

The distribution and use of present and past progressive forms in Spanish-English and Spanish-Brazilian Portuguese bilinguals

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This study examines the distribution and use of simple and progressive forms in two groups: English-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish in the U.S. ($n = 9$) and Brazilian Portuguese-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish in Brazil ($n = 15$). We hypothesized that the groups would show different crosslinguistic influence from their dominant languages in their choice of verb forms. We collected semi-spontaneous production data via oral narratives and analyzed group differences in verb form, either simple or progressive, in activity and accomplishment verbs (Vendler, 1967). The results show a main effect for group, confirming that English-Spanish bilinguals favor progressive verb forms in such contexts, while Brazilian Portuguese-Spanish bilinguals opt for simple verb forms. We discuss our findings following previous work by Jiang (2000) and Putnam & Sánchez (2013).

Keywords: heritage language, verb morphology, progressive verb form

1. Introduction

The present study examines the use and distribution of present and past tense progressive forms in Spanish as a heritage language among Spanish/English and Spanish/Brazilian Portuguese bilinguals born and raised in the US and Brazil respectively (Cuza, 2010; Cuza & López Otero, 2016; Geeslin & Fafulas, 2012; Klein, 1980; Sánchez-Muñoz, 2004). The term heritage speaker refers to second-generation immigrants or early arrivals exposed to a minority language during early age in a naturalistic context where a majority language was also spoken (Montrul, 2004; Polinsky, 2011; Valdés, 2001).

Previous work on the acquisition of past and present tense aspectual differences in Spanish has shown significant difficulties among Spanish heritage speakers

and L2 learners, especially in the acquisition past tense aspectual features (Cuza & Miller, 2015; Montrul, 2002a; 2008; Montrul & Slabakova, 2003). L2 learners and heritage speakers don't seem to fully acquire preterite vs. imperfect aspectual distinctions, and overextend the preterite form to contexts where the imperfect should be used. We add to this previous work in two crucial ways: First, we examine present and imperfect progressive forms, an area of research still underexplored (Cuza, 2010; Cuza & López Otero, 2016; Geeslin & Fafulas, 2012; Sánchez-Muñoz, 2004). In regard to the acquisition of present tense aspectual properties, previous work documents difficulties in the acquisition of the ongoing value of the present form, and overextension of the present progressive in English-speaking heritage speakers and L2 learners of Spanish (Cuza & López Otero, 2016). Second, we investigate and compare Spanish heritage speakers exposed to English as a dominant language in the US with speakers exposed to Brazilian Portuguese in Brazil, a language pair so far unexplored as far as the present progressive and past tense progressive forms are concerned.

This language pair is interesting because BP and Spanish are closely related languages and share similar morphological and lexical features. However, BP behaves similarly to English as opposed to Spanish in regard to the selectional properties of the present tense (Schmitt, 2001): the simple present selects only a habitual meaning (i.e., *O Paulo estuda espanhol*, 'Paulo studies Spanish'), while the present progressive selects ongoing readings (i.e., *O pai está assistindo o jogo*, 'The father is watching the game'). In the past, on the other hand, the imperfect progressive is the only option in English when expressing imperfective ongoing readings (i.e., *I was walking when the wolf approached me*), whereas both Spanish and BP have an imperfect simple form and an imperfect progressive form (i.e., *Juan dormía/estaba durmiendo cuando el ladrón entró*, *O João dormia/estava dormindo quando o ladrão entrou*, 'John was sleeping when the burglar broke in'). No previous research to our knowledge has examined the acquisition of Spanish aspectual values among heritage speakers of Spanish with BP as dominant language.

The study is organized as follows: Section 2 discusses the differences between the simple and progressive forms in the present and the past tenses in Spanish, English and BP. Section 3 presents our research questions and hypotheses. Section 4 describes our study and methodology. Section 5 shows the results, followed by the discussion and conclusions in Section 6.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Tense and aspect

Tense is a deictic feature that connects the time of the referred situation with another moment, usually with the moment of speaking (Comrie, 1976). It can be present, past, and future. Aspect, on the other hand, is not deictic and refers to the different ways to see the internal constituency of a situation (Comrie, 1976). Tense and aspect refer to time, but tense involves an external relation in time, whereas aspect informs about the internal temporal structure of the situation.

Lexical aspect has been defined as the aspectual information provided by the lexical properties of the verbs and their predicates (Colomé, 2013; Vendler, 1967): punctuality, telicity, and dynamicity. According to their lexical aspect, Vendler (1967) classifies verbs and their predicates into four categories: states, activities, accomplishments, and achievements. Table 1 presents the four categories in which verbs can be classified according to their semantic features: punctuality, telicity, and dynamicity:

Table 1. Lexical aspect and semantic features (Vendler, 1967)

Features	States	Activities	Accomplishments	Achievements
Punctuality	–	–	–	+
Telicity	–	–	+	+
Dynamicity	–	+	+	+

2.2 Semantic constraints in the selection of the Spanish present tense

The Spanish present tense allows for a wide spectrum of aspectual values that may precede or follow the speech act (Alarcos Llorach, 1994; Yllera Fernández, 1999). The Spanish simple present can adopt a habitual meaning, an ongoing meaning, and a historical present interpretation, among others. The Spanish present progressive, on the other hand, can have an ongoing meaning and allows for a temporary-habitual meaning (Schmitt, 2001; Yllera Fernández, 1999).

In contrast with Spanish, the simple present in both English and BP do not allow an ongoing interpretation, as only the present progressive has an ongoing reading (i.e., *Julia is playing*/**plays now*; *A Júlia está brincando*/**brinca agora*). However, the present progressive can have a temporary-habitual meaning in both English and BP. Table 2 summarizes the aspectual values of the simple present and the present progressive in the three languages:

Table 2. Aspectual differences in the present tense: Spanish, English, and BP

Aspectual values		Spanish	English	BP
Simple present	[+ongoing]	Julia juega ahora	*	*
	[+habitual]	Julia juega todos los días	Julia plays everyday	A Júlia brinca todos os dias
Present progressive	[+ongoing]	Julia está jugando ahora	Julia is playing now	A Júlia está brincando agora
	[+habitual]	Julia está jugando últimamente	Julia is playing lately	A Júlia está brincando ultimamente

As shown in Table 2, the present progressive can select both an ongoing and a temporary-habitual reading in all three languages. Additionally, the Spanish simple present allows for an ongoing interpretation.

2.3 Semantic constraints on the selection of the imperfect progressive in Spanish and BP

In both the Spanish and the BP past tenses, there are two different simple forms with different aspectual values: the preterit, which depicts a completed event or state, and the imperfect, which selects a habitual or ongoing interpretation. On the other hand, English only has one simple past form, which does not select for any specific aspectual reading. Furthermore, an imperfective interpretation can be reached in English by using the periphrases such as *used to* or *would* (e.g., *The neighbor used to/ would visit the grandmother every evening*). An imperfective ongoing reading can be expressed in the three languages with the use of a progressive form. In Spanish and BP, the imperfect progressive, as well as the imperfect, can select for imperfective ongoing meanings, whereas in English the only option is the past progressive, as represented below:

- (1) a. Spanish
Mi hermano estaba cantando cuando nuestra hermana llamó.
(imperfective ongoing)
- b. Brazilian Portuguese:
Meu irmão estava cantando quando a nossa irmã ligou.
- c. English:
My brother was singing when our sister phoned.

In Spanish and BP, the imperfect can select for the readings above in addition to its habitual reading:

- (2) a. Spanish
Mi hermano cantaba cuando nuestra hermana llamó.
 (imperfective ongoing)
 ‘My brother was singing when our sister arrived.’
 b. Brazilian Portuguese
Meu irmão cantava quando a nossa irmã ligou.
 ‘My brother was singing when our sister phoned.’

The Spanish and BP imperfect tense selects both habitual and ongoing imperfective readings. On the other hand, the imperfect progressive in BP and Spanish as well as the past progressive in English select for ongoing imperfective readings, although both Spanish and BP, as opposed to English, also have simple imperfect morphologies to express ongoing imperfective readings. This study focuses on the acquisition of these aspectual differences in Spanish, crucially ongoing readings. Table 3 summarizes the aspectual values in the past in Spanish, English, and BP:

Table 3. Aspectual differences in the past tense: Spanish, English, and BP

Aspectual values	Spanish	BP	English
Perfective [completed]	Ana leyó un libro	A Ana leu um livro	Ana read a book
Imperfective [habitual]	Ana siempre leía un libro	A Ana lia um livro sempre	Ana always read a book
	*	*	Ana used to/would read a book.
	[ongoing] Ana leía un libro cuando llamé.	A Ana lia um livro quando liguei.	*
	Ana estaba leyendo un libro cuando llamé.	A Ana estava lendo um livro quando liguei.	Ana was reading a book when I phoned.

As shown in Table 3, Spanish and BP have two options to express ongoing readings in the past: imperfect and imperfect progressive. English, in contrast, only has the past progressive.

3. Previous acquisition research

3.1 The Spanish present progressive

The aspectual distribution of the present progressive in Spanish as a heritage language has been previously examined in various studies (Cuza, 2010; Cuza & López Otero, 2016; Geeslin & Fafulas, 2012; Klein, 1980; Sánchez-Muñoz, 2004). Klein (1980) compares two populations of Puerto Rican immigrants living in New York City: heritage speakers and L1 Spanish late bilinguals. Using semi-spontaneous conversation and a picture description task, the author investigated the role of transfer from English into Spanish with regard to aspectual selection in the present tense and found a narrowing of the simple present towards an exclusively habitual reading and a spread of the use of the present progressive when expressing all ongoing readings. This was confirmed by the results, which show that the heritage group used the present progressive significantly more than the L1 Spanish late bilingual group when expressing ongoing readings instead of using the simple present with an ongoing value. A similar question motivated Sánchez-Muñoz's (2004) study. The author examined the role of cross-linguistic influence from English present progressive into Spanish. She implemented a picture description task and an interview among Spanish-English bilinguals living in Los Angeles. The author concluded that the bilinguals, particularly the heritage speakers, overextend the use of the Spanish present progressive in contexts where monolinguals would use the simple present with an ongoing value.

Recently, Cuza and López Otero (2016) examined the acquisition of the aspectual values of the simple present and the present progressive among Spanish heritage speakers and L2 learners. The authors implemented an elicited production task, an acceptability judgment task, and a forced preference task. The findings indicate that the experimental groups, especially the L2 learners, overextend the scope of the simple present in contexts where native speakers preferred the present progressive. The authors conclude that these findings may be the result of a simpler aspectual configuration where the less marked form, the simple present, has increased its scope at the expense of the present progressive.

Furthermore, Cuza (2010) and Geeslin and Fafulas (2012) also examined the aspectual distribution of the present progressive in Spanish and its acquisition. However, their experimental groups did not include heritage speakers. Instead, they focused on L2 learners and long-term immigrants. Cuza (2010) is the first study to investigate the acquisition of the selectional properties of the Spanish simple present in L2 speakers and Spanish long-term immigrants in New Jersey and Toronto. The author implemented a written acceptability judgment task, a truth-value judgment task and an oral narrative based on the wordless book *Frog Story* to examine

four conditions: both the simple present and the present progressive with their respective ongoing and habitual interpretations. The author followed de Swart's (1998) selectional approach to aspectual variation to account for the differences in the selectional properties of the simple present and the present progressive of the bilinguals. The results are consistent with those found among heritage speakers (Klein, 1980; Sánchez-Muñoz, 2004): that is, reduction of the selectional scope of the simple present to a habitual reading and a more categorical use of the present progressive in ongoing contexts.

More recently, Geeslin and Fafulas (2012) studied the linguistic variables that would constrain the use of the simple present or the present progressive, such as lexical aspect, animacy of the subject, and clause type, among others. They implemented a multiple-choice test and a video-narration activity to a group of L2 speakers and native speakers serving as control baseline. Both groups behaved similarly, although the use of the present progressive was more common in the L2 learners. However, in general terms, both groups produced the simple present in most of the instances. The authors argue that L2 learners can acquire the constraints that rule the use of simple present and the present progressive.

To summarize, most of previous research indicates overextension of the present progressive to express ongoing meanings as well as reduction of the semantic values of the simple present as a result of cross-linguistic influence from English. However, other studies have found that Spanish-English bilinguals produced the simple present more. The present study further examines the distribution of these forms in English-Spanish bilinguals, but also compares the production of these bilinguals with that of BP-Spanish bilinguals.

3.2 The Spanish imperfect progressive

The aspectual distribution of the imperfect progressive and the imperfect in Spanish as a heritage language remains underexplored. Most previous research has documented semi-spontaneous speech in heritage speakers of Spanish in Texas (Chaston, 1987; Lavandera, 1981; Solé, 1977). Lavandera's (1981) seminal study documents an increase in the use of the imperfect progressive in heritage speakers of Spanish. The author analyzed the speech of nine heritage speakers of Spanish in a family gathering. The results show that, besides the fact that most productions included instances of code-switching, the imperfect progressive was more frequent than the imperfect. Lavandera argues that the increase in the use of auxiliary verb forms (i.e., progressive forms) to the expense of more morphologically simple forms (i.e., the imperfect) is the result of contact with English, as auxiliaries are more frequent in English and they express tense and aspect. Furthermore, the author indicates that code-switching scenarios can trigger such morphological distribution.

Chaston (1987) examines the speech of 18 heritage Spanish-speaking college students. Specifically, the author looks at both the preterit and imperfect production and correlated their performance with their overall proficiency and sociolinguistic factors, such as usage and attitudes. The findings indicate that, contrary to previous research (Lavandera, 1981; Solé, 1977), the imperfect progressive is not gaining ground over the imperfect. However, the author notes that, in ongoing actions in the past, over half of the events are expressed with the imperfect progressive. Following Solé (1977), Chaston argues that the progressive form may be used to emphasize the ongoingness of the event. The author does not attribute this phenomenon to language contact or to cross-linguistic effects from English and calls for further investigation. On the other hand, Mrak (1998) looks at the imperfect forms in the narratives of nine heritage speakers of Spanish living in Houston, TX and finds that the third generation uses the imperfect progressive more than the first and second generations.

More recently, this phenomenon has been examined in bilingual populations. Lamanna (2008) examines the distribution of the imperfect and the imperfect progressive in ongoing contexts, where they are interchangeable. Lamanna examines written data from a corpus of U.S. Spanish and from corpora of Mexican, Cuban and Puerto Rican Spanish in order to control for potential differences in the U.S. variety. In absolute terms, the results are inconclusive, but by taking a closer look the findings indicate that ongoing and continued actions are more usually expressed with the imperfect progressive in the U.S. variety than in the monolingual corpora. Finally, the author suggests that there may be a relation between the choice of verb form and the lexical frequency.

To summarize, most previous research documents an overextension of the use of the imperfect progressive in heritage Spanish in the United States. However, Dumont and Wilson (2016) found different results. They examined the use of the imperfect and the imperfect progressive by comparing two corpora of spoken Spanish from Spanish-English bilinguals in New Mexico and monolinguals from Ecuador. The authors found out that the distribution of the imperfect forms is not changing in New Mexican Spanish to become structurally more similar to English. However, the constraints ruling the use of each form seem to be weakening in the New Mexican data more than in the monolingual variety. The present study examines the use and distribution of the Spanish imperfect progressive in English-Spanish bilinguals, but also compares their production to BP-Spanish bilinguals.

3.3 Research question and hypothesis

As mentioned earlier, the goal of the present study is to examine the use and distribution of present and imperfect progressive forms in English-speaking and BP-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish. More specifically, we are interested in examining to what extent heritage speakers of Spanish with BP and English as their dominant language use present and imperfect progressive forms, instead of simple present and imperfect forms with activity and accomplishment verbs. And if difficulties are found, whether they can be accounted for in terms of crosslinguistic influence from their dominant language. We pose the following research question:

RQ: Do heritage speakers of Spanish show crosslinguistic influence from their dominant language when facing the possibility of using two different forms that have the same semantic reading in a given context?

We hypothesize that both English-speaking and BP-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish will show crosslinguistic influence from their dominant languages when facing the possibility of using either the imperfect or the imperfect progressive with activity and accomplishment verbs. We also expect to find differences in verb form as a function of tense across the groups. Specifically, the use and distribution of the past tense forms will be different across groups due to different selectional properties of past tense forms in English and BP. On the other hand, the use and distribution of the present tense forms will be similar across groups due to the fact that the readings of the present tense forms, both simple and progressive, are similar in English and BP.

4. The experiment

4.1 Participants

Twenty-four participants took part in the study: 9 English-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish and 15 BP-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish. The participants completed a language history questionnaire about their linguistic background, their patterns of language use and their self-assessment of their skills in their languages (Cuza, 2013; Cuza & López Otero, 2016): their heritage language, Spanish, and in their dominant languages. Furthermore, the participants completed a modified version of the DELE language proficiency test for Latin American Spanish (Cuza, Pérez-Leroux & Sánchez, 2013) in order to guarantee that all participants were

similar in terms of proficiency.¹ The English-speaking participants were tested at the principal investigator's language acquisition lab, whereas the BP-speaking participants were tested in public places in São Paulo, Brazil.

The English-speaking group consisted of Spanish heritage speakers born and raised in the U.S., except for two (mean age at testing, 19 years old; age range, 18–22).² Their parents were born in Mexico, Argentina, the U.S. and Peru. Their mean score in the DELE proficiency test was 41/50. Regarding their patterns of language use, 56% (5/9) of them reported speaking 'Spanish' or 'mostly Spanish' at home, 33% (3/9) reported speaking 'equal English and Spanish' and 11% (1/9) reported speaking 'mostly English' or 'slightly more English'. Most of the participants reported using more English at school, work, and social situations, and 66% (6/9) indicated feeling comfortable in both English and Spanish; the other 33% (3/9) indicated feeling more comfortable in English. Their reported self-proficiency was almost native-like (3.7/4) in English and almost good/fluent (3.1/4) in Spanish.

The BP-speaking group consisted of Spanish heritage speakers born and raised in Brazil, except for two (mean age at testing, 32 years old; age range, 21–55). Their parents were born in Chile, Argentina, Spain, Paraguay, Bolivia and El Salvador. Their mean score in the DELE proficiency test was 45/50. Regarding their patterns of language use, 73% (11/15) reported speaking 'mostly Portuguese' or 'only Portuguese', while 20% (3/15) reported speaking 'equal Portuguese and Spanish' or 'slightly more Portuguese' and only 7% (1/15) of them reported speaking 'Spanish' or 'mostly Spanish' at home. Portuguese is also more present in other contexts: most of the participants reported using more Portuguese at school, work, and social situations, and 87% (13/15) indicated feeling more comfortable in Portuguese; the other 13% (2/15) indicated feeling comfortable in both Portuguese and Spanish. They reported having almost native-like proficiency in Portuguese (3.7/4) and almost good/fluent proficiency in Spanish (3/4).

1. This proficiency test is composed of a vocabulary task from the MLA Foreign Language Test and cloze test from the *Diploma de Español como Lengua Segunda* (DELE) test (Bruhn de Garavito, 2002; Duffield & White, 1999; Montrul & Slabakova, 2003). We implemented Cuza, Pérez-Leroux & Sánchez's (2013) modified version of the original test, which has adapted some lexical items in the vocabulary section and uses a completely different cloze section.

2. Among the English-speakers, one participant was born in Mexico and came to the USA before the age of one; another participant was born in Argentina and immigrated to the USA at the age of ten. In the BP-speaking group, one participant was born in Chile and went to Brazil at the age of two; another participant was born in Argentina and went to Brazil at the age of nine.

4.2 Methods and structures under analysis

The goal of the present study is to examine the use and distribution of present and imperfect progressive forms in English-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish and BP-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish. Specifically, we examine contexts with activity and accomplishment verbs:

i. Activity verbs:

- (5) *El lobo estaba dormiendo.*
'The wolf was sleeping.'
- (6) *Mientras el cazador pasaba cerca de la casa.*
'While the hunter was passing by the house.'

ii. Accomplishment verbs:

- (7) *Y cuando estaba agarrando flores por su abuelita, el lobo se fue.*
'And when she was picking up flowers for her grandma, the wolf left.'
- (8) *Se acercó porque le preguntaba cosas.*
'She got closer because he was asking her things.'

The verbal forms analyzed in this study were extracted from a semi-spontaneous task (oral narrative). Following previous research (Cuza, 2010; Montrul, 2002b; Montrul & Potowski, 2007), the participants were asked to narrate *The Little Red Riding Hood* in Spanish. The participants were presented with a wordless storybook of *The Little Red Riding Hood*. The book had a total of 10 pages that the participants could freely flip. Before starting the oral production, the participants were told to take a look at the wordless storybook to become familiar with the story. The participants were asked to narrate the story freely. They were not asked to produce any specific form or to narrate the story in a certain tense. This oral narrative was the first task to be implemented from a series of other tasks that examined other phenomena. The narratives were digitally recorded for later transcription and analysis. Each verb in the narratives was coded for verb form (simple, progressive), lexical aspect (state, activity, accomplishment, achievement), tense (present, past), and participant group (English-Spanish, BP-Spanish).

5. Results

The participants produced a total of 430 verbs in the forms under examination: simple present (SP), present progressive (PP), imperfect (IM), and imperfect progressive (IP). In both the present and past tenses, both groups used the simple forms more than the progressive forms. Specifically, the BP-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish showed a tendency to use the simple present and the imperfect more than the progressive forms (SP = 98.2% vs PP = 1.8%; IM = 93.5% vs IP = 6.5%). As shown in Figure 1, this tendency was stronger than in their English-speaking counterparts, who, although they also used the simple forms more, did so in a less categorical fashion (SP = 92.7% vs PP 7.3%; IM = 85.4% vs IP = 14.5%).

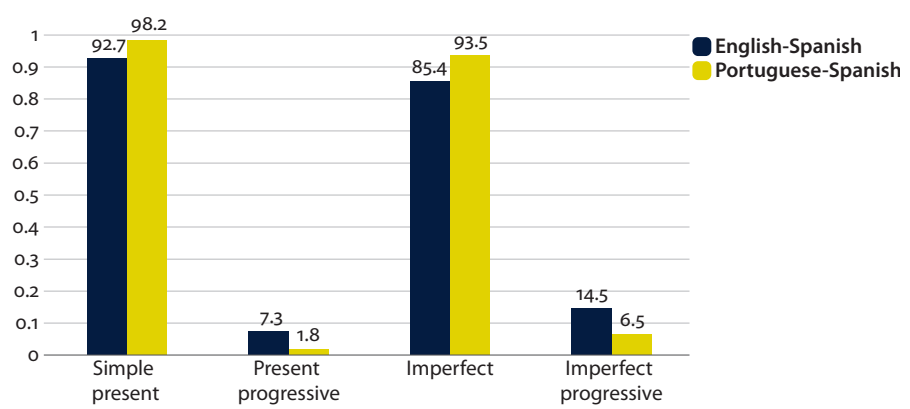


Figure 1. Overall tendency of use of verb forms under examination per group ($n = 430$)

The English-speaking group used simple forms 85.5% of the time and progressive forms in 14.5% of the instances. On the other hand, the BP speakers showed a more categorical pattern: they produced simple forms 94.7% of the time, while they only used progressive forms 5.3% of the time. However, these overall tendencies do not reflect the context in which the simple and the progressive forms are interchangeable. If we take a closer look to those contexts, the tendencies of use appear more clearly. Specifically, the contexts in which the simple and progressive forms are interchangeable are those in which their lexical aspect is either activity or accomplishment. In the narratives, there were 70 instances of activity or accomplishment verbs. Figure 2 shows the tendencies of use of the verb forms under examination when expressing activities or accomplishments.

The results for activity and accomplishment verbs showed clear tendencies in both groups. The English-speaking group produced more progressive tokens in both the present and past tenses (SP = 33% vs PP = 67%; IM = 36% vs IP = 64%),

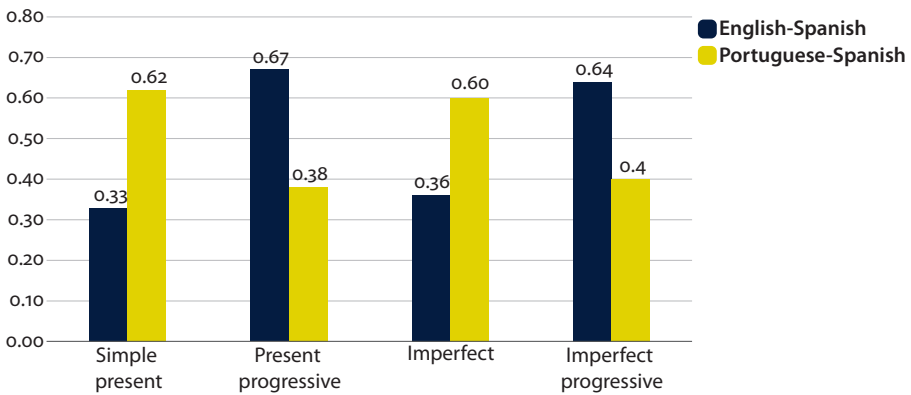


Figure 2. Tendency of use of verb forms under examination per group: Activity and accomplishment verbs ($n = 70$)

whereas the BP-speaking group produced more simple forms in both tenses (SP = 62% vs PP = 38%; IM = 60% vs IP = 40%). In addition, the data were analyzed using generalized linear models with a binomial link function in order to assess the predictability of the simple or progressive forms. For the models, participants were random intercepts, and group (English-Spanish, BP-Spanish), tense (present, past) and lexical aspect (activity, accomplishment) were fixed factors. All models included form by group interaction. The statistical significance of form, group, and the “verb form” by group interaction were assessed using hierarchical partitioning of variance via nested model comparisons.

The panel in Figure 3 plots the probability of using progressive forms, in opposition to simple forms, as a function of group: either English-speaking or BP-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish. The function represents the rate of change from one form to the other in the probability space. The results for the contrast between simple and progressive forms revealed a main effect of group ($\chi(1) = 4.08$; $p = 0.04$), but not of tense ($\chi(1) = 0.07$; $p = 0.78$) or lexical aspect ($\chi(1) = 1.32$; $p = 0.24$). Therefore, the use of simple or progressive forms was determined only by the language group of the participants, and not by the tense or the lexical aspect of the verb. The English-Spanish bilinguals showed a tendency to prefer the progressive forms, while the BP-Spanish bilinguals used more simple forms.

Overall, in the narratives the simple forms were more frequent than the progressive. However, a closer look was necessary to perceive the tendencies within groups. The results reveal that, in activity and accomplishment verbs, the two groups of heritage speakers of Spanish are significantly different: the English-speaking group has a tendency to use progressive forms, whereas the BP-speaking group uses more simple forms.

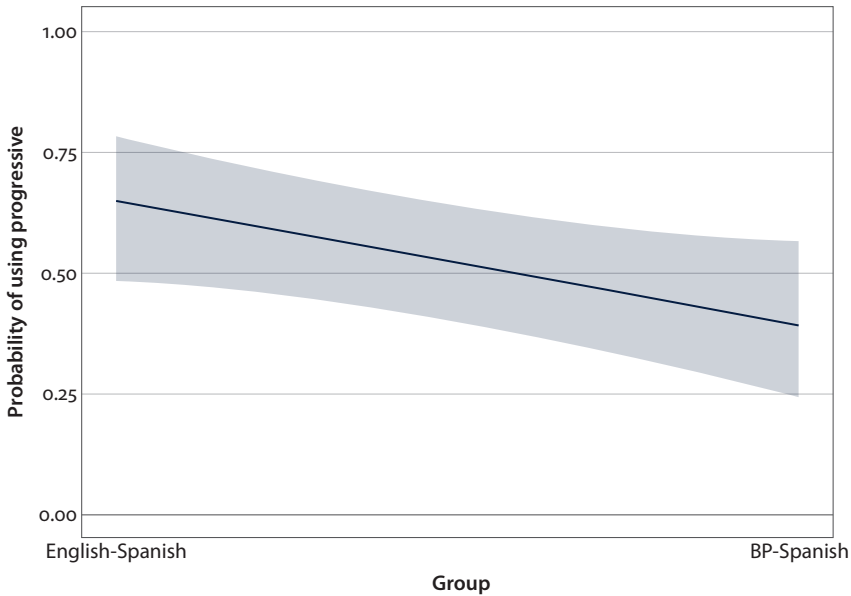


Figure 3. Probability of using progressive forms as a function of group: English-Spanish, BP-Spanish

6. Discussion and conclusions

The goal of the present study was to unveil the tendencies of use of progressive versus simple forms in two groups of Spanish heritage speakers: an English-dominant group and a BP-dominant group. For this purpose, we analyzed their oral production via a semi-spontaneous production task. We took a closer look at activity and accomplishment verbs and at the forms employed in such verbs (i.e., simple or progressive). We predicted differences between the two groups regarding the use of the present or progressive forms in activity and accomplishment verbs. Furthermore, we expected the experimental groups to behave differently due to crosslinguistic influence from their dominant languages.

As shown in the results section, the two groups display a statistically significant difference in their tendencies of use when contrasting the progressive forms with their simple counterparts in both the present and past tenses. Specifically, with activity and accomplishment verbs, the English-speaking group used progressive forms 65% of the time, whereas the BP-speaking group did so only 39% of the time. Furthermore, the overall results, which include verbs other than activity and accomplishment verbs, are also consistent with this tendency. Indeed,

the English-speaking group used progressive forms 14.5% of the time, whereas the BP-speaking group did so only 5.3% of the time. The overall tendencies of the groups lead to believe that there might be crosslinguistic effects from their dominant languages. This view is supported by the results from the analysis of the narratives in their native language. BP speakers, whose language also allows for both simple and progressive forms in ongoing activities and accomplishments, produced a similar pattern with these verbs. They produced simple forms 58% of the time, in opposition to 42% of progressive forms. Below are some examples of the production of participants from both groups:

(1) **English-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish:**

- a. *El lobo le preguntó dónde estaba yendo, qué estaba haciendo, por qué iba por el bosque sola...*
‘The wolf asked her where she was going, what she was doing, why she was going through the forest alone...’
- b. *Cuando se estaba comiendo a Caperucita, justo había un leñador que estaba pasando y escuchó los gritos.*
‘While he was eating Little Red Riding Hood, there was a lumberjack passing by and heard the screams.’
- c. *pero después un hombre afuera de la casa vio que la estaba atacando y fue y la rescató.*
‘But later a man from outside the house saw that he was attacking her and rescued her.’
- d. *Entonces, ella estaba caminando por el bosque y se encontró con un lobo.*
‘Then, she was walking through the forest and encountered a wolf.’
- e. *El lobo estaba hablando con ella y le dijo al lobo que iba a ir a casa de su abuela.*
‘The wolf was talking to her and she told the wolf that she was going to her grandma’s house.’

(2) **BP-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish:**

- a. *En el camino, encontrase un lobo, un lobo malo que preguntó a ella o que ella estaba haciendo.*
‘On the way, she encountered a wolf, an evil wolf that asked her what she was doing.’
- b. *Mientras ella tomaba flores en la floresta, el lobo fue a la casa de su abuela.*
‘While she was picking flowers in the forest, the wolf went to her grandma’s house.’
- c. *Era una vez, Caperucita Roja, que estaba paseando por la floresta...*
‘Once upon a time, Little Red Riding Hood, who was walking through the forest...’

- d. *El lobo también se traga a la nena, pero pasaba por allí un señor...*
'The wolf swallows up the girl too, but a gentleman was passing by.'
- e. *...un cazador, y se da cuenta de lo que está pasando.*
'...a hunter, and he notices what is happening.'

The results of the generalized linear models indicate that neither tense nor lexical aspect is significant in relation to the use of one form or the other, in contrast to what was expected. However, our results do confirm that English-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish use progressive forms more than their BP-speaking counterparts. This corroborates previous research documenting overextension of the present progressive in heritage speakers of Spanish with English as dominant language (Klein, 1980; Sánchez-Muñoz, 2004). Our data suggest that the English-speaking group may experience crosslinguistic effects from their dominant language. In the past tense, on the other hand, our results are consistent with those found for the present tense, as well as with those found in previous research (Chaston, 1987; Dumont & Wilson, 2016; Lamanna, 2008; Lavandera, 1981; Mrak, 1998). Progressive forms are more used by English-speakers, while BP-speakers employ more simple forms.

Previous research discussing the high use of the imperfect progressive in English-speaking heritage speakers of Spanish claim that it may be triggered by code-switching (Lavandera, 1981) or by aspectual differences with the imperfect (Chaston, 1987). However, we did not find any case of code-switching in our data, and further research documenting this phenomenon in different generations of bilinguals (Mrak, 1998) as well as in monolinguals (Dumont & Wilson, 2016; Lamanna, 2008) have not found any aspectual difference between the imperfect and the imperfect progressive in bilingual populations.

These results can be accounted for by Putnam and Sánchez's (2013) work. Putnam and Sánchez (2013) argue that the differences between heritage speakers and monolinguals can be explained in terms of frequency of activation. Heritage speakers, usually dominant in the majority language, do not activate their heritage language for production and comprehension purposes as frequently as monolinguals do, which weakens the associations existing between lexical items and their syntactic and semantic features, as well as their morphology. This view is consistent with Lardiere's (2008, 2009) feature re-assembly hypothesis, which argues that, although bilinguals may have the syntactic knowledge of a certain structure, their production of such structure might due to morphological competence. Additionally, Jiang (2000) argues that morphology is the most challenging lexical component to acquire. The differences between English-speaking and BP-speaking heritage speakers may be due to morphological competence. Specifically, when presented with two possible verb forms in activity and accomplishment verbs, the

English-speaking group tends to use the form that is morphologically closest to the progressive forms in English. Note that the use of the Spanish imperfect progressive in activity and accomplishment verbs is grammatical and that there was not a case of ungrammatical use of the imperfect progressive in any other context in the data set. The BP speakers, on the other hand, used simple forms more than the progressive forms, and an analysis of their narratives in BP showed that they follow a similar verb form distribution in their native language. This might be an indicator that BP-Spanish bilinguals also experience crosslinguistic effects. Additionally, this group difference may also be explained in morphological terms if we consider that Spanish and BP share a considerable part of their morphology, unlike English. Therefore, the different distribution in the groups might also be the result of structure avoidance due to lack of morphological competence of the imperfect tense among the English-speaking heritage speakers. Finally, we did not find significant differences in the use of a certain verb form as a function of tense, against our expectations. We expected to find differences across groups and tense because the selectional properties of English and BP present tense are similar, whereas they differ in the past tense.

To conclude, our findings suggest that in contexts with activity and accomplishment verbs, these two groups of Spanish heritage speakers experience crosslinguistic effects from their dominant languages in different ways. The English speakers overextend the progressive forms, while the BP speakers overextend use simple present verb forms. We argue that these speakers, particularly the English speakers, when presented with two grammatical options in the input, tend to use the form that is morphologically closer to their dominant language. In addition to crosslinguistic influence effects, we argue that the patterns of overextension are also conditioned by the avoidance of marked forms. The imperfect, in opposition to the imperfect progressive, is a marked form that presents difficulties in heritage speakers, as it is learned later than the preterit in both L1 and L2 acquisition (Montrul, 2002b). The imperfect progressive, despite being a compound verb form, is less challenging than the imperfect.

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