of subordinate clauses used.

In Section 2 we briefly summarise the integrated contrastive approach on which this study is based. We also report on the findings of previous research on discourse organisation in French, Dutch and English, as well as in different kinds of interlanguages. In Section 3 we formulate our research hypotheses and define the features that are examined, and in Section 4 we present the data and the subjects. Section 5 gives a detailed account of the results of our study, while

Section 6 summarises the most important findings and compares them with those discussed in Section 2.

2.   Previous studies

2.1   The integrated contrastive model

In line with the objectives of this volume, the data we have collected are contrasted in various ways. Granger (1996) and Gilquin (2000/2001) convincingly argue that the integrated approach, which combines both traditional CA (contrastive analysis) and the younger discipline of CIA (contrastive interlanguage analysis), provides us with a solid framework, allowing not only for a thorough analysis of learner language and the phenomenon of transfer, but also for a more comprehensive study of both the learners' mother tongue and the language they are in the process of acquiring. The contrastive analysis of source language and translated language will not be dealt with here, although in Section 2.2.1 we briefly summarise some of the results obtained by Cosme (2005, 2006, 2008) on discourse organisation and clause-linking in English, French and Dutch as source and translated languages.

With respect to the comparison of interlanguages, and contrary to the current trend,[1] we do not compare the interlanguage of learners who are acquiring the same foreign language and who have different mother tongues. Rather, we contrast the interlanguage of Dutch-speaking learners of French and French-speaking learners of Dutch living in Brussels and the Walloon region of Belgium. This particular kind of CIA should cast light on both the transfer of strategies from the native language, and the properties of the general interlanguage system, irrespective of the native and foreign languages involved. It should however be borne in mind that any conclusions will be tentative, given that the present study only deals with two learner groups.

2.2   Discourse organisational preferences

2.2.1   From a contrastive perspective (CA)

As Cosme (2006) points out, recent contrastive literature[2] has claimed that different languages show different preferences in the way discourse is organised. The linguistic field of discourse organisation is, of course, a very extensive one, which covers phenomena such as information density, the structuring of information (thematic structure, focus assignment) and clause-combining. The present study mainly deals with this last aspect.

A distinction can be made between two major clause-linking patterns. On the one hand, a language may prefer to combine clauses in a paratactic manner, mainly employing juxtaposition (commas and colons) and coordinating devices (conjunctions). On the other hand, it may opt for a more hypotactic organisation

in which subordination plays a major part. The first pattern is called incremental, horizontal or linear, while the second is termed hierarchical or vertical (Fabricius-Hansen 1996, 1999, Asher & Vieu 2005, Cosme 2008).[3] In reality, these patterns can be seen as the extremes of a continuum along which languages can be ordered in terms of their preferences.

On this continuum, French and Dutch are often claimed (Cosme 2008) to tend towards the extremes (see Figure 1): French is considered to display a hierarchical discourse structure, while Dutch arguably presents a more linear discourse organisation. English seems to prefer a combinatory style and Dutch a choppier one.
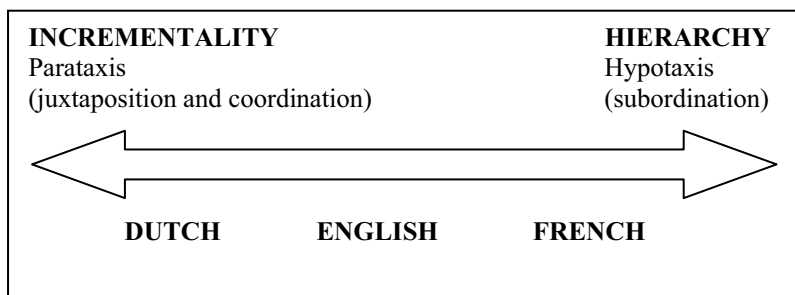

Figure 1. The dependency hypothesis (adapted from Cosme 2008)

Translational data corroborate these findings. While French translations of English texts are characterised by a high number of shifts from coordinate structures to subordinate ones, the opposite is true for English translations of French. In the translation of English into Dutch, it is also the shift from subordination to coordination that prevails.

In the present study, we therefore need to bear in mind that French often seems to resort to subordination, whereas Dutch speakers frequently seem to make use of coordinated and juxtaposed clauses, both in newspaper texts and in fiction. These patterns will be compared to the narrative data we collected.

2.2.2 From an acquisitional perspective (CIA)

Bartning & Kirchmeyer (2003) have looked at discourse organisation from an acquisitional point of view. They have contrasted the film retellings of 24 pre-advanced and advanced Swedish learners of French with similar data obtained from Swedish and French native speakers in order to study the level of textual competence achieved by the learners. They examined, among other things, syntactic complexity, which was evaluated by three closely related features: (i) the degree of packaging, (ii) the degree of integration and (iii) the degree of ellipsis. With respect to the degree of packaging, the data show that intermediate and lower-advanced level learners use more simple sentences (consisting of only one clause) than native speakers do and that they seldom combine more than two clauses into one sentence. This results in a more linear account of the events

reported. As for the degree of integration, it seems that learners use fewer non-finite subordinate clauses (i.e. infinitival and participial clauses, which are highly integrated structures) than native speakers. Finally, the use of elliptical relations, which presuppose referential continuity and imply that one or more elements are not explicitly mentioned, is rather rare in the learner data.

When compared to data on (post-)basic and (very) advanced levels, these results reveal an acquisitional path which corresponds to gradually increasing complexity in the construction of sentences, as shown in Figure 2.
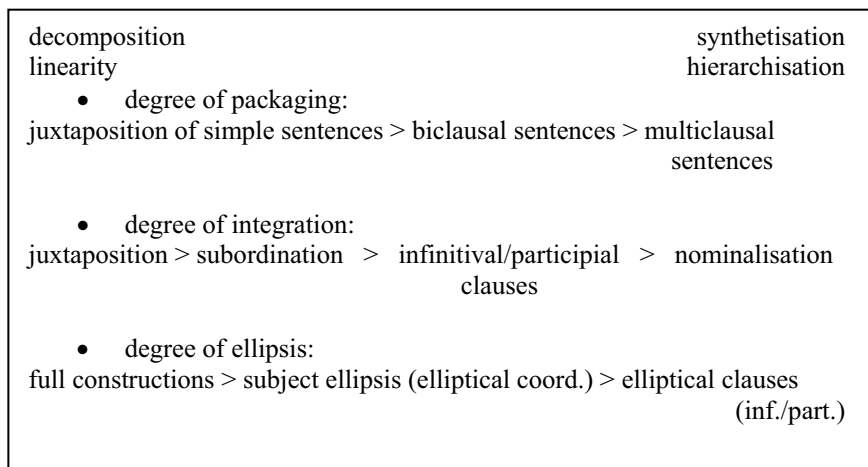
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decomposition   synthetisation
linearity   hierarchisation

- degree of packaging:

juxtaposition of simple sentences > biclausal sentences > multiclausal
                                                                      sentences

- degree of integration:

juxtaposition > subordination > infinitival/participial > nominalisation
                                              clauses

- degree of ellipsis:

full constructions > subject ellipsis (elliptical coord.) > elliptical clauses
                                                                      (inf./part.)

Figure 2. Continuum representing the increasing syntactic complexity of
sentences[4] (from Bartning & Kirchmeyer 2003: 19)

According to Bartning & Kirchmeyer (2003: 19-20), the development towards the use of more complex, more integrated and more elliptical structures is accompanied by an increasing ability of the learners to plan their discourse, to organise information hierarchically and to think in a more abstract way in a foreign language. Thus, the use of syntactically more complex structures means that the tasks of planning, organising and abstracting become increasingly important, and represent a considerable cognitive burden for the learner. This probably explains why the use of very integrated and complex structures only occurs at more advanced stages, since less proficient learners are already dealing with morpho-syntactic and lexical difficulties of other kinds. These take up much of their cognitive effort on the one hand, and on the other hand, may inhibit the use of complex constructions because the learner has not mastered the necessary tools.

Other studies in second language acquisition (SLA) (Chini 2003, Lambert et al. 2003) have mainly concentrated on the presence and the role of subordinate clauses in learner language. None of them, however, include Dutch. Lambert et al. (2003: 49) deal with very advanced French- and German-speaking learners of English, whose film retellings are compared to those of native speakers of

English, French and German. Table 1 shows that the proportion of subordinate clauses differs in the native speakers' texts: whereas subordinate clauses account for 19.1% of all clauses in the English language corpus, they only make up 11.2% of the German corpus, but represent 37% of the French corpus. The results for French and English confirm the descriptions of these languages in the previous section. German-speaking learners of English use even fewer subordinate clauses in English than in their native language (9.4%). French-speaking learners of English also reduce their use of hypotactic structures below that of their native language, although they still use them considerably more than the native speakers of English (30.9%).

Table 1. Proportion of subordinate clauses (adapted from Lambert et al. 2003: 50)

	English	**German**	**French**	**Ger. L1/ Eng. L2**	**Fr. L1/ Eng. L2**
Subordinate clauses/total clauses	742/3,886	366/2,740	850/2,297	274/2,908	617/1,997
% subordination	19.1%	11.2%	37.0%	9.4%	30.9%

Lambert et al. (2003) also observed that the less advanced learners who participated in their research stuck closely to the chronology of events in the films they were describing. They created the necessary conditions for topic continuity (with the protagonist in subject position). This basic organisational mode has been observed in other studies dealing with other combinations of native languages and interlanguages, and is called the "prototypical treatment" (Watorek 1996). It appears to be a typical feature of the interlanguage system, which occurs at relatively early stages in the acquisition process. However it is still used by quite advanced learners who are confronted with a very complex verbal task, to simplify the task and manage all the cognitive and linguistic processes in on-line experiments (Lambert et al. 2003: 61).

Chini (2003) examined the frequency and functions of subordinate clauses in the interlanguage of learners who have reached varying degrees of post-basic proficiency. She points out clearly that the presence of more complex syntactic structures depends not only on the increasing complexity of the interlanguage, or the characteristics of the mother tongue and/or target language, but also on the personal stylistic preferences of the subjects and the rhetorical effects they are pursuing.

The data in Chini's (2003) study are film retellings of the silent movie *Modern Times*[5] starring Charlie Chaplin, produced by eighteen German learners of Italian, thirteen native speakers of Italian and ten native speakers of German. The learners were divided into four groups according to their proficiency level, ranging from post-basic to advanced. First, the narratives produced by eight learners from across the groups were compared to the native-speaker data in

terms of the proportion of subordinate clauses in general, and of complement clauses, relative clauses, pseudo-relative clauses (a category typical of Italian which we will not consider) and adverbial clauses in particular. As Table 2 shows, the percentage of subordinate clauses (as opposed to the total number of clauses) is somewhat smaller in the learner data: 27.4%, compared to 33.3% in Italian and 32.4% in German.[6] In addition, the learners use fewer non-finite subordinate clauses than the native speakers of Italian, which coincides with the results reported by Bartning & Kirchmeyer (2003). Chini (2003) does not provide the data for German in this respect.

Table 2. Proportion of subordinate and non-finite clauses in Chini (adapted from Chini 2003: 81, 83)

	German	**Italian**	**Ger. L1/ Italian L2**
Subordinate clauses/total clauses	116/358	544/1,631	234/864
% subordination	32.4%	33.3%	27%
Number of infinitival clauses	-	109	40
Number of gerund clauses	-	25	3
Number of participial clauses	-	4	0
Total non-finite clauses	-	138	43
% non-finite clauses (total subordinate clauses)	-	25% (138/544)	18.4% 43/234

Finally it is worth pointing out that Chini draws a parallel between the use of paratactic structures and that of over-explicit referential expressions, and suggests that these choices are linked to more local planning and elaboration strategies. These in turn lead to an element-by-element treatment, and the connections between the clauses and sentences are mainly implicit.

3.   Research hypotheses and methodology

The following global hypothesis was formulated in accord with the contrastive literature reviewed in Section 2:

> MAIN HYPOTHESIS:
> Dutch-speaking learners of French and French-speaking learners of Dutch encounter difficulties when writing narratives in their second language because they have to apply, respectively, a more hierarchic or vertical discourse organisation, and a more incremental or horizontal discourse organisation in their L2 than they are accustomed to in their L1.

In order to test this hypothesis and pinpoint specific problems, several sub-hypotheses and research questions were formulated. These concern the degree of

packaging, the degree of dependency and the degree of integration. They are related to the global hypothesis as shown in Figure 3.
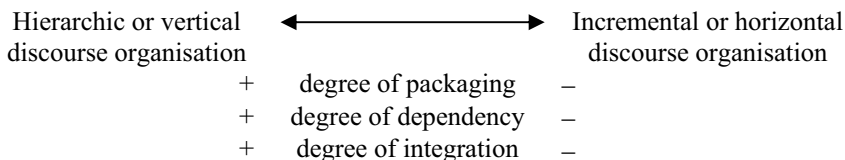
Hierarchic or vertical discourse organisation	← →	Incremental or horizontal discourse organisation
+	degree of packaging	–
+	degree of dependency	–
+	degree of integration	–

Figure 3. Relationships between the type of discourse organisation and the degree of packaging, dependency and integration.

3.1 The degree of packaging

Bartning & Kirchmeyer (2003) introduced the idea of degree of packaging ("degré d'empaquetage"). It will be examined by taking account of:

- o the average number of clauses per sentence; and
- o the proportions of mono-, bi- and multi-clausal sentences.

With this objective in mind, a fairly traditional approach was adopted (see, among others, Riegel et al. 1994: 472). This consists of defining a sentence on the basis of graphic features (i.e. a capital letter at the beginning and a full stop or question/exclamation mark at the end) and a clause on the basis of the presence of (at least) a subject (which can, of course, remain implicit)[7] and a predicate. Sentences were classified as simple (consisting of one clause), complex (bi-clausal) or multiple (consisting of more than two clauses). Various combinations are possible within any one sentence. The following example illustrates this approach:

(1) (i) Là il fait un festin de roi et (iii) se présentant à la caisse, (ii) appelle l'agent de quartier lui-même (iv) en l'accostant par un signe de la main. (FR L1)
'(i) There he dines in royal style and, (iii) presenting himself at the cash desk, (ii) he himself calls the local policeman (iv) by signalling to him with his hand.'

This is a multiple sentence, which contains an independent clause (i), coordinated to (ii) a main clause, which is in turn preceded by (iii) a participial clause and followed by (iv) another participial clause (constructed around a gerund).
The following sub-hypothesis was formulated with respect to the degree of packaging:

SUB-HYPOTHESIS 1:
French is expected to exhibit a higher degree of packaging than Dutch, as shown by:

      o   a higher average number of clauses per sentence; and
      o   a higher proportion of multiple sentences.

Accordingly, the following research question was posed:

> INTERLANGUAGE RESEARCH QUESTION 1:
> Do the learner data present a similar degree of packaging, do they present a degree of packaging similar to that of the learners' L1 or have the packaging characteristics of the L2 already been acquired at the (lower) advanced stage?

3.2   The degree of dependency

The degree of dependency was evaluated by examining the frequency of parataxis (juxtaposition and coordination) and hypotaxis (subordination and secondary predication). According to Lehmann (1988), hypotaxis, which traditionally covers all kinds of subordinate clauses, is the result of a process he calls "hierarchical downgrading". The following sub-hypothesis on dependency will be tested:

> SUB-HYPOTHESIS 2:
> French native speakers use hypotaxis more frequently than Dutch ones, who prefer parataxis. French narratives written in French therefore present a higher degree of dependency than narratives written in Dutch.

With respect to the interlanguage of the two learner groups, the present study sets out to answer the following question:

> INTERLANGUAGE RESEARCH QUESTION 2:
> Do the narratives of language learners show a preference for parataxis in general, do they manifest the same tendencies as narratives written in the learners' L1, or have the characteristics of the target language already been acquired?

3.3   The degree of integration

While the degree of dependency is certainly a very important feature of the distinction between more hierarchic and more incremental styles of discourse organisation (see Section 2.2), it is not all-revealing. It is possible to distinguish even further between more and less integrated structures in subordinate clauses (Bartning & Kirchmeyer 2003), taking the description of discourse organisational preferences to a further level.

      According to Lehmann (1988: 204), a subordinate clause may be desententialised, "turning it into a simple constituent of the main clause". At the end of this process we find non-finite verb forms and verbal nouns. Thus, example (2a) below presents a more integrated structure than (2b):

(2a) Il prétend *qu'il a volé le pain*.
      'He claims *that he stole the bread.*'
(2b) Il prétend *avoir volé le pain*.
      'He claims *to have stolen the bread.*'

The frequency of finite and non-finite subordinate clauses was examined in the various data-sets. Furthermore, in order to get a more complete picture of the integration process, a distinction was made between non-finite subordinate clauses containing an infinitive, a past or present participle, and a gerund.[8] In this, we departed from the rough distinction made by Bartning & Kirchmeyer (2003) between finite and infinitival/participial clauses in terms of different levels of integration. We felt that there was a need for a more fine-grained distinction, to distinguish for instance between (2b) and (2c-d) below:

(2c) Buitengekomen uit het restaurant belt de agent naar het commissariaat zodat ze een wagen kunnen sturen om Charlie weg te voeren. (NL L1)
      'Having left the restaurant, the policeman calls the police station so that they can send a car to take Charlie away.'
(2d) Laissant vides chacun des plats sur la table, il se dirige vers la sortie où le récupère le gendarme. (FR L1)
      'Leaving every one of the dishes on the table empty, he goes to the exit where the policeman catches him again.'

The participial clauses in (2c) and (2d) do not behave like truly dependent clauses, in the way the finite and the infinitival clauses in (2a) and (2b) do. They resemble more closely detached secondary predications.[9]
     The distinction between truly dependent clauses and detached secondary predication in the form of participial clauses is accounted for by Lehmann (1988). According to his clause linking model (ibid. 185), the participial construction in (2c) and (2d) is "part of the main clause and insofar embedded in it. However, its syntactic function […] is a blend, as it were, of an apposition and an adverbial, and thus not subject to government". On the continuum of "hierarchical downgrading" (see Figure 4) put forward by Lehmann (1988: 189) the kind of participle used in (2c) and (2d), which he calls a "conjunct participle", is considered to be less embedded than governed clauses (e.g. the finite clause in [2a] and the infinitival clause in [2b]), but more embedded than independent and adjoined clauses (i.e. paratactic structures).
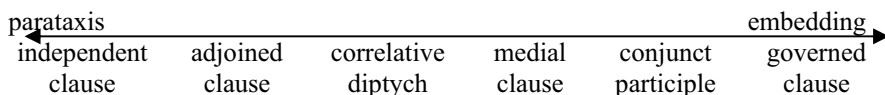
parataxis					embedding
independent clause	adjoined clause	correlative diptych	medial clause	conjunct participle	governed clause

Figure 4. Hierarchical downgrading (Lehmann 1988: 189)

     Overall, we distinguished between parataxis (which includes coordination and juxtaposition) and hypotaxis (which covers subordination – with finite or

non-finite verbs – and secondary predication of a participial kind) in order to give as complete a survey of the degree of dependency and integration as possible.[10] Figure 5 summarises the various distinctions that we took into account. It also shows that, although dependency and integration are closely related, they are not synonymous.

Dependency level			
PARATAXIS		HYPOTAXIS	
Juxtaposition	Coordination	Secondary predication	Subordination
		Integration level	
		Secondary predication (i.e. participial clauses)	Finite subordinate clauses	Non-finite subordinate clauses (i.e. infinitives)

Figure 5. Distinction between dependency and integration

Our sub-hypothesis with respect to the degree of integration, then, is the following:

SUB-HYPOTHESIS 3:
French is characterised by a higher degree of integration than Dutch. This means that the French data are expected to contain a higher proportion of more integrated kinds of structures than the Dutch:
non-finite subordinate clauses (infinitives and gerunds) > finite subordinate clauses > secondary predication (participial clauses) > coordination > juxtaposition

The following question will be addressed in the learner data:

INTERLANGUAGE RESEARCH QUESTION 3:
Do the narratives of the two learner groups resemble each other with respect to the degree of integration they show, do they have a similar degree of integration to that of the learners' mother tongue, or do they resemble more closely the usual patterns in the language being learned?

Overall, by comparing the degree of packaging, dependency and integration in the Dutch and French interlanguages, we hope to be able to shed some light on the question of whether linear and local treatment are indeed typical features of the interlanguage system, even at a rather advanced stage.

Finally, we also took a closer look at the variety of subordinate clauses that native speakers and learners use.

4. The data: subjects and task

We analysed the narratives written by 19 Dutch-speaking learners of French and 19 French-speaking learners of Dutch (all Belgians living in Brussels or in the Walloon region of Belgium). These were compared to the writings of 19 native speakers of Dutch and 19 native speakers of French (also all Belgians).

The first group (FR L2) consisted of Dutch-speaking students enrolled in the first year of "Language and literature: French + a second language" at Ghent University (GU). These students thought the task to be a preliminary test designed to evaluate their linguistic abilities at the beginning of the academic year. All of them had taken French for eight years.[11] The second group (NL L2, where NL refers to *Nederlands*, the Dutch word for "Dutch") was composed of ten French-speaking students enrolled in the second year of "Language and literature: Dutch + a second language" at the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) and of nine French-speaking students enrolled in the third year of the school for interpreters at Mons. All of these learners also undertook the task as part of their writing class.

The native speakers of Dutch (NL L1) were all students enrolled in the Arts and Humanities faculty at Ghent University and fourteen of them had a "language profile".[12] They volunteered for the task, in return for a small fee. The last group (FR L1) consisted of French-speaking students studying Romance languages at the Free University of Belgium (ULB), who completed the task as part of a writing class.[13]

Since our aim was to compare groups of learners who had reached a fairly advanced stage (based on Bartning 1997 and Bartning & Krichmeyer 2003), we decided to work with French-speaking learners who were in the second and third year of university (rather than the first year, like their Dutch-speaking counterparts), because they had not received the same amount of instruction in Dutch as the Dutch-speaking learners had in French in primary and secondary school (see note 11). For the same reason, this group performed the task near the end of the academic year. Given that the learners had more or less the same level of proficiency, we decided not to perform any within-group analyses, although there was obviously a certain degree of individual variability.[14]

All the students undertook the same task. They were asked to describe in writing, as accurately as possible, the plot of the *Alone and Hungry* sequence (12 minutes) of the film *Modern Times* (cf. Lambert 1997, Chini 2003). They were allowed to take notes while viewing the film, but were not allowed to make a draft of their narrative first. They were given a maximum of one hour for this rather complex task.[15]

5.   Corpus findings

5.1   Some preliminary observations

Before we comment on the way information is organised in the four corpora, it must be pointed out that the learners' narratives differ considerably from the native speakers' in terms of length, as Table 3 brings out. These differences possibly point to the greater cognitive effort the learners had to make, in comparison with the native speakers, and, consequently, to the fact that they needed more time to activate their procedural knowledge.

Table 3. Average length of the narratives

	FR L1	FR L2	NL L1	NL L2
Total no. of words per corpus	5,669	3,394	5,965	2,864
Average no. of words per narrative	298.37	178.63	313.95	203.37
Average no. of sentences per narrative	18	13	20	16
Average no. of clauses per narrative	44	29	45	34

The complexity of the task and its greater cognitive demands are also related to the fact that five different characters appear in the extract, sometimes simultaneously. Charlie Chaplin is the main protagonist, and the girl he wants to help plays a major role at the beginning of the sequence. The policeman is present during more or less the entire story, whereas the baker and the witness are less important characters, only appearing at the beginning. Do the learners and the native speakers refer to all these characters in the same proportions? Charlie is clearly the protagonist in all four corpora, but he gets some competition from the girl in the FR L2 corpus. These learners focused on the girl at the beginning of their narratives and related in detail what happens to her.[16] However, they seem to be unable to maintain the same level of detail afterwards and so give a more condensed account of the adventures of Charlie and the policeman. This suggests some planning difficulties and problems with time management. The learners of the NL L2 corpus seem to experience fewer cognitive (planning) problems.[17]

5.2   Discourse organisation

5.2.1   The degree of packaging

As Cosme (2008) points out, sentence length can be seen as a first indication of syntactic complexity (see also Hannay & Mackenzie 1996: 44). It appears from Table 4 that the native-speaker Dutch sentences (NL L1) contain, on average, only slightly fewer words than the native-speaker French sentences (FR L1). Moreover the sentences in the learner corpora are only slightly shorter than those in the source and target languages. The shortest sentences were produced by the NL L2 group. The average number of clauses per sentence is nearly the same in

the different corpora, although the NL L2 is again the smallest. A very small overall difference can be observed between French and Dutch, which could perhaps be seen as a first tentative indication of the greater syntactic complexity of French. Both interlanguages closely resemble their target languages in the number of clauses.

Table 4. Average number of words and clauses per sentence

	FR L1	**FR L2**	**NL L1**	**NL L2**
Average no. of words	16.62	14.26	15.62	12.46
Average no. of clauses	2.6	2.5	2.3	2.2

Figure 6 shows the average number of simple (mono-clausal), complex (bi-clausal) and multiple (multi-clausal) sentences. This gives a better idea of the actual distribution of clauses over sentences.
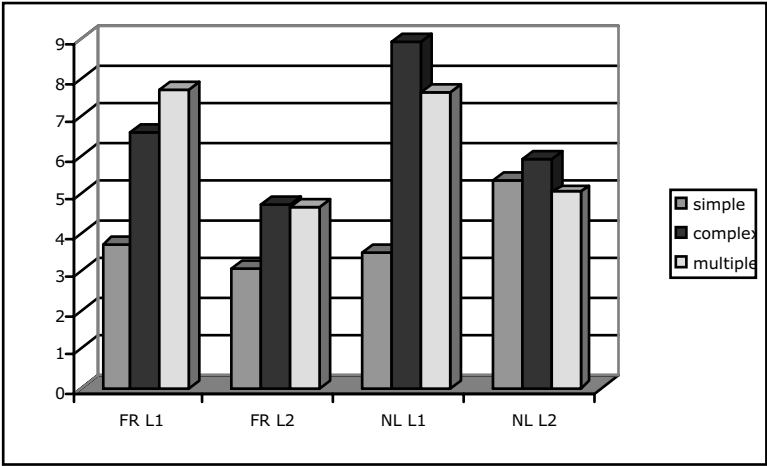

Figure 6. Average number of simple, complex and
multiple sentences per narrative

Native speakers
The average number of simple and multiple sentences is equal in the two sets of native speaker data, although they differ in the number of complex sentences, which are used more often by the Dutch native speakers. Hence, the distribution of the clauses does not seem to provide any support for the hypothesis that Dutch has a choppier style (see Vanderauwera 1985) and French a more complex sentence structure.

Learners

The learners' narratives are, on average, shorter and contain fewer sentences than the native speakers', and this is reflected in the frequency of sentence types. Proportionally speaking, the gap between simple sentences on the one hand and complex and multiple sentences on the other appears to be smaller in the learner corpora. The FR L2 corpus contains as many complex as multiple sentences and the fewest simple sentences of all the corpora. The NL L2 corpus resembles the target language corpus (NL L1) with respect to the tendency to use complex sentences. Furthermore, the NL L2 corpus arguably presents the most horizontal or linear discourse organisation in terms of the construction-types examined, since it contains as many simple sentences as multiple sentences, and more simple sentences than the other data sets, and since the most frequently used type of sentence is a complex one.

Summary

We found only minor differences at the level of packaging: French texts display a slightly higher degree of packaging than Dutch ones, but the difference between the two data sets is certainly not as pronounced as that found by other researchers. Sub-hypothesis 1 is therefore not confirmed by the data.

The learner corpora do not point to any clear features that are characteristic of a "general" interlanguage system. Although they contain, on average, approximately the same proportion of clauses as the native speaker corpora (see Table 4), they do seem to have a slightly less complex discourse organisation in terms of the average number of words per sentence and the proportion of simple sentences (and, for the NL L2 group, the proportion of complex sentences).

5.2.2   The degree of dependency

In order to gain a better understanding of the internal sentence organisation, we need to examine the different types of clause-linking, i.e. parataxis (juxtaposition and coordination) vs. hypotaxis (subordination and secondary predication). Before we discuss the results for this feature, however, it is necessary to point out that the quantification of types of clause-linking is not a straightforward matter, at least in multiple sentences. In complex sentences, two clauses can be combined through juxtaposition, coordination or subordination. In multiple sentences, one clause can, for instance, be subordinated to another clause, while simultaneously being coordinated to a second subordinate clause. An example is given in (3), where the subordinating and the coordinating conjunctions have been italicised:

(3)   Puis, une dame a raconté au policier qu'il avait fait erreur et un peu plus tard Charles et la fille se sont rencontré dans la camionnette ... *parce que* entretemps le bonhomme avait déjà fumé une cigare *et* mangé deux plats du jour sans rien payer. (FR L2)

   'Then, a lady has told the policeman that he had made a mistake and a bit later Charles and the girl met in the van… *because* in the meantime the

young chap had already smoked a cigar *and* eaten two meals without paying for anything.

Such cases of "double linking" were taken into account in our analysis, and so two types of linking were quantified. The results are shown in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5. Types of linking in complex sentences

	FR L1	**FR L2**	**NL L1**	**NL L2**
Parataxis				
- juxtaposition	13%	11%	2%	2%
- coordination	44%	38%	50%	44%
total	**57%**	**49%**	**52%**	**46%**
Hypotaxis				
- subordination	38%	51%	48%	54%
- sec. predication	5%	0%	0%	0%
total	**43%**	**51%**	**48%**	**54%**

Table 6. Types of linking in multiple sentences

	FR L1	**FR L2**	**NL L1**	**NL L2**
Parataxis				
- juxtaposition	21%	21%	12%	13.7%
- coordination	35%	40%	48%	47%
total	**56%**	**61%**	**60%**	**60.7%**
Hypotaxis				
- subordination	36%	39%	39%	39%
- sec. predication	8%	0%	1%	0.3%
total	**44%**	**39%**	**40%**	**39.3%**

Native speakers
In the French native speaker corpus (FR L1), coordination is the prevalent type of linking in complex sentences, while subordination is by one percent the most frequent linking type in multiple clauses. Juxtaposition is the least common type of paratactic linking in both kinds of sentences, but it plays a more important role in multiple sentences. The proportions of parataxis and hypotaxis are similar in complex and multiple sentences.

In the Dutch native speaker corpus (NL L1), coordination is the most common type of linking in both complex and multiple sentences. However, in complex sentences it is very closely followed in popularity by the use of subordination. Juxtaposition is very seldom used in complex sentences, but it plays a larger role in multiple sentences. Overall we can conclude that, for complex sentences, the findings do not really correspond to the picture that has been given of Dutch in earlier studies (which do not distinguish complex and multiple sentences): hypotaxis is well represented, and indeed is even more

frequent than in the FR L1 corpus. In multiple sentences, however, the results seem to conform better to the traditional picture: there is a gap of 20% between the use of parataxis (juxtaposition 12% and coordination 48%) on the one hand, and hypotaxis on the other (subordination 39% and secondary predication 1%), whereas this gap is only 12% in the FR L1 corpus. Within the paratactic organisation, coordination plays the leading part in the NL L1 corpus.[18]

Overall, we cannot conclude that French is characterised by much more subordinate linking than Dutch, or Dutch by much more juxtaposition. Our data do not really support sub-hypothesis 2. The most important difference is in secondary predication, which reaches 5% in complex sentences and 8% in multiple sentences in the FR L1 corpus (see examples [4a] and [4b] below), whereas in the NL L1 corpus, there were no examples of secondary predication in complex sentences and very few in multiple sentences (see example [4c]).

(4a)   Voyant le désarroi de la jeune fille, Charlie Chaplin se dénonce à sa place pour le vol et se fait donc arrêter par les agents de police. (FR L1)
'Seeing the young girl's desperation, Charlie Chaplin turns himself in for the theft in her place, and gets himself arrested by the policemen.'

(4b)   C'est alors que monsieur Chaplin, touché sans doute par la jolie frimousse et la mauvaise position de la jeune fille, s'accuse du vol. (FR L1)
'It was then that Mr Chaplin, touched, without a doubt, by the pretty face of the girl and the awkward position she was in, said that he was guilty of the theft.'

(4c)   Charlie Chaplin, overtuigd van het feit dat hij die vrouw wil helpen, stapt een cafetaria binnen, vult twee schotels eten en eet dit alles smakelijk op. (NL L1)
'Charlie Chaplin, convinced that he wants to help this woman, goes into a cafeteria, fills two dishes with food and eats it all up with great pleasure.'

The specific use of present participial clauses in the FR L1 corpus (see example [4a]) cannot be seen entirely separately from an apparent difference between French and Dutch, which will be further commented on in Sections 5.2.3 and 5.3 below. In principle, the present participle can function as a predicate in Dutch, as illustrated by the following examples taken from the *E-ANS* (Coppen et al. 2004: "Het tegenwoordig deelwoord", 2.4.5):

(5)   Hij komt *lopend*.
'He comes *walking* (= He comes on foot).'

(6)   Karel liep *lachend* weg.
'Charles walked away, *smiling*.'

No indications are given in the *E-ANS* about the frequency of this construction in modern Dutch. However, our data suggest that these forms are not often used, since there were only six occurrences of participial clauses in our data (see example [4c]), none of which contained a present participle.[19]

Learners

Let us now take a look at the interlanguages. We will first discuss the use of each type of clause-linking separately, by comparing their presence in complex and multiple sentences. Surprisingly, both learner corpora are characterised by high proportions of hypotaxis, consisting mainly of subordination. The learners' complex sentences contain even more subordination than the Dutch native-speakers'. In fact, subordination is the most common type of clause-linking used by learners in complex sentences. In multiple sentences, both learner groups use as many subordinate links as the Dutch native speakers. Subordination is no longer the preferred linking device, but it is still used almost as often as coordination in the FR L2 corpus.

Coordination is the second most common type of clause-linking used by learners in complex sentences, and the most frequent one in multiple sentences.

In complex sentences, the use of juxtaposition is very restricted in the NL L2 corpus (2%), but is more common in the FR L2 corpus (11%). Juxtaposition plays a more important role in multiple sentences in both learner corpora, but the learners of French use this linking device considerably more often than the learners of Dutch (21% in FL L2 and 14% in NL L2).

Looking at these data from a different angle, and comparing the relative weight of parataxis and hypotaxis, we observe that the pattern in complex clauses is quite different from that of native speakers. Hypotaxis is used slightly more often than parataxis, although in multiple sentences, parataxis wins out over hypotaxis. But since subordination reaches 39% even in multiple sentences, it cannot be claimed that the interlanguage of our (pre-)advanced learners shows signs of "prototypical treatment", i.e. of a more simplified, chronological and incremental organisation.

Learners vs. natives

Finally, we want to compare the data for interlanguages and native speakers. Overall, both interlanguages resemble their target languages more closely than their source languages. The most striking observation concerns the percentage of juxtaposed links in the FR L2 corpus: there are 9% more juxtaposed clauses in this corpus than in the NL L1 corpus, and only 2% less than in the FR L1 corpus. It seems as though the learners have succeeded in the process of acquiring the structuring of their target language with regard to juxtaposition.

On the other hand, the Dutch-speaking learners of French (FR L2) do not make any use of secondary predication involving participial clauses, although this is quite characteristic of French L1 (cf. the examples in [4]). The French-speaking learners of Dutch (NL L2), however, seem to have understood the importance of coordination and subordination in their target language and often use it. These differences between the two learner groups might be explained by the nature of the properties they need to acquire: it is easier to use structures for which an analogous organisation pattern exists in the source language, than to use structures for which the equivalent in the source language seems to be rare and

perhaps slightly archaic (secondary predication involving present participial clauses in Dutch).

Summary
All things considered, subordination is relatively frequent in our Dutch corpus, but coordination is the most frequently-used linking device. The French native speakers often employ juxtaposition and secondary predication; more specifically, they combine a participial clause with a main clause.

   Overall, the learners seem to be well on their way to producing the characteristics of their respective target languages, but the Dutch-speaking learners still need to grasp the particular properties of the French hypotactic pattern. Surprisingly, both learner groups use at least as many subordinating links as the native speakers. This finding, however, would need support from a more qualitative analysis (see Section 5.3 below). Future research should also check whether there is a connection between this and the overuse of causal subordinate clauses documented by Carroll & Lambert (2003), Chini (2003) and Kirchmeyer (2003).

5.2.3   The degree of integration

Even though our French and Dutch data do not differ greatly with respect to the degree of packaging (Section 5.2.1), they might well differ with respect to the degree of integration.

   As was stated in Section 3.3, not all hypotactic structures that are characterised by a dependency relation present the same degree of integration: secondary predication is less well-integrated with the main predication than finite or infinitival subordinate clauses. With respect to the latter two types of subordinate clauses, it has been shown (Lehmann 1988, Bartning & Kirchmeyer 2003) that infinitival clauses manifest a higher degree of integration than finite subordinate clauses. The degree of integration of hypotactic structures will therefore be evaluated by distinguishing between finite subordinate clauses, infinitival subordinate clauses, participials and gerunds. Following Wilmet (1997: 530-531), we do not consider gerunds as part of secondary predication. It should be noted that Dutch does not really possess gerunds, but the use of the present participle preceded by the word *al* can be compared to the French "gérondif":

(7)   *(Al) zwemmend* bereikte hij de overkant.
      En nageant, il est arrivé à l'autre côté.
      'Ø *Swimming* he reached the other side.'

No examples of this form were found in either the NL L1 or the NL L2 corpora.
   Table 7 shows how finite and non-finite subordinate clauses were represented in the corpora.

Table 7. Hypotaxis and integration

Degree of integration	FR L1	FR L2	NL L1	NL L2
sec. predication (participial clauses)	19%	0%	2%	0.5%
finite sub. clauses	48%	71%	78%	73.5%
non-finite sub. clauses				
infinitives	29%	23%	20%	26%
gerunds	4%	6%	0%	0%
sub-total	33%	29%	20%	26%

Native speakers
The use of non-finite subordinate clauses was clearly more widespread among the French (33%) than the Dutch (20%) speakers, which seems to support sub-hypothesis 3. A substantial number of the FR L1 subordinate clauses are secondary predication participial clauses (see Table 7), which actually indicates a lower degree of integration. The non-finite clauses in the NL L1 corpus are mainly infinitival clauses. In the FR L1 corpus, the percentage of infinitival clauses is 9% higher than in the NL L1 corpus. This finding is again consistent with the idea that French has a more integrated discourse organisation than Dutch.

Learners
Both learner groups used more non-finite subordinate clauses than the Dutch native speakers. The French-speaking learners of Dutch (NL L2) seem to have acquired the use of integrated structures in their target language, since their non-finite clauses were, with one exception, all infinitival clauses, as was the case for the target language corpus.

Unlike the French native speakers (FR L1), the FR L2 group does not use participial clauses. The following examples illustrate that differences between the normal discourse organisation of Dutch and French have an impact on the interlanguage of the Dutch-speaking learners of French (FR L2). Example (8) shows how these learners prefer to use their native-language devices, while example (9) illustrates the French strategy:

(8) La dame qui a vu la jeune fille voler du pain informe le boulanger qui alerte la police. (FR L2)
'The lady who saw the young girl steal a loaf of bread informs the baker, who alerts the police.'

(9) Le boulanger, averti entre-temps par un témoin à l'œil vigilant, se précipite à la suite de la voleuse infortunée et la rejoint sans effort. (FR L1)
'The baker, alerted in the meantime by a vigilant eye-witness, hurries to pursue the unfortunate thief and catches up with her easily.'

Summary
In addition to the use of subordinate clauses – which can be seen as a first indication of a more integrated discourse organisation – the frequency of finite and non-finite clauses has been suggested as a criterion for measuring the level of integration. At first sight the French native speakers' narratives do seem to be characterised by a higher level of integration, because the percentage of non-finite clauses is clearly higher in the FR L1 corpus than in the other data sets (cf. Table 7: 33%). On the other hand, 19% of the subordinate clauses are detached participial clauses which function as secondary predications. They are, as such, even less integrated than the finite subordinate clauses. Given the contradictory evidence of the high percentage of extremely integrated structures in the FR L1 corpus (33%), and the frequent use of the least integrated dependent clauses (namely secondary predication, which is rare in NL L1 corpus), there is no clear answer with regard to our third sub-hypothesis.

5.3   Zooming in on subordinate clauses

Table 8 shows the types of subordinate clause used in the four corpora.

Table 8. Types of subordinate clause

	FR L1	FR L2	NL L1	NL L2
Complement	16%	26%	25%	35%
Adverbial	31%	32%	35%	35%
Relative	30%	37%	38%	29%
Gerund	4%	6%	0%	0%
Participial	19%	0%	2%	1%

Native speakers
The Dutch native speaker corpus contains 8% more relative clauses than the French native speaker corpus (38% compared to 30%). A similar difference can be observed for the number of complement clauses in the two native speaker data sets: the Dutch-speaking subjects (NL L1) use 9% more complement clauses than the French-speaking subjects (FR L1). With adverbial clauses, there is only a difference of 4% between the two groups. The subordinate clauses used by the French native speakers also include 4% gerunds and 19% present participles, two structures which are essentially absent from the Dutch native speakers' writings.

Learners
The types of subordinate clauses used in the interlanguages are similar to the learners' mother tongue with respect to relative clauses, whereas the proportions of adverbial clauses resemble the target languages more closely. The FR L2 group uses almost the same proportion of complement clauses (26%) as the NL L1 group (25%). The NL L2 group uses an even higher proportion (35%) of complement clauses. Together with adverbial clauses, complement clauses are the

most frequent subordinate clauses in this learner corpus. There are almost 20% more complement clauses in the NL L2 group than in the French native speaker corpus (FR L1).

Despite their reluctance to use present participles, the learners of French (FR L2) do use gerunds – in fact they make more use of this structure than French native speakers (FR L1). This indicates that they have acquired an important form-function relation that is used by native speakers. The structure is not unknown to the learners, since their mother tongue possesses a close variant of the French gerund (*al* + present participle), but this variant is seldom used in Dutch (see Section 5.2.3). We can conclude that the French interlanguage (FR L2) looks a lot like native Dutch in terms of the use of different types of subordinate clauses. The main difference between them is the presence of gerunds in the learner corpus.

The Dutch interlanguage (NL L2) is striking for its high percentage of complement clauses, whereas the French native speaker (FR L1) corpus is marked by a small proportion of complement clauses. Lambert (1997) has pointed out that the use of complement clauses following verbs like *want, believe, hope* or *desire* can serve to make the characters' intentions, hopes and beliefs explicit, and explain the reasons for some of their actions. It could thus be that a considerable proportion of the complement clauses in the learner corpus fulfil this function, and relate to the strong presence of logical relations in the French native speaker corpus. However, an analysis of these complement clauses showed that they mostly occur with declarative verbs (*say, ask, convince*, etc) and perception verbs (*see, observe*). The same types of verbs are used in the NL L1 (Dutch native speakers) corpus.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Just how "vertical" is French and how "horizontal" is Dutch?

Our study gives a highly nuanced picture of the principles of discourse organisation in French and Dutch narratives and shows that there are no straightforward answers to the question of how vertical French is and how horizontal Dutch is. While there are no great differences between them in terms of the average number of words and clauses per sentence, and only small differences with respect to the use of simple, complex and multiple sentences, Dutch native speakers do seem to prefer more complex sentences, whereas French native speakers opt for slightly more multiple sentences than complex ones. Quite surprisingly, the two native corpora contain similar proportions of subordinate clauses. However, the French native speakers' data have a higher proportion of non-finite clauses than the Dutch data. As far as clause-linking is concerned, no clear-cut patterns appear. The Dutch data are relatively paratactic and display a fair amount of coordination. However, they also contain a large number of subordinate links, although not a lot of juxtaposition. In the French

data, coordination prevails in complex sentences, and subordination in multiple sentences. Comparatively speaking, these data also contain quite a lot of juxtaposition and secondary predication.

Overall, it is not so much the degree of packaging nor the use of subordinate clauses that distinguishes French and Dutch in this study, but the frequency of non-finite clauses and more specifically the use of secondary predication in the form of present participles separated from the main clause by a comma.

6.2   Indications of transfer and interlanguage features

The learners' narratives are considerably shorter than those of native speakers. The FR L2 learners also put more emphasis on the girl in the story than the other subjects do, but they are unable to give as much detail in the later part of their accounts as they do at the beginning. These findings suggest some difficulties at the planning level and with respect to the cognitive treatment of information, as may still be expected at a lower advanced level (see Bartning & Kirchmeyer 2003).

On average the sentences written by the learners do not contain many fewer words or clauses than those written by native speakers. Proportionally, the learner corpora display more simple sentences, but nevertheless they frequently contain complex and multiple sentences. Our data do thus not fully corroborate Bartning & Kirchmeyer's (2003) findings, where learners produced only a small number of multiple sentences, and showed a clear preference for simple sentences. The differences could be due to the different composition of the learner groups, since Bartning & Kirchmeyer's group contained not only lower advanced-level but also intermediate learners.

The overall proportion of subordinate clauses in the learner data does not differ from that in the native data. No transfer-related phenomena are observed in this respect, since there are no important differences between the two native datasets. Our French-speaking learners of Dutch thus do not display the same tendency as Lambert et al.'s (2003) French-speaking learners of English, who use many more subordinate clauses than native speakers of English (in line with the custom in their native language). Moreover, our Dutch-speaking learners of French (FR L2) juxtapose clauses more often than the native speakers of Dutch (NL L1), as do the native speakers of French (FR L1). The FR L2 learners have not yet acquired the specific organisation principle of French that consists of secondary predication through the linking of participial clauses to main clauses with a comma. However they do use gerunds. The NL L2 corpus, in turn, is characterised by a high percentage of complement clauses, as compared to both the target and (especially) the source language, a phenomenon which has yet to be explained.

It thus seems that there is no clear organisational pattern typical of interlanguage at a (lower) advanced level. No real prototypical treatment consisting of a simplification of the task for reasons to do with cognitive cost is visible in our data. In this respect, our results differ from those of Lambert et al.

(2003). The impact of target and source language in our data differs according to the feature being examined.

6.3   Some methodological implications for future research

We would like to conclude by formulating some remarks concerning the use of the integrated approach. However promising for the future, it should be pointed out that the integrated contrastive model can only function properly when all the data being compared are of a similar nature. We cannot help but wonder if the particular kind of data used in this project can be expected to present the same characteristics as the original and translated data used by Cosme (2008) and by the authors she refers to. Even though we have worked with native speakers who are probably as highly educated as the professional writers involved in the corpora used by others, and even though the majority of them have a "language profile", their writing is likely to differ from that of trained professionals. Moreover, the specific character of narrative writing sets it somewhat apart from the novels, newspaper articles or editorials and parliamentary texts that make up the corpora used by Cosme (2006, 2008) and the authors she refers to. This means that the comparison of our findings with those obtained within the CA-framework cannot be conclusive. It also shows that the preference for language-specific organisation principles should be tested over a range of different text types and genres. We therefore think that it is necessary to continue compiling representative and diversified corpora of all kinds (different source and target languages, different translated languages, different interlanguages), as well as to stimulate the methodological debate about the ways in which this should happen and about the actual contrastive analyses.

In addition, our contribution illustrates the need for a clear terminology and well-defined concepts in the study of discourse organisation in order to increase knowledge in this field. Not only has the comparison of our results with those obtained by others proved to be difficult at times, but the diverging results in other CIA-studies (for instance those on the use of subordinate clauses in German reported by Chini [2003] and Lambert et al. [2003]) are probably related to different conceptions of a particular phenomenon. The differences between Chini's (2003) findings and Lambert et al.'s (2003), for instance, are more likely to be due to a different conception of subordination than to a problem of text-type comparability, since the two studies are based on comparable oral narratives.[20]

Notes

1   The existence of learner corpora of the *International Corpus of Learner English* (ICLE) type has favoured comparisons of the interlanguage of learners who have different native languages, but who are acquiring the same foreign language. See Section 2.2.2 for examples.

2   Cosme refers to the work carried out by Vanderauwera (1985), Chuquet & Paillard (1987) and Hannay & Mackenzie (1996). See also her own study (Cosme 2006) for a comparison of French and English.

3   We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Christelle Cosme for having provided us with this manuscript.

4   The term "subordination" under the heading "degree of integration" refers to the use of finite subordinate clauses, and therefore does not include infinitival and participial clauses.

5   This movie has been used in various parts of the European Science Foundation (ESF) project (Perdue 1993) and the Structure of Learner Varieties (SLV) project (Hendriks 2005). We employed one of its episodes in our own study.

6   Remember that Lambert et al. (2003) only observed 11.2% of subordinate clauses in the narratives of their German native speakers. The difference between their findings and Chini's (2003) is puzzling.

7   We are thinking here of all kinds of zero pronouns and ellipses.

8   We use the term "gerund" to refer to the verb form called a "gérondif" in French. It is an invariable form consisting of the verb stem and the ending *–ant*, identical to the present participle except that it is preceded by the preposition *en*. When used in sentence-initial position, both the "gérondif" and the present participle have the same subject as the main verb in normative grammar. According to Riegel et al. (1994: 342), they also share the same temporal value: they express simultaneity with respect to the main verb. Syntactically speaking, the "gérondif" resembles an adverbial expression as it takes the role of an adverbial complement expressing simultaneity and sometimes also causality, condition or opposition.

9   Combettes (1998, quoted in Rossi-Gensane 2006) describes detached constructions as "une série d'expressions, différentes d'un point de vue formel (adjectifs, participes, [syntagmes] introduits par une préposition, constructions absolues), mais qui présentent des propriétés communes dont les principales sont : la liberté de position dans la phrase […], la valeur d'un prédicat secondaire qui vient s'ajouter à la prédication principale, la présence d'un référent sous-jacent auquel la construction détachée doit renvoyer" (a series of different expressions (adjectives, participles, [phrases] introduced by a preposition, absolute constructions), which share properties such as: relatively free sentence position […], secondary predication added to the main predication, the presence of an implicit referent the detached construction refers to).

10   The rare cases of detached adjectives were not taken into consideration:

> Une jeune femme, *l'air triste*, marche dans la rue, le long d'un trottoir animé. (FR L1).
>
> 'A young woman, *sad*, walks down the street, mingling in an animated crowd.'

11   In Flanders, French is a compulsory subject in the last two years of primary school and throughout secondary school. In Wallonia, Dutch is not compulsory, as pupils can choose between Dutch, English and German. Therefore, not all the learners of Dutch will necessarily have taken Dutch courses for the same length of time.

12   This means that they were studying (Romance, Germanic, Eastern-European, Eastern or African) languages.

13   We would like to thank Michel Berré and Carola Henn (Mons), Anne-Rosine Delbart (ULB) and Liesbeth Degand (UCL) for their help with the collection of the data and for welcoming us into their classrooms.

14   A closer look at the data reveals that some students showed very high frequencies of the elements studied and others very low frequencies. These neutralised each other to a considerable extent. To conduct research on the individual writing style of subjects (cf. Chini 2003), it would be necessary to also consider the learners as native speakers and compare their writings in their mother tongue to their narratives in their L2. This approach has one major drawback, however, which we judged to be possibly disruptive for our study: the subjects would have to see the movie, and perform the writing task, twice. After the second viewing they would be more familiar with the plot, which could influence their selection and planning process, and consequently the complexity of their writing.

15   The degree of complexity can be linked to the amount of detail presented by the visual stimuli and by the simultaneous involvement of many characters in the events.

16   The Dutch-speaking learners of French (FR L2) refer more frequently to the girl than do the other subjects. References to the girl constitute 34% of their references to all five characters, whereas they only make up 27% of the references in the FR L1 corpus, 26% in the NL L1 corpus and 27% in the NL L2 corpus.

17   Bearing in mind Chini's (2003) observation that an insufficient mastery of referential devices (i.e. an overuse of full NPs and an underuse of pronouns) can lead to a more local treatment of information, which in turn results in a more paratactic discourse organisation, we also conducted a preliminary study on the types of referential devices used. We can conclude from this that, although the data diverge in some specific respects, there was no major overuse of explicit referential expressions

(suggesting difficulties in the global treatment of information, see also Hendriks 2001) in the learner corpora.

18   The rather small proportion of juxtaposition suggests that Dutch is not really characterised by a choppy style.

19   The Dutch translation of example (2d), repeated below for convenience, seems a little formal and perhaps even slightly archaic. The juxtaposition of independent clauses would come across as more vivid and fast-paced in modern Dutch.

> Laissant vides chacun des plats sur la table, il se dirige vers la sortie où le récupère le gendarme. (FR L1)

> 'Leaving every one of the dishes on the table empty, he goes to the exit where the policeman catches him again.'

> 'Elke schotel leeg achterlatend op de tafel, begeeft hij zich naar de uitgang waar de politieman hem opwacht.'

20   It should be noted, however, that these data were obtained with the help of different visual stimuli.

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