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Lionel Chan

Graduate Center, City University of New York

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NON-STANDARD ITALIAN DIALECT HERITAGE SPEAKERS’
ACQUISITION OF CLITIC PLACEMENT IN STANDARD ITALIAN

by

LIONEL CHAN

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Linguistics in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

2014
This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Linguistics in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Abstract

NON-STANDARD ITALIAN DIALECT HERITAGE SPEAKERS’ ACQUISITION OF CLITIC PLACEMENT IN STANDARD ITALIAN

by

Lionel Chan

Adviser: Professor Gita Martohardjono

This dissertation examines the acquisition of object clitic placement in Standard Italian by heritage speakers (HSs) of non-standard Italian dialects. It compares two different groups of Standard Italian learners—Northern Italian dialect HSs and Southern Italian dialect HSs—whose heritage dialects contrast with each other in clitic word order. The syntactic constructions tested include restructuring contexts (i.e., constructions in which clitic climbing can take place), and negative first- and second-person informal imperatives. The overarching research question guiding this pilot study is to determine what influences non-standard Italian dialect HSs’ clitic placement when learning these constructions in Standard Italian. Three possible sources that may motivate these speakers’ clitic placement in Standard Italian are considered: heritage non-standard Italian dialects; universal principles and dominant language transfer (English). A secondary research question of this study investigates whether there is a universal preference for encliticization.

Participants completed two experimental tasks. The first was an Oral Elicited Imitation task that focused HSs’ usage of clitics, whereas the second was a Grammaticality Judgment task that examined HSs’ explicit knowledge of this property. The overall findings of this pilot study suggest that HSs parallel their heritage dialect clitic word order in their usage of Standard Italian, even though they are aware that another structure is possible in the standard dialect. The results also show only weak evidence to support a universal preference for encliticization, as suggested by the data gathered in previous studies (Bruhn-Garavito & Montrul 1996; Duffield & White 1999; Montrul 2010a; 2010b). A pedagogical implication based on this pilot study’s findings is that when teaching standard dialect syntax, pedagogues should differentiate instruction based on learners’ heritage non-standard dialectal background.
Acknowledgments

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Next, I am grateful to Professor Christina Tortora for her expertise in theoretical syntax, for her guidance, and for always “saving the day.” Professor Tortora is a brilliant syntactician whose savvy critical thinking skills and detailed guidance enabled me to conceptualize the strong underpinnings of this project. She was flexible in agreeing to meet with me even on days when she was not in Manhattan; I will miss our productive and enlightening meetings at the College of Staten Island. Moreover, I feel so fortunate that Professor Tortora was willing to step in and lend a hand during some tough moments. This, of course, attests to her commitment as a strong mentor to her students.

Additionally, I am grateful to Professor Hermann W. Haller for his expertise and guidance. I feel privileged to have studied with him at Queens College and that he found the time out of his busy schedule to collaborate with me on this project. Professor Haller is a well-known scholar and a man of many talents. For example, his expertise spans across various fields, including linguistics, Italian-Americans, and Italian teacher training, just to name a few. Drawing on his vast knowledge and experience, Professor Haller’s detailed feedback throughout various stages of my dissertation left “no stone unturned” and tremendously strengthened my work; he always pointed me in the right direction. He was flexible in agreeing to meet with me even on days when he was not at the Graduate Center; I will miss our productive conversations up in his office on the seventh floor of Kiley Hall at Queens College. Needless to say, Professor Haller’s commitment to detail and to the overall development of his students’ work was very valuable to me.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the participants of my study. They took time out of their busy schedules to take part in my experiment.
Finally, I am grateful to my family and friends, without whose support this dissertation would have never been possible. I am thankful to everyone for always "pitching-in" whenever and wherever they could while I was fulfilling my responsibility as a doctoral student and candidate. There were even some uncertain moments, and without their support and encouragement, I would not have reached this incredible milestone.
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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Linguists define “heritage speakers” (“HSs”) as descendents of immigrants who have had naturalistic exposure during childhood both to their family language (the heritage language or “HL”) used in the home and to another language used in the greater community of their host country (the majority language) (Montrul 2008; Polinsky 2011). Rothman (2009) adds to this definition a description of the range of proficiencies in the HL: HSs can have, at one extreme, low proficiency (only aural comprehension in specific lexical areas) and at the other extreme advanced proficiency (fluency in speaking and in aural comprehension, a large lexicon, and native-like levels of pronunciation). Yet, despite this heterogeneity, three fundamental characteristics unify HSs as a group: first, although HSs are exposed to the HL from birth, their command of the HL by adulthood is typically weaker than their command of the majority language; second, the majority language becomes the HS’s dominant language (the language a HS feels most comfortable using) as early as late childhood since they are usually educated in the majority language; third, by adulthood, HSs’ grammatical competence in the HL is different from that of monolingual L1 speakers (Cook, 2003; Montrul 2008, 2009, 2010b; Polinsky 2006, 2008).

Heritage Language Acquisition (HLA) is the research area that examines HSs’ language learning process as they learn, re-learn or improve their linguistic proficiency in the HL. HLA is a relatively new subfield within the research areas of bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition (SLA).2 Since its inception, one issue that has generated some debate in generative HLA research is that of dialects. Polinsky and Kagan (2007) write that in the field of HLA there is a common misconception that a HS’s baseline (the linguistic system to which the HS is exposed since birth) is always the standard dialect of the HL. This becomes particularly problematic for languages that are comprised of many and varied dialects. For example, HSs of Italian origin are considered speakers of Standard Italian, yet their families

---

1 Rothman (2009) notes that some sociolinguistic perspectives extend the definition of HSs to include individuals who have familial/cultural ties to a particular language, regardless of whether they have ever had previous exposure to the family language. I exclude these individuals from this present discussion and study, as my current investigation focuses on the mental grammars of only those speakers with previous exposure to a heritage language.

2 Research on HL learners began receiving more attention in the U.S. during the 1990s, particularly in the field of applied linguistics (e.g., language teaching). At present, there is a growing body of research on this population from various disciplines, such as sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics.
are, more often than not, speakers of very different dialects, such as Conflenti (a dialect spoken in Calabria) or Paduan (a dialect spoken in the Veneto). As a result, difficulties inevitably arise in experimental studies when the standard dialect of a HL is considered to be the baseline instead of the HL’s non-standard varieties. Few generative studies (Rothman 2007; Pires and Rothman 2009) have focused on such heritage non-standard dialectal input. My current investigation addresses this neglected aspect of HLA.

Whereas the overwhelming majority of HLA studies (see Montrul 2008 for references) center around HSs with exposure to two systems (the HL and the dominant language), I focus on HSs with exposure to three systems: a non-standard dialect, a standard dialect, and the host majority language. This particular context of language learning is unexplored in experimental HLA research. The participants in my current study are, specifically, HSs of a non-standard Italian dialect who are dominant in English and are acquiring Standard Italian as a third system. I have chosen to examine Italian, in particular, because of the syntactic differences in clitic word order between non-standard dialects: Southern Italian dialects (SIDs) have obligatory clitic climbing, whereas Northern Italian dialects (NIDs) disallow clitic climbing. In contrast to both NIDs and SIDs, Standard Italian has optional clitic climbing. A similar contrast is also found in the negative imperative constructions of second person singular (tu), second person plural (voi) and first person plural (noi): whereas SIDs exhibit obligatory pre-verbal clitic placement and NIDs generally tend to favor the post-verbal position, Standard Italian allows for both pre- and post-verbal clitic placement positions. In this pilot study, I compare two different groups of bilingual acquirers, namely NID and SID HSs learning Standard Italian. The participants of my study shared the same level of proficiency in the language system tested (i.e., intermediate-low in Standard Italian), and in their previously acquired language systems (i.e., low proficiency in their heritage non-standard Italian dialect, and fluency in the dominant language [English]).

Given that these syntactic structures (i.e., clitic climbing and those without climbing; pre-verbal

---

3 According to Berruto (1989), many Italian dialects are so structurally distant from one another that they are mutually unintelligible; furthermore, depending on the structural distance, some Italian dialects are also mutually unintelligible with Standard Italian. I provide a more detailed description in Chapter 3.

4 Although I review HLA studies that are within a generative framework, the misclassification of HSs’ baseline is problematic in other related fields of research such as sociolinguistics and applied linguistics.
and post-verbal negative imperatives) are semantically identical (Maiden and Robustelli 2007), I investigate whether there is variability in clitic placement in Standard Italian for these different non-standard dialect groups. My purpose is to explore which of the following sources motivates H$S$‘ acquisition of clitic climbing in the standard dialect:

(a) transfer from non-standard dialectal input (NIDs, SIDs)
(b) universal principles in language learning$^5$
(c) dominant language transfer (English)

Issues in SLA theory, such as psychotypology (Kellerman 1983) and the Interface Hypothesis (Sorace 2011) will also be discussed when addressing (a) and (c) above. Klein and Perdue’s (1997) Basic Variety model will provide the basis for (b). I discuss these theoretical issues in greater detail in chapter 2. Additionally, I intend to explore whether there is a universal preference for post-verbal clitic placement in the two syntactic constructions tested in this study. Uncovering the answers to these questions will help pedagogues better address the language learning needs of non-standard Italian dialect H$S$s in the Standard Italian classroom.

At present, there exists a serious need for linguistic research to inform language pedagogy. Some researchers (e.g., Valdés 2006: 193) have observed a disconnection between language acquisition research and language pedagogy: textbooks and pedagogical articles focusing on HL learners, generally written by classroom instructors teaching HL learners, are “largely anecdotal, pretheoretical, and often not informed by research on bilingualism and language contact, language change, language variation, or language acquisition”, whereas on the other hand, mainstream SLA researchers, including those who focus on HLA, tend to distance themselves from language pedagogy. That is to say, many researchers often do not explicitly connect their research findings with practical, pedagogical considerations. My current study seeks to bridge this disconnect between HLA research and language pedagogy for HL learners.

---

$^5$ The term “universal principles” discussed in this study does not refer to Chomsky’s (1995) Universal Grammar, although there is some overlap with what current generative linguistic theory predicts (cf. Kayne 1994). Rather, I use the term to refer to common principles that all language learners rely on, as argued by Polinsky (2006).
To address my research questions, my investigation is organized as follows: Chapter 2 provides an overview of the field of HLA. I examine how the learning of heritage languages is both similar and different to L1-acquisition and L2-acquisition processes. I then discuss two possible sources that cause heritage grammars to diverge from monolingual/baseline grammars: attrition and incomplete acquisition (Montrul 2009). I provide a critical examination of the latter source and how the concept of ‘incomplete grammars’ is controversial within the generative framework. I also examine a different viewpoint on bilingual grammars, namely how they can be viewed as “unique systems” (Cook, 2003). Following this discussion, I explore external motivations (cross-linguistic influence) and internal motivations (universal principles in language learning) that may be motivating how heritage grammars are shaped; particular attention is devoted to psychotypology and heritage dialect input. Finally, I review recent generative studies that attempt to incorporate sociolinguistic and sociocultural factors in HLA research.

Expanding along the lines of sociocultural and sociolinguistic factors that impact HL learning, in Chapter 3 I explore how these factors may affect the acquisition process for my study’s participants, namely non-standard Italian dialect HSs who are acquiring the standard dialect. To understand the sociolinguistic complexity of the dialects of Italy, I provide a general overview of the history of Italian dialects both in Italy and in the U.S. I examine the possibility of how non-standard Italian dialect HSs who are learning Standard Italian may not be considered true ‘heritage language learners.’ From there, I review the literature on instructed Second Dialect Acquisition, drawing on the sociocultural and sociolinguistic findings that are most relevant to my study’s participants. In line with the focus of my experiment, I offer a critical analysis of the literature on the learning of Standard Italian by non-standard Italian dialect HSs in North America, and the implications for teacher-training.

To better understand the syntactic constructions tested in my study, in Chapter 4 I begin by including a general description of how object clitics operate in Standard Italian, Northern Italian dialects and Southern Italian dialects. To explain the variability in clitic placement when used in constructions with modal, aspectual or motion verbs that embed infinitives, I explore the syntax of clitic climbing from a generative perspective, namely Rizzi’s (1982) biclausal approach. The remainder of this chapter focuses
on the syntactic structure of imperatives in Standard Italian, Northern Italian dialects and Southern Italian dialects. My main focus is on second-person singular/plural (tu/voi) informal negative imperatives and first-person plural (noi) negative imperatives, since it is only in these structures where clitic placement is variable in Standard Italian. I then offer an overview of Kayne’s (1992) null modal analysis to explore the syntactic variability of clitic placement within the generative framework.

In Chapter 5, I review the literature on the acquisition of clitics and clitic climbing in Italian and across different Romance languages. I begin with a review of the studies on the L1/monolingual acquisition of clitics, followed by the HLA of clitics. Although the acquisition of clitics for both groups is generally not problematic, it is somewhat more difficult for L2 learners: acquiring clitic climbing is more difficult than acquiring clitics in simple structures. Finally, in my discussion of L3 acquisition of clitics, I examine the role that psychotypology may play for learners who are acquiring a third language system.

I describe my pilot study in Chapter 6. I present the research questions in greater depth along with hypotheses evaluating the possible sources of influence. I include a description of my study’s tasks and research design. The first experimental task (an oral elicited imitation task) examined HSs’ usage of clitics, while the second task (a grammaticality judgment task) focused on HSs’ explicit knowledge of this property. I then present the data obtained from both experimental tasks and evaluate which source(s) of influence appear to be at play. Additionally, I offer relevant pedagogical implications based on my preliminary findings.

Finally, I conclude in Chapter 7.
CHAPTER 2. HERITAGE GRAMMARS

In this chapter I examine the complexities of heritage grammars. I begin by comparing how heritage language acquisition (HLA) is both similar to, and different from L1 acquisition and from L2 acquisition. I discuss how heritage grammars form as a result of attrition, incomplete acquisition, or both. I then examine how linguistic properties are developed in heritage grammars. Lastly, I end the chapter with an overview of recent studies that incorporate sociolinguistic variables in the interpretation of data from generative linguistic HLA research.

2.1. HERITAGE LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: BETWEEN L1 AND L2 ACQUISITION

HLA exhibits characteristics of both L1- and L2-acquisition, although there are also notable differences. For example, according to some researchers (e.g., Montrul, Foote and Perpiñán 2008; Sorace 2005), adult HSs and L2 learners show similar developmental deviations from the adult baseline grammar. On the other hand, since HSs consistently receive oral input early in life, unlike L2 learners, they exhibit more native-like knowledge in adulthood than their L2-learner counterparts (Au et al. 2002; Montrul 2010b).6

Similarities and differences are also found between HSs and L1 monolingual speakers. Both HSs and monolingual baseline speakers acquire major grammatical properties of the L1 at similar rates during early childhood, typically by age 4 or 5. During late childhood, however, L1 acquiring children continue to receive regular and rich L1 input, leading to what Montrul (2010b: 168) terms “complete” acquisition. Furthermore, monolingual speakers have more access to the language since they live in a country where the L1 is the majority language. In contrast, for HSs, exposure to the HL is usually restricted to the home (Polinsky 2011). Once HSs begin formal schooling, they are generally educated in the majority language. As HSs progressively become dominant in the majority language, their heritage grammars tend to diverge from monolingual baseline grammars. HLA studies attribute these divergences from the baseline to two

6 Pascual y Cabo and Rothman (2012: 454) question what it means for HSs to be “better” or more native-like than L2 learners. They argue that this may stem from the fact that HSs generally have “more practice at being bilingual.”
principal sources, namely attrition and incomplete acquisition\(^7\). In the next section, I provide an overview of both these sources.

2.2. SOURCES OF DIVERGENCE FROM THE BASELINE

2.2.1. ATTRITION

Attrition is a typical explanation for why heritage grammars differ from baseline grammars (c.f., Montrul 2009; Polinsky 2011; among others). In its broadest definition, language attrition is seen as an individual or speech community’s loss of a language or its properties (Freed 1982: 1). Attrition can be pathological, as in dementia, or non-pathological, e.g. due to lack of use. This latter situation applies also to HSs. In order for attrition to occur, a property must have been acquired first before it can be lost.

Montrul (2009) argues that attrition entails a grammatical system that had developed “completely (perhaps into adolescence\(^8\)) and remained stable for a while before some grammatical aspects eroded” (240). In the case of HSs, for whom the majority language is usually introduced when they begin school, the acquisition of the majority language often displaces usage of the HL, leading to attrition.

According to Jakobson (1941), what a speaker learns earlier is more likely to be retained than what he/she learns later. For instance, structures that are acquired during early childhood will be less vulnerable to attrition, whereas those acquired in late childhood or adolescence are more at risk to loss. Jakobson’s (1941) Regression Hypothesis is one of the most well-known theoretical models in language attrition research. Within the realm of HLA research, the Regression Hypothesis offers a possible explanation as to why adult HSs’ knowledge of tense-aspect is more robust than their knowledge of mood verbal morphology in Spanish. Montrul (2009) investigated which specific aspects of HSs’ syntax and morphology are fully acquired and which ones remain underdeveloped into adulthood. Her experimental group was composed of 65 participants while her control group (native monolingual Spanish speakers) consisted of 23 participants. She controlled for proficiency among HSs by dividing experimental group

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\(^7\) The concept of incomplete acquisition has generated some debate in the field of HLA. I will discuss this in greater detail in section 2.2.2.

\(^8\) Although children generally acquire many grammatical properties by early childhood (by age 4 or 5), some properties are acquired later. Blake (1983) suggests that in Spanish, certain properties of the subjunctive are acquired after early childhood and are not fully developed until they approach adolescence.
participants into three categories: advanced, intermediate, and low; there were 29, 21 and 15 participants in each of these proficiency-level groups respectively. Participants performed both elicited oral and written production tasks. Montrul discovered that, as a whole, HSs exhibit higher accuracy on grammatical aspect in the past (preterite vs. imperfect) than on mood verbal morphology (indicative vs. subjunctive\(^9\)). She concluded that her results from this study support the Regression Hypothesis: as evidenced by the data, since grammatical aspect is acquired earlier (around age 3), HSs are more likely to retain it; on the other hand, since verbal mood morphology is acquired later (ages 7-8)\(^{10}\), it is more prone to the effects of attrition in comparison to grammatical aspect.\(^{11}\)

On the other hand, one can also argue that the Regression Hypothesis is not a suitable explanation for why HSs in Montrul's (2009) experiment possess stronger control over tense-aspect as opposed to mood verbal morphology. Montrul (2008: 72) has proposed two conditions that must be met in order for the Regression Hypothesis to be properly tested in language attrition studies: first, participants must be “individuals assumed to have completely acquired the language, typically adults”\(^{12}\); second, of the at least two structures tested, one must be acquired earlier than the other. These conditions are problematic within the framework of HLA research. With respect to the first condition, whether HSs, by definition, ever “completely acquire” their HL is an issue that has generated some debate.\(^{13}\) According to some researchers (e.g., Montrul 2008; Polinsky 2011), since HSs are not exposed to the same type of rich input that monolingual/baseline L1 learners receive, especially after increasing exposure to the majority language, it is possible that HSs by and large do not “completely acquire” their L1 like their monolingual counterparts do. As a result, some parts of HSs’ grammatical competence may remain

\(^9\) It is important to note that in Spanish, there is dialectal variation in usage of the subjunctive: some dialects require the subjunctive in temporal adverbial clauses whereas others do not. Montrul’s (2009) study does not address dialectal variation.

\(^{10}\) Montrul (2009) notes that the subtleties of the indicative-subjunctive contrast might not be understood by L1 speakers until adolescence (cf. Blake 1983).

\(^{11}\) In addition to the Regression Hypothesis, Montrul (2009) further attributes HSs’ weaker control of indicative-subjunctive to the Interfaces Hypothesis (see Section 2.3.1.1.1 for a more detailed discussion on linguistic interfaces).

\(^{12}\) Here again arises the issue of “complete” vs. “incomplete” acquisition; I will address this in greater detail in the next subsection. Yet, it is worth pointing out here that the generative framework presupposes that once acquired, linguistic competence is relatively stable (Montrul 2008: 75; cf. Chomsky 1965: 3-4); it could be argued that this would be problematic in explaining attrition in generative linguistic theory.

\(^{13}\) In previous research, Montrul (2006) herself argues that incomplete acquisition is a feature of bilingual grammars.
underdeveloped into adulthood (Montrul 2009: 240). If one were to adopt this strict perspective of “completeness,” then the Regression Hypothesis could never be used to examine properties of heritage grammars acquired after the majority language is introduced (typically age 5). Referring to Montrul’s (2009) study above, since monolingual children do not acquire the subtleties of the Spanish subjunctive until late childhood (cf. Blake 1983) - i.e. after exposure to the majority language - one could argue against using the Regression Hypothesis to explain Montrul’s findings because the subjunctive was never "completely" acquired. Furthermore, with respect to the second condition, this would imply that any two (or more) structures used to test the Regression Hypothesis for HSs can only be those acquired before they are exposed to the majority language. Needless to say, the strict interpretation of “completeness” in L1 acquisition problematizes the use of the Regression Hypothesis to test for attrition among the HS-population.

Putting aside the Regression Hypothesis, the issue of “completeness” vs. “incompleteness” in L1 acquisition has generated much debate in HLA research. In the next subsection, I provide a critical discussion of incomplete acquisition for HSs.

2.2.2. INCOMPLETE ACQUISITION

Another possible course of divergence from the baseline is incomplete acquisition, argued to occur when particular structures are available in the input to the HS, but are not fully acquired (Montrul 2008; Rothman 2007). Incomplete acquisition can be caused by inconsistent or variable input when the HS is exposed to the HL and to the majority language simultaneously.14 Once the majority language is introduced, childhood grammars cease to develop possibly through lack of use and “fossilize” (remain "as is"), resulting in divergences from fully developed adult baseline grammars. In addition, Montrul (2008: 21) writes that specific properties of the HL do not have a chance to reach age-appropriate levels of proficiency after intense exposure to the majority language begins. With the introduction of the majority language at age 5 (a common benchmark used in HLA studies), HSs may not have the opportunity to

14 What can complicate the issue of incomplete acquisition even more so is the different levels of attrition among speakers of the same HL (Haller 2013, personal communication). I will discuss this issue in greater detail later in this section when exploring a more accurate interpretation of the concept of baseline languages for HSs (cf. Pascual y Cabo and Rothman 2012).
fully acquire their HL.\textsuperscript{15}

Returning to Montrul’s (2009) study discussed above, it is plausible to consider that HSs’ lower accuracy on mood verbal morphology is due to their never “fully” having acquired this structure previously. The introduction of the majority language for most HSs (typically at age 5) may have inhibited the subsequent acquisition of mood verbal morphology in Spanish from reaching “completion”, which Blake (1983) argues to occur at ages 7-8.\textsuperscript{16} On the other hand, since the acquisition of grammatical aspect occurs around age 3, HSs are able to “completely” acquire it since it occurs during an age that is generally void of any possible influence from the majority language. In short, HSs’ weaker knowledge and usage of verb mood morphology in this study may not necessarily be due to attrition (i.e., order of acquisition), but rather it may be due to incomplete acquisition. To improve the research design, Montrul should have chosen two properties that are acquired sequentially, but around the same age range, and more important, occur before exposure to the majority language. Doing so would allow for a more accurate analysis in which the roles of attrition (e.g., the Regression Hypothesis) and incomplete acquisition can be teased apart.

At the same time, however, it is important to note that the concept of incomplete acquisition can be considered incoherent in that it presupposes that there exists ‘complete acquisition’, a term for which there is no clear definition. HSs, by definition, have not reached this undefined goal.\textsuperscript{17} Otheguy and Zentella (2012: 202) contend that no grammar can ever be completely acquired for two main reasons: (1) due to inevitable language change, the grammar of the subsequent generation is always incomplete in comparison to that of the previous; and (2) there is no general theory of what end-state completeness should look like. Based on these arguments, they write that heritage grammars cannot be characterized by incomplete acquisition. As an alternative, Otheguy and Zentella propose considering heritage grammars as separate linguistic systems. In fact, based on their own research on pronomial usage in

\textsuperscript{15} Yet, what it means for any speaker, whether a monolingual or a bilingual, to ‘fully acquire’ his/her L1 remains an open question. Thus, the issue of incomplete acquisition may be problematic in this respect; I return to this point later in this section.

\textsuperscript{16} Although Montrul (2009) acknowledges this, she concludes that her results are compatible with the Regression Hypothesis.

\textsuperscript{17} From the generative perspective, the only grammar that exists is the internal grammar (Universal Grammar) and what speakers do with it. The concept of incomplete acquisition implies that there has to be a goal outside the mind of the speaker.
heritage Spanish in New York, Otheguy and Zentella argue that heritage grammars represent a simplified, yet systematic and coherent grammar. This greater simplicity alone “can never be, in and of itself, an indicator of reduced proficiency or incomplete acquisition” (203). In short, the fact that heritage grammars are different from monolingual/baseline grammars does not make heritage grammars incomplete.

Pascual y Cabo and Rothman (2012) propose that the term *incomplete acquisition* may be inappropriate to describe HSs since the L1 input to which HSs are exposed since birth may not necessarily be the same L1 input to which monolingual speakers are exposed. Unlike monolingual speakers in the home country, it is possible that HSs are exposed to a baseline variety spoken by immigrants whose HL has already been in contact, to varying degrees, with the host country’s majority language. That is to say, the L1 input that HSs receive may not necessarily be the same L1 input that monolingual speakers receive. For instance, the variability found in first-generation immigrant language use (to which second-generation HSs are exposed) can be an explanation for why heritage grammars diverge from monolingual grammars found in the home country. Previous research (Prada Pérez and Pascual y Cabo 2011) suggests that the heritage grammar of second-generation bilinguals is indeed similar to that of first-generation immigrants. From this perspective, Pascual y Cabo and Rothman contend that heritage grammars may indeed be ‘completely’ acquired language systems, thus putting into question the use of the term ‘incomplete acquisition’ in HLA research.

In line with the argument put forward by Otheguy and Zentella (2012), Pascual y Cabo and Rothman (2012) also write that heritage grammars are simply “different” from monolingual grammars, and not incomplete language systems. Since the linguistic-contact environment in which HSs grow up is most likely different from that of monolingual speakers in the home country, end-result divergences are a likely outcome. As a result, Pascual y Cabo and Rothman question the fundamental basis of whether bilingual grammars should, or can, be compared to monolingual grammars.

In the next subsection, I explore the issue of what may constitute a more accurate baseline to
which heritage grammars can be compared.

2.2.3. UNIQUE GRAMMARS VS. DIVERGENCE FROM THE BASELINE

The use of the terms "attrition" and "incomplete acquisition" share a common assumption about heritage grammars: that they are always deficient when compared to baseline grammars. This focusing on what is missing stands in contrast with the approach adopted by other researchers, such as Cook, Iarossi, Stellakis and Tokumaru (2003), who view bilingual grammars from a different perspective: L1 and heritage grammars are not interpreted as lacking features found in baseline grammars. Instead, these grammars are considered unique systems in their own right, independent of comparisons with monolingual baseline and standard L1 grammars. Cook (2003) views these speakers as having a uniquely blended linguistic knowledge (one that combines both their HL and their dominant language) that he calls multicompetence. This viewpoint raises doubt as to whether HSs should be compared to native speaker controls, who have almost always constituted the baseline in previous experiments on HSs.

Since Cook (2003) believes that the bilingual speakers' knowledge of their HL is in some ways different from that of a monolingual, he raises the issue of whether HSs should be compared to other speakers with multicompetence instead. As HSs are, by definition, "bilingual" to a greater or a lesser extent (Valdés 1995), perhaps a more fair comparison in linguistic research would be to use proficient bilingual speakers as controls, instead of monolinguals. For instance, Cook, Iarossi, Stellakis and Tokumaru (2003) found that bilingual speakers process syntactic structures differently from monolingual speakers. Cook’s multicompetence model serves to understand why some properties are developed and reanalyzed, producing heritage grammars that do not resemble and cannot be explained by the baseline at all.

In sum, as a result of attrition, incomplete acquisition, or both, properties of HSs’ grammars often become divergent from baseline grammars. How these properties of heritage grammars are developed remains an open question. Most research on HSs has centered, and continues to center, upon features present in baseline grammars and absent in heritage grammars.
2.3. HERITAGE SPEAKERS’ REANALYSIS OF BASELINE GRAMMARS

HL divergence from the baseline can be explained by the concept of reanalysis. In this section, I review the literature that centers around two main causes for heritage grammar reanalysis\(^\text{19}\): “external” motivations and “internal” motivations.

2.3.1. “EXTERNAL” MOTIVATIONS: CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE

“External” motivations are so called because they originate outside the language system that undergoes reanalysis. In this subsection, I explore the role that HSs’ dominant language plays in this process. I also examine how heritage colloquial dialects impact HSs’ knowledge and usage of the standard dialect. Additionally, I address some factors that impact HSs’ acquisition of a third linguistic system.

2.3.1.1. DOMINANT LANGUAGE TRANSFER

The most obvious source of cross-linguistic influence is the HS’s dominant language. Cenoz (2001, 10) hypothesizes that “learners are more likely to borrow from a language they actively use than from other languages they may know but do not use.” Since the majority language becomes the stronger language for HSs (both psycholinguistically and functionally), it may encroach on their use of structures in the HL (Cook 2003; Montrul et al. 2008). Research on child simultaneous bilingualism (Paradis 2001; Yip and Matthews 2000) suggests that properties of a speaker’s stronger language can appear in his/her weaker language. In the following subsections, I explore the role of dominant language transfer in HSs’ syntax from two perspectives: structures that lie at a linguistic interface, and structures that fall within the core-domain of syntax.

2.3.1.1.1. SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES AT LINGUISTIC INTERFACES

According to the Interface Hypothesis (Sorace 2011), aspects of grammar are more vulnerable at

\(^{19}\) Following the work of Polinsky (2006, 2011), I retain the term reanalysis (as opposed to analysis) to refer to the cognitive processes that HSs undergo when analyzing their heritage grammars again during adulthood. Reanalysis presupposes that HSs had already analyzed their heritage grammar in early childhood during their initial exposure to the HL.
interfaces (components linking sub-modules of language with each other). Examples include the syntax-pragmatics interface, which involves partial structural overlap across two languages in which the distribution of a particular syntactic construction is controlled by discourse pragmatics (Döpke 1998; Müller and Hulk 2001), and the syntax-semantics interface, which deals with formal features and operations within word order and Logical Form (Sorace and Serrratrice 2009). A large body of research has shown that bilingual speakers demonstrate behaviors that are different from monolinguals when using constructions at these interfaces (Müller and Hulk 2001; Serratrice, Sorace and Paoli 2004; among others).

One example of these different behaviors that HSs demonstrate at the interfaces is optionality (using two or more constructions or forms when the target language has only one [Hawkins 2001: 343]). In the “incomplete” grammars of HSs’ (cf. Montrul 2008), non-target-like options compete with one another and/or, possibly also, with the target-like option. One underlying cause (but perhaps by no means the only cause) of HSs’ variable production of these non-target-like option(s) may be negative transfer from the dominant language. Although optionality is a term used widely in L2 acquisition studies, other researchers (e.g., Bolonyai 2007; Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten 2011; among others) have begun to use it to describe HSs’ reanalysis of baseline grammar. Sorace (2005) posits that characteristics of residual L2 optionality for syntactic structures at linguistic interfaces are also found in L1/HL attrition.

Although optionality is likely to occur at the linguistic interfaces, as opposed to core linguistic domains, the degree to which different structures may be vulnerable at the same interfaces may vary. At the lexical semantics-syntax interface, Bolonyai (2007) investigated the effects of incomplete acquisition on overt morphological agreement markings in heritage Hungarian. The participants of her study were six HSs of Hungarian who were dominant in their L2 (English); they ranged in age from 7 to 9. The results of her study revealed that although HSs tend to make few to no morphological errors in possessive nominals and in subject-verb agreement, the main source of morphological instability involved interpretable features where the L1 and L2 differ – possessive be-clause is most affected due to cross-
linguistic differences between Hungarian be-possessives and English have-possessives; it is here where the L2 structure encroaches upon that of the weaker L1, resulting in L2-induced structures in heritage Hungarian that diverge from the baseline. Bolonyai adds that other factors, including structural complexity of the L1 and ambiguity in the L1, may play a role in HSs’ divergence from the baseline. Thus, as Bolonyai has shown at the lexical semantics-syntax interface, some structures are more prone to dominant language transfer than others.

At the syntax-pragmatics interface, structural overlap also plays a key role in dominant language transfer. In their model for simultaneous bilingual L1 acquisition, Hulk and Müller (2000) propose that cross-linguistic influence occurs only at the syntax-pragmatics interface: they suggest that if language A displays an ambiguity with respect to a particular structure while language B has a superficially similar structure, there will be interference from language B to language A. Other researchers (e.g., Montrul 2008; Serratrice, Sorace and Paoli 2004; among others) have applied this model of cross-linguistic influence for studies on L1 attrition and HLA.

Silva-Corvalán’s (1994) research on heritage Spanish in Los Angeles supports this model of cross-linguistic influence at the syntax-pragmatics interface. This comprehensive large-scale study consisted of 150 participants who the researcher divided into three categories: Group 1 consisted of first-generation Latin American immigrants who lived in Los Angeles for no more than five years since their arrival to the U.S.; Group 2 was composed of second-generation Latinos (those who were born in the U.S. or arrived before age 5); finally, Group 3 consisted of third-generation Latinos (those who were born in the U.S. and at least one of whose parents fit the description for Group 2). Tasks for each participant included both a written questionnaire and an oral interview, the latter of which was recorded and transcribed. One of the researcher’s chief findings was dominant language transfer in HSs’ syntactic constructions at the syntax-discourse pragmatics interface, a finding in line with Hulk and Müller’s (2000) model. Although Spanish allows for both SV and VS word order, subject to discourse pragmatics constraints (e.g. topic vs. focus, new vs. given information, etc.), second- and third-generation HSs tend to use SV much more than first-generation immigrants (Silva-Corvalán 1994: 143). As a result of cross-linguistic influence - i.e. English word order (typically SV) is by and large more rigid than that of Spanish -
second- and third-generation HSs tend to use obligatory SVX word order in Spanish, without paying attention to discourse-pragmatics constraints.

Further evidence to support this model of cross-linguistic influence at the syntax-pragmatics interface is found in HSs’ object expression. Serratrice, Sorace and Paoli (2004) found that bilingual speakers tend to use post-verbal strong object pronouns in Italian more often in contexts where monolingual speakers would be pragmatically constrained to using preverbal weak pronominal clitics. The researchers attribute this difference to cross-linguistic influence from the dominant language (English).

In line with the findings from the studies above, it appears that some syntactic constructions involving object clitics – the topic of this investigation – may be more prone than others to dominant language transfer depending on whether or not they are at linguistic interfaces. Montrul (2010a) explored the role of dominant language (English) transfer to heritage Spanish in clitic usage both within a core grammatical domain and at linguistic interfaces; the structures that she tested included simple clitic placement, including clitic climbing (syntax-proper), clitic left dislocation (syntax-discourse pragmatics interface), and direct object marking (syntax-semantics-discourse pragmatics interface). The latter two syntactic structures are considered to be more complex than the first because they are dependent on other linguistic domains. This experiment involved the participation of L2 learners and HSs at varying proficiency levels of Spanish, namely beginning, intermediate and advanced. L2 learners were divided into three groups by their Spanish proficiency level: 22 low, 25 intermediate and 25 advanced; HSs were also divided in the same manner: 13 low, 26 intermediate, 32 advanced. A strong point of this study’s design is that in anticipation of any possible regional differences across the experimental tasks, Montrul selected only HSs of Mexican descent. Additionally, 22 native controls also took part in this study. Participants completed two tasks, namely an oral production task and an acceptability judgment task.

At the interfaces, Montrul’s (2010a) results revealed that HSs appeared more native-like with structures of clitic left dislocation (syntax-discourse pragmatics), but differed significantly from native-speakers in their use of direct object marking (syntax-semantics-discourse pragmatics). Unlike the native-controls, the HSs failed to overtly mark animate direct objects, and (erroneously) considered these
sentences grammatical in the acceptability judgment task. Montrul proposes that while direct object marking is a structure subject to attrition and/or to incomplete acquisition for HSs, their omission of the object marker with animate direct objects may be due to optionality: in Spanish, the object marker may or may not appear depending on semantic features (animate vs. inanimate object), whereas English has no direct object marker.

In sum, collectively these studies show that as a result of attrition, incomplete acquisition, or both, HSs tend to simplify structural overlap between the two languages at linguistic interfaces, such as semantics or discourse pragmatics, allowing the structure of their dominant language to encroach upon the same structure in their HL. Optionality in the syntactic structures of the HL is likely to result at the interfaces. Often this optionality then leads to an extension – namely an additional usage – of an existing parallel structure in heritage grammars, in comparison to that of baseline grammars.

2.3.1.2. SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES WITHIN THE CORE-DOMAIN OF SYNTAX

In cases where interfaces are not involved, namely constructions within syntax proper, there is evidence that HSs’ knowledge of baseline facts generally remains robust. Montrul et al. (2008) examined wh-movement across Spanish and English for HSs and L2 learners. A total of 155 adult participants took part in this study: aside from the 22 native controls, the experimental groups were made up of two types of adult bilinguals, namely 70 English-dominant L2 learners of Spanish (at varying proficiency levels of Spanish), and 67 English-dominant HSs of Spanish (also at varying proficiency levels of Spanish). Their research design controlled for language proficiency levels, while it employed a cross-directional methodology in which the researchers could explore whether dominant language transfer (from English) has effects on the participants’ weaker language (Spanish). In other words, the researchers’ goal was to investigate the similarities of cross-linguistic influence from English, irrespective of whether Spanish is each participant’s L1 or L2. The overall results of their study suggest that HSs and L2 learners have strong knowledge of the constraints on wh-movement in Spanish, namely that omitting complementizers in Spanish is ungrammatical, and subject extractions from embedded clauses that contain an overt complementizer are grammatical in Spanish. The HSs showed very little effects of dominant language
(English) transfer when researchers examined that-t trace effects in Spanish, even in structures where transfer from English was predicted: HSs appear to be strongly aware that complementizers are not optional in Spanish (unlike in English). This evidence from Montrul et al.’s (2008) study supports the concept that constructions within syntax-proper are less permeable to cross-linguistic influence.21

Research on other structures within syntax-proper attest to the resistance of this core-domain to dominant language transfer. I refer back to some of the studies discussed above, namely Montrul (2010a) and Silva-Corvalán’s (1994). The participants in these studies were adult HSs of Spanish who were English-dominant. A common goal among these three studies was to examine HSs’ knowledge and usage of clitics in contexts where clitic placement is variable in Spanish. I will discuss the syntactic variability of clitic placement in much greater detail in the next chapter. For now, however, suffice it to say that in these contexts, HSs can express object pronouns in Spanish by choosing a syntactic structure that overlaps with English, or one that does not overlap with English. Klein-Andreu (1986) proposes that in cases such as these, HSs would prefer to use the structure in the Spanish that overlaps with the one in English (their dominant language). This, however, is not what Montrul (2010a; 2010b) and Silva-Corvalán (1994) find at all in their data; rather, similar to the native controls in their studies, these researchers argue that adult HSs (at all levels of proficiency) tend to choose the HL structure that does not overlap with the one in their dominant language. The fact that adult HSs possess knowledge of both possible structures in these contexts for clitic placement, but tend to use the structure that is preferred by baseline speakers and that does not overlap with their dominant language, attests to the HL’s resistance to dominant language transfer in this core-domain. In short, taking into account the findings on wh-movement along with these from studies focusing on (non-interface) variable clitic placement, it appears that constructions within the core-domain of syntax are much less permeable to dominant language transfer, in comparison to those at the interfaces.

Despite the findings of these various studies, there is some recent evidence that argues against

21 Montrul et al. (2008: 104) acknowledge that one reason why the English-dominant bilinguals (including HSs) in their study possess strong knowledge of the constraints of wh-movement in Spanish is because both Spanish and English “behave linguistically alike in this respect,” i.e. both languages have wh-movement, despite a few differences. Due to the general similarity between the two languages, one can argue that it is difficult to determine whether HSs’ knowledge of wh-movement is truly robust and independent of dominant language transfer, or whether the dominant language does play a role. Despite this, however, Montrul et al.’s (2008) findings do provide a point of departure in our understanding of dominant language transfer in syntax-proper.
the permeability of core-linguistic domains to dominant language transfer. Some researchers (Cazzoli-Goeta, Guijarro-Fuentes and Young-Scholten 2010; Pérez-Leroux, Cuza and Thomas 2011) put forward that the core domain of syntax is also vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence, and not only at its interfaces with semantics and pragmatics. Pérez-Leroux et al. (2011) propose that for contexts that allow for variability in clitic placement within syntax-proper, child HSs are more susceptible to dominant language transfer. It is essential to keep in mind that unlike the previous studies (Montrul 2010a and 2010b; Silva-Corvalán 1994) that attest to the robustness within syntax-proper for adult HSs, Pérez-Leroux et al.'s (2011) participants were child HSs; from this viewpoint, Pérez-Leroux et al.'s (2011) results do not appear to contradict the conclusions of previous studies on adult HSs. That is, age may play a role in clitic placement variability for HSs. I return to address this issue in chapter 5 when I review the literature on the acquisition of clitics.

Similar findings suggesting the vulnerability of syntax-proper to dominant language transfer were also reported in Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten’s (2011) investigation of HSs in the United Kingdom. I will soon discuss this study in greater detail in a subsequent section within this chapter, but for now, suffice it to say that after discovering HSs’ errors in grammaticality judgment tasks, namely that some HSs select ungrammatical syntactic structures (not at interfaces) as grammatical, Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten argue that HSs’ constructions within syntax-proper may also be vulnerable to divergence from those in baseline grammars. Nevertheless, it is important to note that although these researchers’ findings may shed new light on the vulnerability of structures within syntax-proper, the main purpose of their study was instead to test for variance in the usage of a structure – sentence-initial non-nominative DPs – at the syntax-discourse pragmatics interface. Thus, since it was not the intended goal of their study, their finding on HSs’ variance from the baseline in syntax-proper constructions merits further investigation. Given the small number of studies suggesting dominant language transfer in syntax-proper for HSs’, it appears needless to say that more detailed research is required before making general conclusions with respect to this core domain’s permeability to dominant language transfer.

In sum, most previous research on cross-linguistic influence in HLA investigates how the

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22 Pannemann (2006) also finds evidence to support cross-linguistic interference within syntax-proper, namely in the acquisition of determiner phrases. Yet, it must be noted that her research work focuses on child bilingual L1 acquisition, and not HSs.
dominant language encroaches into the structure of the HL in systematic ways. The majority of these studies indicate that overall, dominant language transfer is a weak factor in cross-linguistic influence within the domain of syntax proper, especially with adult HSs.

Few studies have investigated cross-linguistic influence in HSs with exposure to more than two language systems. I review these studies in the next section.

2.3.1.2. HERITAGE NON-STANDARD DIALECTAL INPUT

Research on how non-standard dialectal input, specifically colloquial Brazilian Portuguese, constrains HSs’ knowledge of Standard Portuguese (Rothman 2007; Rothman and Pires 2009) found that dialect differences can constrain HSs’ knowledge of syntactic properties in the standard variety. Rothman (2007) discovered that colloquial Brazilian Portuguese HSs in the U.S. did not recognize the grammaticality of inflected infinitives in Standard Portuguese because Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese dialects do not possess this structure. A comparison/baseline group, namely monolingual speakers of Colloquial Brazilian Portuguese dialects in Brazil, on the other hand, did show knowledge of this structure, a fact that Rothman attributes to these speakers’ exposure to Standard Portuguese in educational settings (an opportunity to which HSs living outside of Brazil typically do not have access).

In addition, Rothman and Pires (2009) found that since colloquial Brazilian Portuguese dialects no longer have inflected infinitives, while colloquial European Portuguese dialects still do, colloquial European Portuguese dialect HSs are much more accurate in recognizing this structure’s grammaticality in Standard Portuguese, as opposed to colloquial Brazilian Portuguese dialect HSs. The authors write that this difference in input results in grammatical competence divergence between the two groups in Standard Portuguese. Furthermore, they propose the term missing-input competence divergence (what could not be acquired given its absence in the input) to describe the situation of HSs of colloquial Brazilian Portuguese dialects.

An obvious problem with their argument and hypothesis in the context above is that the authors blur the distinction between the baseline and the standard dialect: these are separate language systems that may not necessarily share structural similarities. There is no solid foundation to use Standard
Portuguese as the baseline for comparing the heritage grammar of regional colloquial Portuguese dialects. Rothman and Pires’ (2009) work shows that it is inappropriate to use the educated standard variety as a point of comparison for evaluating heritage grammars. Ultimately, however, in finding a connection between knowledge of heritage colloquial dialects and that of the HL standard variety, they contend that each geographical colloquial dialect can provide significantly distinct primary linguistic data for HSSs, and that syntactic differences between geographical dialects of the same HL can lead to systematic mismatches in HSSs’ knowledge of the HL standard variety. Thus, distinguishing the various dialects of a HL as different systems is helpful in uncovering any cross-linguistic influence.

We have seen that both the dominant language and heritage non-standard dialects are potential sources for divergence from the standard. The question that I raise is which of these two sources exerts more influence in HSSs’ acquisition of the HL’s standard variety. To achieve a better understanding of cross-linguistic influence involving three (or more) language systems, I review the literature in the next section.

2.3.1.3. CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE FOR LEARNERS ACQUIRING A THIRD SYSTEM

An open question in the literature has been the role that a learner’s L1 and/or L2 plays, if any, when learners acquire a third language system. Despite the fact that interest in L3 acquisition within a generative framework has surfaced only in recent years, three theoretical models accounting for cross-linguistic influence in multilinguals have received considerable attention in the literature: the Cumulative Enhancement Model, the L2-Status Factor, and psychotypology (recently formalized by Rothman [2011] as the Typological Primacy Model). The basis of Flynn, Foley and Vinnitskaya (2004)’s Cumulative Enhancement Model (CEM) model is that both the L1 and the L2 can impact a learner’s acquisition of a third system. Contrary to what some other researchers have proposed for L3 acquisition, such as only L1-transfer (Leung 2006), or only L2-transfer (Bardel and Falk 2007), the CEM predicts that any previously acquired language system can enhance the acquisition of a subsequent system. On the other hand, Bardel and Falk (2007) provide a different viewpoint on cross-linguistic influence with their L2-Status Factor model: the L2 blocks basic access to the L1 because the L2 is privileged in the L3 initial
Psychotypology predicts language transfer by accounting for a learner’s perception of the linguistic distance between the target language system and his/her previously acquired language systems. Many recent studies in L3 acquisition (e.g., Carvalho and Bacelar da Silva 2006; Cenoz 2001; Montrul et al. 2011; Rothman 2011; among others) have shown that psychotypology plays a crucial role in determining from where language transfer derives. Therefore, I will discuss psychotypology in greater detail in the next subsection.

2.3.1.3.1. A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE ON CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE

“Psychotypology” (Kellerman 1977, 1979, 1983) is defined as a language learner’s intuitive perception of the linguistic distance between languages. Focusing primarily on L2 acquisition, Kellerman (1983: 113-114) writes that how the learner perceives the typological closeness between the L1 and L2 will either constrain or trigger cross-linguistic influence: he predicts that if a L2 learner perceives his/her L1 as typologically close to the L2, then the learner will “capitalize” on being able to identify cognate forms and structures across the two languages during the acquisition process, which may lead to facilitation (positive transfer) and interference (negative transfer) (cf. Odlin 1989); on the other hand, if the learner perceives the L1 and L2 as very different (i.e. each typologically distant from one another), the likelihood of cross-linguistic influence will be impeded. Numerous researchers (Cenoz 2001; Montrul et al. 2011; Rast 2010; Rothman 2011; among others) have since extended the concept of psychotypology in their study of multilingual language learners, including those acquiring a third language system; their research has shown that psychotypology plays a vital role in determining the degree to which previously acquired languages (either L1 or L2) impact the acquisition of the third system.

Rothman (2011) has formally expanded the concept of psychotypology for multilingual learners in his contemporary Typological Primacy Model (TPM) model. This model was based on data from a previous study (Rothman and Cabrelli Amaro 2010) and from research that Rothman (2011) conducted in

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23 According to Kellerman (1979), psychotypology is only one of three factors that simultaneously controls cross-linguistic influence in language learning. In addition, the learner’s psychological structure of the native language and the learners’ knowledge of the target language also play a role.
which he examined adjectival interpretation in L3 learners. In the latter study, Rothman’s overarching goal was to determine what variables condition syntactic transfer when one of his participants’ previously acquired language systems shares noun-raising with the target (L3) language, while the other does not. His experiment included 60 participants all together. Aside from the native controls (17 L1-Spanish and 16 L1-Brazilian Portuguese), there were two experimental groups: 12 L3 learners of Spanish who possessed L1-Italian and L2-English; 15 L3 learners of Portuguese who possessed L1-English and L2-Spanish. By creating two experimental groups, the experimenter was able to control for participants’ order of acquisition of English and the typologically closer Romance language (Spanish/Italian). Rothman attributed learners’ target knowledge of adjectival semantic nuances to their knowledge of a Romance language, irrespective of whether it was the L3 learners’ L1 or L2. Rothman’s (2011) findings support Flynn et al.’s (2004) Cumulative Enhancement Model; however he proposes a modification of it, namely that language typology plays a role in determining whether transfer occurs from L1 or L2. He formally refers to this modified model as the Typological Primacy Model (TPM) for multilingual transfer. It is worth noting that although one of the fundamental building blocks of this model is psychotypology, Rothman’s use of this concept differs from Kellerman’s (1983) original use intended for primarily discussing cross-linguistic influence from the L1 in L2 learning. Rather, Rothman employs the concept in a formal model explaining cross-linguistic influence for L3/multilingual learners.

Similar results concerning typological distance were found in Carvalho and Bacelar da Silva’s (2006) investigation of syntactic transfer for adult speakers of English and Spanish who were learning Portuguese as a third system. The main purpose of their study was to examine whether typological distance and order of acquisition play a role for multilingual learners. They employed a cross-directional methodology for grouping their subjects; the first experimental group consisted of 9 L1-English and L2-Spanish participants, whereas the second group was made up of 7 L1-Spanish and L2-English participants. The researchers did not use a control group in this experiment. They recorded participants’ think-aloud process while the participants worked first on pedagogical tasks involving the present and future subjunctive in Portuguese, followed by stimulated recalls. The data showed that participants transferred almost exclusively from Spanish; both positive and negative transfer effects from Spanish
were evident. These findings led Carvalho and Bacelar da Silva to conclude that the main cause was the learners’ perception of the typological closeness between Portuguese and Spanish. Together these studies indicate that cross-linguistic influence does not necessarily stem from a learner’s dominant language. Rather, transfer seems more likely to occur between the learner’s target language and a previous language that he/she perceives as typologically closer to it, regardless of order of acquisition.

Cenoz (2001) puts forward that age is an important factor in determining whether psychotypology plays a role for multilingual language learners. She investigated the source language of transfer for speakers of Basque and Spanish learning English as a third language-system. Her participants were divided into three groups: one group was made up of L1-Basque and L2-Spanish participants, the second was composed of L1-Spanish and L2-Basque participants, and the third was composed of (L1) Basque-only participants. For the learners acquiring English as a third system, both bilingual groups demonstrated overall more transfer from Spanish to English than from Basque to English, the latter pair of which participants correctly perceived as typologically more distant than the relationship between the former pair. She examined whether there is cross-linguistic influence when learners, especially older ones, have previously been exposed to two or more language systems. Cenoz argues that psychotypology plays an even more crucial role for older children and adults because of their more advanced metalinguistic and cognitive development, in comparison to that of younger children. As a result, older children and adults have a more accurate perception of linguistic distance that could influence which source language transfers.

Additionally, Cenoz (2001) suggests that the learners’ perception of typological distance played the most important role for language transfer, and not order of acquisition. This finding is in line with the findings of Rothman (2011) and Carvalho and Bacelar da Silva (2006). The methodology of Rothman’s (2011) experiment allowed for the L2-Status factor to be tested, whereas it was also indirectly examined in Cenoz (2001) and Carvalho and Bacelar da Silva’s (2006) research. Collectively, the findings of these studies contend that there is no evidence to support the L2-Status factor; while these findings do not contradict the CEM model, they do provide a better understanding of which previously acquired language system will likely transfer to the third system. In sum, psychotypology appears to play the strongest role
in cross-linguistic influence.

Psychotypology overrides language proficiency in determining the source language of transfer. Rast (2010) conducted an experiment to observe how learners process a new target language (namely Polish) at the very beginning stages. The participants were 11 L1-French speakers who had subsequently acquired English; for some participants, English was their L2, while for others it was Ln. Although Rast (2010: 166) does not specify exactly how many, she reports that many of the participants were multilinguals: three participants, in particular, had minimal knowledge of Russian, a language typologically related to Polish. What all participants did share was that they were being exposed to Polish as an Ln for the first time. They were tested on their initial exposure, and at various intervals up to 8 hours after their initial exposure. The researcher found that since Russian and Polish are highly inflected languages, the three participants with knowledge of Russian paid closer attention to verbal morphology than other participants. Thus, despite the small sample size, Rast concluded that even minimal knowledge of a background language can be the source of cross-linguistic influence when psychotypology is at play.

In addition, it is important to clarify that the distinction between psychotypology and language typology. The latter measures the linguistic distance between languages referring to the genetic relationship, if any, that the languages share (language families, etc.). The former term, however, refers to the learner’s own perception of what appears similar between the target language and a previously acquired language (cf. Kellerman 1983). An even more notable finding from Rast’s (2010) work was that cross-linguistic influence to Polish did not always necessarily stem from the typologically related language (Russian) for these three participants. Rather, Rast (2010: 180) posits that language transfer can also derive from the perceived similarity between features in a given word or utterance, such as mówić (‘he/she speaks’) in Polish and movie in English; although these words share formal features, they derive from languages with no genetic relationship to each other. In short, what is indeed typologically closer may not always necessarily be what the learner perceives as similar or related.

To summarize this section on “external” motivations, the Interface Hypothesis states that language transfer is weak within the domain of syntax proper, but stronger at interfaces (e.g., syntax-
pragmatics). Furthermore, heritage non-standard dialects constrain HSs’ adult knowledge of the standard dialect of the HL. Finally, when language learners acquire a third system, cross-linguistic influence may not necessarily stem from the dominant language because psychotypology plays a crucial role in determining where language transfer will come from. Even minimal knowledge of a background knowledge can be the source of cross-linguistic influence when psychotypology is involved. Still, there remain structures in heritage grammars that cannot be explained by influence from “external” or other language systems. The next section addresses “internal” motivations for divergence from the baseline.

2.3.2. “INTERNAL” MOTIVATIONS: UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES

Empirical studies (see Polinsky and Kagan [2007] for references) across various languages have shown that HSs’ reanalysis of syntax cannot always be explained by external influences, such as that of the HSs’ dominant language. Instead, Polinsky (2006) proposes that language-internal influences, such as universal principles, may cause heritage syntax to diverge from that of the baseline. Since their knowledge of the baseline is reduced, HSs rely upon universal principles to reanalyze their baseline grammar (leveling of paradigms, increased redundancy and increased analyticism). In support of this hypothesis, Polinsky and Kagan (2007) found that, across a variety of languages, HSs utilize the same strategies when reanalyzing baseline grammars. With regard to clitic word order - i.e. the case examined in this study - open issues remain: (1) what these universal principles in language acquisition are; and (2) how HSs utilize them when reanalyzing the baseline.

Klein and Perdue’s (1997) Basic Variety model explores the universal principles constraining language learners from a functionalist framework. They write that these principles belong to the genetic endowment of the human species and are a “genuine manifestation of the human language faculty” (Klein 1997, 5): from the initial stages of language learning, all learners work with a simple system of phrasal, semantic, and pragmatic constraints. The mental representation of novice-level language learners’ word order is determined by universal phrasal constraints, such as NP - V - NP, V - NP, and NP - Cop - Adj/NP/PP, irrespective of their L1 or the target language.

It is interesting to note that commonalities exist between this functionalist approach to language
Universals and approaches within a generative framework. For instance, from a generative perspective, Kayne (1994) has proposed the universal, underlying word order is S - V - O. This structure parallels the first phrasal constraint (NP₁ - V - NP₂) of Klein and Perdue’s (1997) Basic Variety model. For both approaches, other surface word orders are assumed to have undergone movement resulting in surface structures that violate this order. Based on this similarity in word order between the two approaches, it is possible that a universal principle or strategy upon which language learners may rely is to use a post-verbal position for objects, regardless of the objects’ representation (e.g., a clitic, strong pronoun, or a full NP) in a sentence.

2.4. **Sociolinguistic Considerations**

Traditionally, few researchers working within the generative framework have incorporated sociolinguistic variables into the design of their HLA studies. Montrul (2008: 75) writes that the generative approach “has never been concerned with” explaining how external variables (e.g., age, gender, education, and language use) impact the internal grammar. Yet, since HSs are, by definition, a heterogeneous group in terms of their HL proficiency, a logical step in understanding their grammars would be to account for socio-cultural factors that impact their language acquisition process, such as the variable amount of L1 input that they receive, how many members of the family speak the HL to the child, the status of the minority (HL) language in the society, and when the majority language is introduced in the home. Recently, some researchers, such as Cazzoli-Goeta, Guijarro-Fuentes and Young-Scholten (2010), have proposed that taking into account sociocultural variables can allow us to better understand this population in generative linguistic research. In this section, I provide an overview of two studies that include usage of sociocultural or sociolinguistic variables in the analysis of their data.

After exposure to the majority language, child HSs who continue to use their HL at home with family members and at extra-curricular activities are more likely to delay attrition in their HL. Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky (2008) conducted a study to investigate the morphosyntactic characteristics of child heritage Russian. Their participants included 15 native controls tested in Moscow, and 15 Russian-English bilingual children between the ages of 4 and 11, living in the U.S. In comparison to the native controls,
these child participants in the experimental group showed few aspectual errors; this finding stands in contrast to those of Polinsky (2006), whose research on heritage Russian shows that grammatical aspect becomes lexicalized. Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky (2008) concluded that grammatical aspect is still somewhat robust in the initial stages of the attrition process; that is to say, the loss of aspectual distinctions in Russian does not occur in the early stages of HL attrition. In this sense, these researchers do not refute Polinsky’s (2006) previous work: they suggest that at some later point during the attrition process, child HSs of Russian will likely lose the ability to distinguish between perfective and imperfective aspect.

Yet, after exposure to the majority language, the effects of HL attrition can be slowed down by child HSs’ continued usage of the HL in various social settings. In addition to formal grammatical analyses, Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky (2008) also interpreted their data by examining the role of sociocultural influence in the attrition process. Efforts to maintain the HL among their participants included consistent use of Russian in the home with family members and in extra-curricular activities. They found that child HSs whose parents strongly encouraged them to use the HL for different types of social interactions are more likely to decelerate the attrition process in their HL. Although this finding is plausible based on the overall results of their data, a weakness of Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky’s (2008) work is that one 5-year old participant was entirely home-schooled in Russian and thus had little formal exposure to the majority language.

An additional finding was that despite child HSs’ ability to correctly use aspectual distinctions in their HL, Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky found that child HSs committed numerous lexical errors and errors in morphosyntax. To this end, the child HSs differed from the baseline speakers. Although analyzing these errors was not the main purpose of their research, Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky did discover a negative correlation between the number errors HSs committed in their tasks, and the HSs’ length of uninterrupted L1 usage (i.e., usage of the L1 before exposure to the majority language); in other words, the immigrant children participants who were exposed to the dominant language at earlier ages were more likely to commit lexical errors and errors in morphosyntax. Thus, Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky (2008: 297) concluded that both the length of uninterrupted L1 usage, and the continued HL maintenance after exposure to the
majority language contribute to lessening the impact of attrition.

Adult HSs who consistently use their HL are more likely to possess heritage grammars that converge with those of adult baseline speakers. Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten (2011) investigated attrition in adult HSs of Spanish in the United Kingdom. Their study examined HSs’ usage of sentence-initial non-nominative DPs in comparison to that of monolingual/baseline Spanish speakers. This construction is found at the syntax-discourse pragmatics interface, where divergence of heritage grammars is likely to occur (see earlier discussion in this chapter on work by Hulk and Müller 2000).

Aside from the 10 native-controls, the participants in the experimental group were 24 adult L1-Spanish speakers who were originally from Spain or Latin America and who were now living in the United Kingdom. Although the participants ranged widely in age from 25 to 65, their age of arrival to the UK was controlled, namely from 18 to 25. Additionally all participants had lived in the UK for a minimum of five years. Participants performed two tests, namely an oral production task and an aural judgment/preference task. A strength of Cazzoli-Goeta and Young-Scholten’s work on heritage Spanish is that their research design differs from many previous studies within the generative framework: these researchers elicited more non-traditional sociolinguistic background information from their participants, namely occupation and language choice during specific activities, and used this information in the analysis of their data. Their purpose in doing so was to account for the intensity of participants’ contact with English vs. Spanish. Based on these and other variables, they classified the participants into two groups: “High English Contact” (those who conduct the majority of their daily professional and personal activities in English) vs. “Low English Contact” (those who conduct the majority of their daily activities in Spanish). The results indicated clear differences between the two groups: the High English Contact group showed more divergence from the baseline grammar, in comparison to the Low English Contact group.

Thus, similar to the findings of Bar-Shalom and Zaretsky (2008) for child HSs, it appears that adult HSs who continue to use their HL professionally and in other activities are more likely to lessen the impact of HL attrition. A commonality between these studies that take into account sociocultural or sociolinguistic factors is the researchers’ focus on HSs’ continued input and usage of the HL.
Sociolinguistic and sociocultural approaches may serve as useful tools in future research in allowing us to better understand the development of heritage grammars. Yet, as Cazzoli-Goeta et al. (2010) point out, it would require generative linguists to account for these external variables more seriously in their HLA research. I explore this recent approach in HLA research in my current study.

2.5. **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter, I have shown that the fundamental underpinnings of HLA lie between those of L1 and L2 acquisition. Heritage grammars are hypothesized to diverge from baseline grammars as a result of attrition, incomplete acquisition, or both. Some linguistic properties developed in heritage grammars have been attributed to universal principles, others to cross-linguistic influence. With respect to the latter, the notion of “psychotypology” is considered to be the most influential factor in determining the source language of transfer when three language systems are involved. Thus, transfer does not necessarily stem from the HS’s dominant language. With regard to the role of heritage dialects, although it is recognized that these can constrain HSs’ knowledge of the standard variety of the HL, there have been no studies, as of yet, examining the acquisition of the standard variety by non-standard dialect HSs. This project fills that gap. Finally, generative research that takes into account external factors (e.g., language use, language maintenance) may offer better perspectives on understanding heritage grammars.

In the next chapter I examine sociolinguistic and sociocultural factors that may impact the learning of Standard Italian by HSs of non-standard Italian dialects.
CHAPTER 3. SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS IN THE LEARNING OF ITALIAN AS A “HERITAGE” LANGUAGE

In this chapter I examine the sociocultural factors that impact non-standard Italian dialect HSs’ learning of Standard Italian. First, I present a historical overview of Italian dialects in Italy and in North America. Then I discuss why the term “heritage language learner” is problematic for describing my study’s target population, namely HSs of non-standard Italian dialect, in the Standard Italian classroom. Finally I present an overview of the subfield of Second Dialect Acquisition, with a focus on U.S. and Canadian-based educational programs in Italian.

3.1. THE ITALO-ROMANCE DIALECTS IN ITALY AND IN THE U.S.

Various Italo-Romance dialects are spoken across the Italian peninsula. Each dialect is limited to, and spoken within, a particular area (e.g., town, city or region). Berruto (1989: 7) contends that due to the considerable structural distance between many Italo-Romance dialects, they are truly different linguistic systems and “not mere varieties of the same linguistic system”; thus, many of the Italo-Romance dialects are mutually unintelligible (cf. Pellegrini 1977). Although mutual intelligibility is usually an important factor for grouping different dialects together under one common language, this has not been the case for Italian (DeFina & Fellin 2010: 276). The unification of Italy in 1861 resulted in the collective grouping of the various Italo-Romance dialects spoken within the nation’s political borders under the common language of “Italian.”

With both obligatory schooling in 1859 and political unification in 1861, one particular Italo-Romance dialect was consistently promoted as the national language in Italy, namely a dialect from Tuscany, as Standard Italian.24 By default, the other regional Italo-Romance dialects across the country became non-standard Italian dialects. Although the majority of Italians were initially monolingual speakers of their local Italo-Romance dialect with little to no knowledge of Standard Italian (De Mauro 1963; cf. Castellani 1982),25 much of the population became bilingual with the progression of time due to

24 Although the initial efforts were inconsistent, mass media and internal migration later helped to promote Standard Italian as a lingua franca across Italy.

25 De Mauro (1963) reports that approximately 2.5% of the population spoke Standard Italian, whereas Castellani (1982) argues that this percentage is greater (10%).
variety of factors, such as compulsory education, internal migration and the national mass media. This led Italy to become a diglossic society ("a relatively stable language situation" in which two language systems co-exist and each one is used for different, specific functions [Ferguson 1959]) for much of the late 20th century. Standard Italian was established as the High [H]-language system, used in formal/official domains (e.g. educational institutions and government affairs/settings), while local/regional non-standard Italian dialects became the Low [L]-language system used in all other interactions (e.g. in communication with friends and neighbors in the local community and with some family members in the home depending on domains and situations).

Language attitudes in Italy confirm this general dichotomy (Baroni 1983; Galli de' Paratesi 1984; Ruffino 2006). Galli de’ Paratesi’s (1984) investigation is among the best-known large-scale studies on language attitudes in Italy. By employing a methodology consisting of matched-guise tests (listeners hear one speaker produce various utterances in different dialects or accents, and then rate these utterances on subjective scales based on different sociolinguistic variables, such as education-level, socioeconomic status, etc.), her principal objective was to uncover the attitudes of Italian youths in three cities (Milano, Firenze and Roma) toward certain local accents. The results suggested that many participants associated the Standard Italian accent with higher socioeconomic status and education level. Since her study is confined to only younger participants, it does not show the change of attitudes that may have occurred across generations.

More recently, Ruffino (2006) conducted a large-scale study examining the language attitudes of elementary school-aged children throughout Italy. His methodology consisted of interviewing these students by asking them to elaborate on the differences between Standard Italian (italiano) and non-standard Italian dialect (dialetto). His findings show that even at a young age, children are already aware of the distinction between Standard Italian and non-standard Italian dialects. The results of his study suggest overall negative attitudes among young children toward non-standard Italian dialects, which many of them described as “vulgar” (volgare) and “incorrect” (scorretto). In addition, children associate non-standard Italian dialects with the countryside (campagna) and its antiquated traditions, whereas they

See Sobrero (1997) for a more detailed analysis.
associate the standard dialect with city-type (città) environments and modernity.

Yet, the language situation is much more complex than the simple [H] vs. [L] dichotomy just described. The diglossia in Italy has not always been so clear-cut. With the [H]-system and the [L]-system representing the extremes, a deep continuum of language varieties exists in between, including regional Italian (a variation of the standard dialect whose structure, i.e. phonology, syntax, etc., is influenced by local/regional non-standard dialect features) and popular Italian (a type of Italian imperfectly acquired and fossilized by a speaker of a non-standard Italian dialect), just to name two (cf. Cortelazzo 1972; Mioni and Cortelazzo 1992). However, without wishing to oversimplify the linguistic situation in Italy, for the purposes of my current research I will focus on the ends of the continuum, namely Standard Italian and non-standard Italian dialects.

Within the realm of non-standard Italian dialects themselves, there has existed yet a further stratification that distinguishes non-standard dialects into high [H]- and low [L]-systems. Some researchers (Clivio et al. 2011) classify non-standard Italian dialects such as veneziano (Venetian), milanese (Milanese) and napoletano (Neopolitan) to be [H]-dialect systems, as many Italians perceive these to have “high aesthetic appreciation” (Clivio et al. 2011), possibly due to their esteemed literary or musical traditions. On the other hand, studies on language attitudes in Italy (Galli de’ Paratesi 1984; Ruffino 2006) reveal that many Italians stigmatize Southern non-standard Italian dialects, such as calabrese (Calabrese) and siciliano (Sicilian), and associate negative socioeconomic status with them and their speakers (cf. Baroni 1983; Saladino 1990). Haller (2002) suggests that the low status of the Southern dialects are a reflection of this area of the country’s poor economic conditions through much of the twentieth century and earlier. In short, the stratification of non-standard dialects themselves presents further complexities within the larger scale [H] vs. [L]-dichotomy between non-standard Italian dialects and Standard Italian.

Today, Standard Italian has grown to become the lingua franca used across Italy (cf. De Mauro 1963), whereas in the past, local/regional dialects may have represented barriers for inter-regional communication within the country.27 In this sense, it possesses a more practical role than non-standard

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27 It is interesting to note that most discussions about the language variety continuum that exists between Standard Italian and non-
Italian dialects. Needless to say, as the [H]-language system, Standard Italian implies other social advantages as well. In light of this, many parents have chosen to raise their children in Standard Italian (Cerruti 2011). Yet, the national government’s promotion of Standard Italian as the national language has had repercussions for non-standard Italian dialects. According to ISTAT (2007) data, throughout Italy, the standard dialect has increasingly encroached into the most private domains of language use that were traditionally regarded as non-standard Italian dialect-strongholds (e.g. in the home with family, and in the community with friends). Furthermore, ISTAT reports that there has been a steady increase in Standard Italian usage in society (cf. Coveri et al. 1998). This data indicate that there has been a decline in the rate of diglossia and in the use of non-standard Italian dialects; to describe the linguistic situation of Italy, Berruto (1987) has put forward the term dilalia (both [H]- and [L]-varieties are used in ‘ordinary conversation’, and domains overlap between the [H]- and [L]-varieties [Trumper 1993: 307]).

Further promotion of the standard dialect as the [H]-language system came in 2007 when the Italian Parliament approved a constitutional amendment declaring (Standard) Italian as the ‘official language’ of Italy. Yet, as Guerini (2011: 114-115) points out, since the general Italian public’s language usage and language beliefs already reflected the standard dialect’s status as an official language (i.e. use in bureaucratic functions, use in government agencies and government-funded schools, and other criteria as outlined by Spolsky [2009: 150]), it received little media coverage. Even before this legislative measure, Standard Italian had enjoyed overt prestige (the type of prestige attached to a particular dialect of a language by the community at large that defines how people should speak in order to gain status in the wider community). Standard Italian’s overt prestige is now joined by its “official language” status, which renders it “unique in that it represents an officially sanctioned view of language” (Carroll 2001: 112-113). Yet, this recent recognition of Standard Italian as Italy’s official language was met with disapproval from one particular political group, namely the Lega Nord (a Northern separatist group), that claims that

standard Italian dialects focuses only on spoken varieties, and not written ones.

28 Haller (2013, personal communication) suggests that this has been the case since the 1960s and 1970s, due to the social stigmatization (i.e., dialettofobia) that was prevalent at that time.

29 Other linguists, such as Sobrero and Miletta, have adopted Berruto’s (1987) concept of dilalia. The use of Standard Italian is not only based on the domain. Rather, some speakers use code-mixing (using two or more language systems in the same utterance) in a conversation.
the imposition of Standard Italian as a national language will result in negative repercussions for the local/regional non-standard Italian dialects, and as a consequence, for local/regional identities throughout the Italian nation as well.\(^\text{30}\)

The socially constructed hierarchies of the Italian language in Italy are also found abroad, namely in North America. Haller (1993, 2011) writes that the language attitudes of first-generation Italian immigrants who arrived to the U.S. were more purist-oriented: they tended to favor Italian dialects that are closer to Standard Italian. This he attributes to the stigmatization of non-standard Italian dialects that these immigrants brought from the homeland, and that they experienced abroad as ‘ethnic languages’ of little prestige. It was common for some children and adolescents from immigrant homes to feel embarrassed when using their heritage non-standard Italian dialect in public with their parents (Clivio 1971; see also Mangione 1998).\(^\text{31}\) Although some second- or third-generation Italian Americans share the first generation’s negative attitudes toward their heritage non-standard dialects (Haller 1980), others view their heritage dialects as symbols of ethnicity and family cohesion (Haller 1997: 406). At present, this latter viewpoint is strongly supported by “a renewed sense of ethnic pride taking hold among the younger generations” across different ethnicities (Dillon 2007). Yet, across generations, many Italian-Americans recognize the importance and value of learning the Standard Italian dialect (Haller 1993, 1997, 2011). This would support DeFina and Fellin’s (2010) argument that there is currently an increase in Italian-American students who are studying Standard Italian in the U.S.; their finding, however, is not supported by any statistical data.

To recapitulate the main points of this section, many of the non-standard Italian dialects are mutually unintelligible from each other and from Standard Italian. In contemporary Italy Standard Italian is indisputably the [H]-language system in comparison to the local/regional non-standard Italian dialects,

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\(^{30}\) As reported in La Repubblica on 29 July 2009, the Lega Nord has responded by proposing the teaching of regional (non-standard) Italian dialects, and the need for more rigorous tests for teachers of these dialects, in order to protect local/regional identity. Yet, it is plausible that other political motivations for promoting and using regional non-standard dialects in schools may be to exclude (i.e., discriminate against) recent immigrants and other (Italian) co-regionals.

\(^{31}\) Other examples of stigmatization in the U.S. included the elite/upper-class Italian immigrants who made many working-class Italian immigrants (i.e., laborers) feel that their regional non-standard dialects were inferior to the standard dialect. In addition, many Italian-American children and adolescents from immigrant homes were also embarrassed by the broken English that their parents spoke (cf. Mangione 1998).
which collectively represent the [L]-language system. Furthermore, southern non-standard Italian dialects are often downgraded and socially stigmatized, while other dialects are not; this has led to a complex sociolinguistic situation with respect to language attitudes among Italians in Italy and Italian-Americans in North America. Finally, there are also many Italian-Americans who recognize the value and importance of learning the standard dialect.

3.2. NON-STANDARD ITALIAN DIALECT HERITAGE SPEAKERS WHO ARE LEARNING STANDARD ITALIAN

Classifying non-standard Italian dialect HSs in the Standard Italian classroom presents some complexities. First, following the definitions set forth by Polinsky (2010), Rothman (2009) and Valdés (1995), using the term "heritage speaker" (HS) to describe an Italian-American who grows up hearing, and possibly speaking, a non-standard Italian dialect in the home/family, in addition to learning the majority language of the host country - English (in the context of U.S.) - is not problematic in of itself. In terms of their heritage language proficiency, for instance, they are a heterogeneous group: on one end of the spectrum there are HSs who possess high levels of fluency and a rich lexicon in the heritage language, whereas on the other end, there are HSs who possess only minimal aural comprehension in the heritage language. Yet, the issue becomes much more problematic when describing a non-standard Italian dialect HS in the Standard Italian classroom by classifying him/her as a "heritage language learner".

There has been some debate as to whether a HS of a non-standard Italian dialect can be considered a HL learner when studying an Italian dialect different from his/her baseline language (i.e., the language system to which a speaker is exposed since birth). The core of this issue rests on the fundamental interpretation of the term “heritage language.” Polinsky & Kagan (2007) write that there are

32 Aside from the factor of language proficiency, non-standard Italian dialect HSs are similar to other larger HS-groups in the host country, such as Latinos and Chinese, in that they experience the same positive and negative affective features of speaking a heritage language. Positive affective attributes include the intimacy of sharing the dialect as a lingua del cuore, or "secret" code, used for bonding with older family members (Haller 2011: 62), whereas negative attributes include experiencing the stigmatization of growing up speaking an immigrant/ethnic language that is different from the majority language of the host country. As a result of the latter, many HSs go through periods of rejection of their heritage culture and assimilate, to varying degrees, into the mainstream culture of the host country (Danesi 1986). See the large body of literature (e.g., Gabaccia 1984) on the assimilation of Italian-Americans in North America.
two conceptions of this term, namely a broad interpretation and a narrow one. A broad interpretation refers to possible links between a speaker’s cultural heritage and his/her linguistic heritage (see Fishman [2001] and Van Deussen-Scholl [2003] for a more detailed explanation). In other words, a learner’s familial or ancestral connection to the language system taught in the classroom is sufficient to classify him/her as a HL learner, regardless of linguistic proficiency. Under this broad interpretation, any students with Italian ancestry may be considered HL learners in the Standard Italian classroom: this includes those who possess no proficiency in any Italian dialect, those who possess knowledge of non-standard Italian dialect(s) only, those who possess knowledge of Standard Italian only, and those who possess knowledge of Standard Italian and non-standard Italian dialects.

On the other hand, a more narrow understanding of the term includes only those learners whose baseline language matches the language system taught in the classroom (Polinsky & Kagan 2007; Valdés 1995; 2000). In this sense, HL learners in the Standard Italian classroom are only those students whose baseline language is Standard Italian. It is the latter, narrower conception of “heritage languages” and “heritage language learners” upon which many linguists agree (see Polinsky & Kagan [2007] and Rothman [2007] for more thorough discussions). In my current investigation, I follow this more narrow interpretation of the two terms to describe this student population in the U.S.

Evidence which directs us to consider the narrower interpretation of the terms “heritage languages” and “heritage language learners” lies in the lack of mutual intelligibility that may exist among the dialects of a common language. Since many of the non-standard Italian dialects (e.g., piedmontese, pugliese) are structurally distant from Standard Italian, one could argue that these learners are studying a foreign language system, similar to their monolingual English-speaking peers in the U.S. who have also had no exposure to Standard Italian in the home/family. Furthermore, from the perspective of the generative linguistics framework (Chomsky 2000: 59), each non-standard dialect is considered a separate linguistic system regardless of how close or distant each is to the standard. It is this formal/generative

33 There is some debate as to whether there exist true L1/baseline speakers of Standard Italian. According to Berruto (1989) and Cerruti (2011), one can argue that at present there are no L1/"native speakers" of Standard Italian because regional non-standard dialectal features still bear noticeable influence on the Standard Italian spoken across the peninsula. Children raised in homes where Standard Italian is spoken exclusively are in actuality being exposed to a regional variety of Standard Italian (italiano regionale). Thus, there are baseline speakers of italiano regionale. In addition, Haller (2013, personal communication) observes that a speaker can use one type of "standard" dialect in a professional setting, while he/she also uses another type of "standard" dialect in a domestic/familial setting. The crux of the issue here may lie in the ideology of how one defines "Standard Italian."
perspective that I adopt for my current investigation. Therefore, even for the HSs of non-standard Italian dialects that are structurally closer to Standard Italian (e.g., umbro, marchigiano, veneziano, romano), it is important to keep in mind that since their baseline was their regional dialect, they can still be considered to be studying a foreign language in the Standard Italian classroom.

Another issue is that for some, classifying these learners as foreign language learners (students with no background in the language that they are studying) in an Italian language course may appear to be somewhat of a paradox. On the one hand, HSs of non-standard Italian dialects may fit the definition of "foreign language learners" since they have had no exposure in the home/family to the standard dialect taught in the classroom. On the other hand, however, they do possess both a cultural connection to, and knowledge of a baseline language that is (politically) “associated with,” the language system taught in the classroom. That is to say, these learners differ from their mainstream English-monolingual counterparts who generally have no cultural or linguistic connection to the Italian language at all. Suffice it to say, classifying non-standard dialect HSs who are learning the standard dialect appears to be a complex task.

Clearly the term "heritage language learner" does not adequately describe HSs of non-standard Italian dialects who are learning Standard Italian. Since the baseline for these learners is not Standard Italian, this raises the question of which research fields are best suited to inform pedagogues on the needs of this student population. Research on Second Language Acquisition may best inform pedagogues on how to teach this population who has had no previous exposure to the language system taught in the classroom. On the other hand, given the socially constructed hierarchies of the various dialects comprised in the Italian language, research on Second Dialect Acquisition may provide an appropriate framework for pedagogues in understanding the sociocultural contexts in which non-standard Italian dialect HSs learn Standard Italian in North America.

In the next section I explore the framework of Second Dialect Acquisition research to shed light on the teaching of Standard Italian to this student population.

3.3. SECOND DIALECT ACQUISITION

A subfield of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research is Second Dialect Acquisition (SDA).
Siegel (2003: 197) writes that SDA is a term used “when the sociolinguistic relationship between the L1 and the L2 is such that their speakers consider them to be varieties of the same language, ... and we can talk of speakers of one dialect (D1) acquiring another dialect (D2).” In applying this definition to the Standard Italian classroom, whether or not Italo-Romance dialect speakers consider their D1 to be a "variety" of the "Italian" language is a very complex issue, as described in the previous section of this chapter. Yet, staying within a sociolinguistic framework, as Siegel's definition requires, many speakers consider the various Italo-Romance languages within Italy's political borders to fall under the common "Italian" language (Danesi 1986). Thus, this definition can accommodate the complex sociolinguistic relationship between standard and non-standard dialects in Italy’s diglossic society over the past 150 years. As I will show in the next subsections, the research on SDA in educational contexts provides an appropriate framework for understanding the social context of the formal (i.e. instructed) learning of Standard Italian by HSs of non-standard Italian dialects in North America.  

SDA distinguishes itself from SLA in two main respects. First, unlike in SLA research where the L2 can be a foreign language, or the majority language of the country where the learner resides, in SDA research the D2 is always a standard or prestige dialect used in the language education program or system. Siegel (2010: 198) adds that the D1, unlike the L1, is almost always socially stigmatized by dominant social groups. An important sociolinguistic implication of this educational structure is that since only the standard dialect is taught in formal educational settings, this may reinforce these learners’ negative attitudes toward their own heritage dialects (e.g., the belief that non-standard dialects are not valued since they are not worth teaching in formal educational systems) and lead them to experience, what Danesi (1974: 196) terms as, "sociolinguistic deprivation".

The second issue distinguishing SDA research from SLA research is that of "language distance" or typological difference. In general, the language distance between an L1 and L2 in SLA situations is

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34 Extensive research has also been done on SDA in naturalistic contexts; see Siegel (2010) for a comprehensive overview of studies. In my current investigation, the focus will primarily be on SDA in educational contexts.

35 To my knowledge, there is only one study in SDA research of naturalistic contexts that focuses on the D2 acquisition of a non-standard dialect. On the other hand, there are little to no studies in the SDA research of educational contexts where the D2 is not a standard dialect.

36 Danesi's (1974) use of this term implies that these learners may feel that they have been deprived of learning a socioculturally non-stigmatized Italian dialect, namely the standard.
greater than that between a D1 and a D2. Siegel (2003, 2010) notes two issues in SDA research that arise due to the general similarities between the D1 and the D2: (1) transfer is more likely to occur when varieties are more similar (cf. Kellerman 1983); and (2) learners are often unaware of any differences between their D1 and the standard dialect (D2) (Chesire 1982; Craig 1988). In the context of formal HL learning, Valdés (1995) writes that many D1 speakers do not recognize differences in structures or lexical items between their D1 and the standard/prestige dialect (D2). Unlike L2 learners, when non-standard dialect HL learners attempt to speak the standard dialect, they frequently make the mistaken assumption that some language features found exclusively in non-prestige dialects and which are highly stigmatized by prestige dialect speakers are also part of the standard dialect (Valdés 1995: 312). This finding supports Haugen's (1964: 125) argument that bidialectalism can be more difficult to attain than bilingualism.

One SDA study that addresses the issue of acquiring the standard dialect in a formal HL learning setting is Fairclough's (2005) investigation on heritage Spanish verb tenses (and moods) in hypothetical clauses. The researcher chose this syntactic structure because of the variation in verb tenses and moods between non-standard Spanish dialects and Standard Spanish. Her participants were two groups of university students who were formally learning Spanish: 141 HSs of a non-standard dialect of Spanish, and 142 L2 learners of Spanish. There were two main objectives to Fairclough's study: first, she compared the acquisition process between the two groups; second, the researcher attempted to determine for the heritage group whether their acquisition of the standard dialect was additive or subtractive of their non-standard dialect (D1). The participants performed a variety of tasks, namely writing paragraphs, cloze-type tests focusing on the targeted structure, acceptability judgment tasks, and oral interviews. Overall, a notable similarity between the two groups was that they produced higher percentages of accuracy in standard Spanish for this structure in tasks where they paid more attention to form (e.g., acceptability judgment tasks) as opposed to those where they paid more attention to meaning.

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37 Yet, there are cases where the typological distance between an L1 and an L2 are less than that between a D1 and a D2; consider, for example, the non-standard Italian dialects of piemontese and pugliese.

38 Although transfer is more likely to occur if the dialects are similar, it does not necessarily occur.
(e.g., oral interviews).

Yet, the heritage group acquired the standard dialect's target verb tenses and moods at a slower rate in comparison to the L2 learners. Fairclough attributes this finding to negative transfer from the HSs' D1. This appears to support Haugen's (1964) position that the more similar two language systems are to one another, the more difficult it may be for speakers to keep them apart. Along these lines, the researcher found that the heritage group in general does not distinguish standard (D2) constructions from those found in their heritage non-standard (D1); Fairclough (p. 131) concludes that these HL learners "do not differentiate their Spanish as two separate systems." An unexpected result of this study was that any evidence of additive bidialectalism was found in the opposite direction of that which was anticipated, namely from D2 to D1: some D2 forms were acquired to fill the gaps in the D1 where needed. The D1 forms were unaffected.

In terms of the pedagogical implications as a result of this study, the researcher argues that explicit grammatical instruction alone is not enough for heritage learners to acquire the standard dialect's target forms. Rather, Fairclough (2005: 134-136) supports a "contrastive approach" to teaching this syntactic structure, combined with validating the importance of the learners' D1, and the teaching of sociolinguistic awareness about different dialects. Therefore, pedagogues of heritage languages should take into consideration that presenting comparative structures between the D1-D2 is not suffice for D2 acquisition to occur. It appears that language courses may need to include other activities on linguistic diversity in order to arouse students' interests in, and raise awareness about, these sociolinguistic issues. What exactly these activities are and their actual effect on learners' D1 remain an open question. In turn, by raising these learners' awareness, they may be better able to attain the specific linguistic goals that their instructors set.

In brief, SDA and SLA are related, but different research fields. Given the sociolinguistic complexities of Italian dialects, SDA can better inform pedagogues on the sociocultural context in which non-standard Italian dialect HSs acquire the standard dialect. Finally, in formal HL learning contexts, raising sociolinguistic awareness is a vital component to supplement explicit grammar instruction in an effort to enhance the acquisition process of the standard dialect.
3.4. SECOND DIALECT ACQUISITION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

In this section, I focus on two issues that have generated debate in SDA research on educational programs: (1) learners’ and teachers’ attitudes toward the standard and non-standard dialects; and (2) the use of the D1 in the standard dialect (D2) classroom. An overview of these issues will provide a better understanding of the sociolinguistic factors that impact non-standard dialect speakers who are studying the standard dialect.

One factor contributing to non-standard dialect speakers' success in the standard dialect (D2) classroom is their teachers' attitudes toward non-standard dialects. Reagan (2002: 5) puts forward that there is “an implicit assumption in everyday language” that standard dialects are somehow “better” than non-standard dialects of a language. It may be possible that some teachers are not even aware that non-standard dialects are rule-governed and that errors in learners’ acquisition of the standard can result from systematic differences. Without sufficient sociolinguistic training, some teachers may also not be able to distinguish the errors caused by systematic differences between the D1 and the D2 and from those caused by carelessness (Siegel 2010: 5). In either case, Cheshire (1982: 63) argues that teachers who view dialectal features as “mistakes of grammar” in non-standard dialect speakers' use of the standard may form a low opinion of these learners' competence. A teacher's lower expectations of these students generally lead to their lower performance in the end (e.g., Fairchild and Edwards-Evans 1990; Irvine 1990: 43-61) since students often internalize how teachers feel about them. Collectively, these studies suggest that language teachers should receive training in dialectology and sociolinguistics.

Another consequence of teachers not receiving proper sociolinguistic training is that learners may eventually adopt their teacher's negative attitudes toward their non-standard D1. Since in many societies non-standard dialects (e.g., regional dialects, ethnic dialects, social dialects) are often stigmatized by speakers of dialects that are closer to the national standard (Siegel 2010: 5), many learners already possess these feelings of linguistic inferiority even before they begin their standard dialect studies. This has often been the case for many non-standard Italian dialect HSs who are learning Standard Italian in North America (Danesi 1974; Haller 1980; Repetti 1995). For instance, a teacher of the standard dialect who does not possess sociolinguistic training will likely reinforce a learner's negative attitudes and
stereotypes about his/her heritage non-standard dialect. Teachers who view students' heritage non-standard dialect as an impediment to the standard dialect acquisition process may bring about damaging effects upon the learners, such as a state of suffering and a sense of inferiority for students (Clivio 1971). I will discuss the issue of teacher training for pedagogues of Standard Italian in much greater detail in a later section of this chapter.

Within the context of HL instruction in North America, Martínez (2003) suggests that although sociolinguistic training for teachers is critical in raising awareness and promoting linguistic sensitivity for teaching the standard dialect to non-standard dialect HSs, attention also needs to be devoted to how pedagogues implement sociolinguistic awareness into classroom activities. Writing on the teaching of standard Spanish for non-standard dialect HSs, Martínez proposes classroom-based dialect awareness programs that foster a deeper social understanding of language variation by exploring the functions, the distribution, and the evaluation of dialects. A benefit of these programs' classroom activities is that they promote learners' critical thinking skills in examining dialectal variation. He further adds that dialect awareness should begin at the elementary levels of HL learning, even though currently most programs that do address issues of linguistic diversity begin dialect awareness instruction in advanced-level courses only; issues of linguistic diversity are typically not addressed in the lower levels of language instruction. Although Fairclough (2005) found that in order for standard dialect acquisition to occur, explicit grammar instruction contrasting D1 and D2 features needs to be supplemented by sociolinguistic learning activities, she never explains what these activities are. Martínez's work, which focuses on sociolinguistic training for the HL learner, may fill this gap.

Turning now to another issue that has generated much debate in research on SDA educational programs is that of D1 use in the standard dialect (D2) classroom. In fact, such debate is often heated, especially in the public arena (e.g., the public reaction to the Oakland [California] Board of Education's 1996 resolution to use Ebonics [African American Vernacular English] to teach Standard American English). Siegel (2010) observes that there has been a great deal of opposition, mainly from parents and educators, in allowing learners to use their D1 in the classroom for the purpose of acquiring the D2; opponents tend to favor immersion programs and many pose arguments attacking the legitimacy and
appropriateness of differentiating instruction for non-standard dialect speakers. Nevertheless, previous research (Actouka and Lai 1989; Fogel and Ehri 2000; Pandey 2000; Taylor 1989; Yiakoumetti 2006; see Siegel [2010] for additional references) across different languages reveals that the use of the D1 in the classroom does not inhibit the learning of the standard dialect (D2); rather the D1, when used as a resource, can accelerate or improve the D2 acquisition process and does not produce the detrimental effects that opponents have suggested. In fact, some benefits of valuing the D1 and/or using it as a resource include higher test scores on literacy assessments and improved overall academic achievement (Siegel 2003). Interestingly, this finding parallels those in the long-lasting debate in bilingual education regarding whether immersion programs are more beneficial than transitional programs to L2 learners.

Siegel (1999; 2003) has identified three types of SDA educational programs that incorporate the D1 in instruction, namely *instrumental* programs (the D1 is used a medium of instruction to teach literacy and content subjects\(^{41}\)), *accommodation* programs (students can use the D1 in the classroom, but the D1 is not a medium of instruction nor the focus of study), and *awareness* programs (the D1 itself is the focus of study). Awareness programs, in particular, include a sociolinguistic component and a contrastive component. Siegel (2003) points out that the three program-types share some general commonalities: first, the standard dialect is taught as the D2; second, they foster *additive bidialectalism* (the acquisition of the D2 is not with the goal, nor at the expense, of eradicating the learners’ D1); and third, they aim to improve students’ linguistic self-respect. Clearly in all these programs the D1 is always treated as a resource and, particularly in the case of awareness programs, the importance of D1 is valued throughout the D2-acquisition process.

\(^{39}\) Siegel (2010) discusses how opponents of SDA cite their concern for students: they believe that SDA programs are a waste of time and a form of *ghettoisation* (further disadvantaging non-standard dialect speakers).

\(^{40}\) The sociocultural context for HL learners is distinct from that found in most SDA studies since in the former, non-standard dialect speakers are acquiring the standard dialect in an immigrant setting; these learners are also dominant in the majority language of the host country in which they reside. In most traditional SDA studies, D1 speakers are acquiring a standard dialect that is usually the majority language of the country/community in which they reside. Recent SDA research (e.g., Siegel 2010) includes Heritage Language Acquisition as a related subfield and/or research area.

\(^{41}\) These programs parallel transitional bilingual education programs in which L1 literacy skills are taught with the purpose of students’ transferring them to their L2.
3.4.1. SECOND DIALECT ACQUISITION EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS IN ITALIAN

Awareness programs reflect the most common type of learning scenario designed for non-standard Italian HSs who are learning Standard Italian in North America. Many researchers (e.g., Danesi 1974; Haller 1980; Repetti 1995) have suggested that non-standard Italian dialects should play a central role in the curriculum of any Italian program. Pedagogues can incorporate the non-standard dialects into existing (standard dialect) courses of the Italian program, and/or create separate courses that specialize on Italian dialectology. In either case, the role that non-standard dialects play will vary based on each course’s pedagogical focus: language, literature or linguistics. Regardless of course-type, however, one common underlying goal of awareness programs in Italian is to remove the negative attitudes toward non-standard Italian dialects that these learners may possess.

In the next subsections, I will explore how language, linguistics and literature courses meet this goal and the role that non-standard Italian dialects play in the Standard Italian classroom.

3.4.1.1. NON-STANDARD ITALIAN DIALECTS IN LANGUAGE COURSES

Standard Italian language courses in awareness programs can help to remove the negative misconceptions about non-standard Italian dialects through the courses' teaching methodology, namely by using the non-standard dialects as a resource to facilitate the learning of the standard. Instructors can use the non-standard Italian dialects by employing a teaching methodology of contrastive analysis, which is a cornerstone of awareness programs in general (cf. Siegel 1999 & 2003). For example, in Italian language courses, Danesi (1974) proposes that teachers should explore a non-standard Italian dialect HS’s linguistic background and profile (i.e., find out which non-standard Italian dialect he/she speaks in the home/family) and examine how structures across the various linguistic domains (e.g., phonological, syntactic, etc.) in the learner’s heritage non-standard dialect compare to the structure of Standard Italian - the target language. Once these contrasts are discovered, the teacher should then prepare supplementary materials to help learners acquire the standard dialect; the materials are

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42 Naturally, the practicality of this methodology varies depending on the composition of students in each Standard Italian classroom (i.e., whether there are more students who are HSs of non-standard Italian dialects than students who have no background with any Italian dialect).
differentiated for learners based on the regional dialect that he/she speaks. Learners come to understand through this contrastive analysis methodology that many of their difficulties in acquiring Standard Italian are due to systematic, and not random, errors of cross-linguistic influence from their heritage non-standard Italian dialect.\(^{43}\) That is, these learners can develop a more positive perception of their heritage non-standard Italian dialects, seeing as to how they are also rule-governed and full language systems, contrary to sociocultural purist attitudes in Italy and North America that consider the non-standard dialects to be arbitrary or corrupt language systems\(^{44}\) (cf. Repetti 1995).

One may argue that Danesi’s (1974) work brings into question the practicality of using contrastive analysis in current instructed SLA settings, in light of recent SLA research findings on this methodology. In Second Language Teaching, a subfield of SLA research, contrastive analysis has developed a negative stigma which it acquired in the post-audiolingual era of the 1970s (see Danesi [1991: 4-11] for a more detailed description of its decline through Second Language Teaching history). Thus, the pedagogical activities that Danesi proposed (e.g., recognition drills, repetition/pattern drills, production drills) may no longer have validity in light of SLA research findings in recent decades. Yet, although recent instructed SLA research has, to a great extent, distanced itself from contrastive analysis approaches (Danesi 1991: 70), Siegel (2003) proposes that this methodology is increasingly being used in instructed SDA settings. Since one of the main obstacles that D2 learners encounter in SDA educational contexts is the lack of awareness of differences between their D1 and the D2, contrastive analysis approaches allow for learners to examine the structure of their D1 and to compare it to that of the standard dialect (D2), and also prevent potential errors that may result from their lack of recognizing differences between the dialects. What is most important is that these contrastive analysis activities oblige learners to pay attention to target language forms, which is necessary for acquisition to occur (cf. Schmidt 1993; Wong 2002).\(^{45}\)

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\(^{43}\) I will put aside any influence from their dominant language (i.e., English, in the North American context). Although this may be a possible source of cross-linguistic influence, psychotypology may attribute a stronger role to the heritage non-standard Italian dialect more so; see the previous chapter for a more detailed discussion.

\(^{44}\) Winer (1995) points out that also many non-standard dialect speakers themselves subscribe to the belief that non-standard dialects are not rule-governed.

\(^{45}\) For instance, see Wong’s (2002) detailed description of Grammar Consciousness Raising tasks. Although designed for instructed
A strength of Danesi’s (1974) work is that he raises the issue of teachers needing to differentiate the supplementary materials based on each non-standard Italian dialect HS’s regional dialectal background. Differentiating the supplementary materials is useful to the student since there are some general differences in grammatical structures between the northern and southern Italian dialects themselves, in addition to their contrasts with the standard dialect. Although Danesi (1974: 200-201) strongly suggests that teachers pay attention to regional differences, namely northern dialects vs. southern dialects, when preparing contrastive analysis activities to teach Standard Italian phonology, he argues against such differentiation in the linguistic domains of morphology and syntax because in these domains “the formal linguistic error-type is shared by most dialectophones”. He forms this generalization based on his observations that regardless of regional Italian dialect background (northern vs. southern dialects), most non-standard Italian dialect HSs tend to confuse tenses in conditional if-clauses, incorrectly use the indicative instead of the subjunctive, etc. Nevertheless, it may be plausible to consider that when teachers differentiate materials to address issues in syntax according to a learner’s heritage regional Italian dialect, learners may gain exposure to, and consequently develop knowledge and usage of, syntactic structures that are grammatical in the standard dialect, but ungrammatical in their heritage dialect. In other words, putting aside for a moment the use of contrastive analysis for error-treatment, a teacher’s preparation of pedagogical material based on a learner’s regional dialectal background may allow the learner to more easily acquire syntactic structures in the standard dialect that may otherwise be unavailable in his/her heritage dialect. I examine this issue in my current investigation.

3.4.1.2. NON-STANDARD ITALIAN DIALECTS IN LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS COURSES

Haller (1980) suggests that Italian literature courses can value non-standard dialects as language systems of high prestige in order to combat the disparaging attitudes that non-standard dialect HSs may
possess. By incorporating non-standard dialects into Standard Italian literature courses, the non-standard dialects are presented in a different light. Learners grow sensitive to the stylistic nuances that many famous Standard Italian authors employ in their writing, and as a result, learners are better able to interpret these texts. Furthermore, some higher education Italian studies programs have courses that center on non-standard dialects (Haller 1980); non-standard Italian dialect HSs become exposed to the rich and prestigious tradition of dialect literature from Cinquecento writers to nineteenth- and twentieth-century poets, dialect cinema from the 1950s, and dialect music, such as the Neopolitan Piedigrotta tradition and famous operas. The pedagogical goal is “on reading and reciting, in order to appreciate the dialects’ invaluable expressive and affective treasures, which are often unequalled by their Standard counterpart” (Haller 1980: 197). What is not the intended instructional goal is for learners to develop fluency in the various non-standard dialects studied in literature. Rather, the purpose is to familiarize learners with the structure of non-standard Italian dialects so that they can appreciate the linguistic diversity of Italian literature; needless to say, this goal is well in line with the general framework of awareness programs. Thus, learners are able to combat the perceptions of lower status that many non-standard Italian dialect HSs have often associated with the non-standard Italian dialects.

A linguistics course on Italian dialectology can also fight the feelings of linguistic deprivation that many non-standard Italian dialect HSs experience. An objective and scholarly approach to studying the various dialects of Italy can allow for Italian American students to eliminate prejudice towards the non-standard dialects, including their own heritage dialects (cf. Haller 1980). This scholarly approach often allows for class discussions on linguistic and cultural diversity in Italy and in Italian-speaking communities. Repetti (1995) proposes that the purpose of such a linguistics course is to acquaint students with the complex sociolinguistic situation of Italy, both from historical and contemporary perspectives. To explore Italy’s multilingualism would be a fundamental objective of such a linguistics course. Similar to the literature courses discussed above, a linguistics course in an awareness program also does not aim to teach students oral proficiency in the non-standard dialect(s). Rather, the focus is on appreciating the history and structure of non-standard Italian dialects, in comparison to each other, and to the standard dialect.
Repetti (1995) puts forward that this linguistics course should be divided into six topical units and suggests learning activities for each. First, learners become familiar with the early linguistic history of the Italian peninsula, namely the pre-classical languages, the introduction of Latin and the foreign influences after the fall of the Roman empire; she proposes that learners use primary sources (e.g., Pellegrini’s *Carta dei dialetti d’Italia*) to learn about the main isoglosses that divide the different dialect families. Second, students and the instructor choose a few dialects to analyze in depth by examining their structure across various linguistic domains (e.g., phonology, morphology, syntax, etc.). Third, learners become familiar with the resources available to studying Italian dialects, such as linguistic atlases, journals, and dialect dictionaries. Fourth, students explore the linguistic minorities in Italy (e.g., speakers of Greek, Albanian, Chinese, etc.). In the fifth unit, students examine the development of Italian dialects outside of Italy, namely in immigrant contexts. Finally, in the last unit learners study various sociolinguistic issues that focus on how non-standard dialects interact with the standard dialect in Italy.

A strength of Repetti’s course design is that it provides students with an excellent point of departure to embark on their own investigations about the dialects of Italy. In line with the best practices of current pedagogical theory, students’ interest can guide their individual learning: for instance, in the second unit, non-standard Italian dialect HSs have the opportunity to explore the structure and origins of their own heritage dialect(s). Learners realize that dialects are not sublanguages of Standard Italian, but rather are full languages themselves. They learn that Standard Italian originated from one of the many regional Italo-Romance dialects spoken across the Italian peninsula; as a result, they begin to dispel the erroneous beliefs that the non-standard Italian dialects derive from the standard dialect, or that they are corrupt forms of Standard Italian. Learning these facts allow non-standard dialect HSs to free themselves from the negative attitudes they may possess toward non-standard Italian dialects.

### 3.4.1.3. AWARENESS PROGRAMS FOR TEACHERS OF STANDARD ITALIAN

Across all course-types (i.e., language, literature, linguistics), another common goal specific to awareness programs in Italian is teacher training. Scholars (Danesi 1974, Haller 1980; Pelletier 1986; Repetti 1995) generally concur that teachers of Standard Italian need to be aware of the linguistic
sensitivity required when working with non-standard Italian dialect HSs who are studying Standard Italian. Following research on the affective component in language learning, Danesi (1974, 1986) posits that the attitude of both the learner and the teacher is a crucial factor in determining the success of HL learning. As discussed earlier, teachers of Standard Italian who view a learner's heritage non-standard Italian dialect as a disadvantage or a problem in language learning may often cause anxiety, frustration and too much self-consciousness for the learner. In fact, such a learner who experiences these negative emotions are less likely to be successful at, or continue to pursue, Italian language studies. Danesi argues that in language courses of awareness programs, teachers should be encouraged to create positive learning environments that incorporate the learner's heritage non-standard Italian dialect into Standard Italian classroom activities. Thus, training teachers to develop positive attitudes toward their learners’ heritage non-standard Italian dialect is of prime importance since many of these learners already associate their heritage dialects with low-class status and sociolinguistic deprivation (Danesi 1974: 196).

Literature and linguistics courses also aim to prepare future teachers of Standard Italian with positive attitudes toward non-standard Italian dialects. In literature courses, Haller (1980: 197) writes that dialect studies allow prospective teachers to gain insight into the language structures of various Italo-Romance dialects; acquiring this insight, in turn, can allow teachers to recognize the "diglottic interferences" surfacing in the Standard Italian speech and writing of non-standard Italian dialect HSs, such as the use of avere for essere in the passato prossimo, and the use of the passato remoto in place of the passato prossimo. Additionally, Repetti (1995: 510) writes that through a historical and sociolinguistic examination of Italian dialects (both standard and non-standard), linguistics courses should help future teachers realize three important points: (1) the dialects are not corrupted forms of Italian, but are sister languages of Italian and of each other; (2) the dialects can be as different from each other and from Standard Italian as French is from Portuguese; (3) the dialects are complete language languages, which are perfectly capable of expressing any concept, any thought, and anything else that any other language is capable of expressing. In summary, by preparing teachers of Standard Italian with adequate sociolinguistic training, they will be better equipped to deal with the affective factors of language teaching when working with the non-standard Italian dialect HS population.
To sum up the main points of this section, the use of the D1 in the classroom does not inhibit the acquisition of the standard dialect (D2). In fact, when teachers use the D1 as a resource to facilitate D2 learning, students can value their own heritage dialect and begin to disassociate it from social stigma. The teacher’s attitude toward non-standard dialects plays a crucial role in determining how successful non-standard dialect speakers will be in their acquisition of the standard dialect. In line with these findings, awareness programs in Italian have focused on sociolinguistic training for teachers and on removing non-standard Italian dialect HSs’ disparaging attitudes toward their heritage dialects.

3.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The sociocultural context in which non-standard Italian dialect HSs learn Standard Italian in North America is quite complex. Therefore, whereas SLA research may better inform pedagogues on the teaching of linguistic features of Standard Italian, SDA research provides a better framework for understanding the sociocultural learning environment for this student population. Awareness approaches in SDA educational programs perceive the learner’s heritage dialect as a resource for, rather than as an impediment to, learning the standard dialect in the classroom. By examining each learner's linguistic background, teachers can then prepare pedagogical materials for non-standard Italian dialect HSs to better facilitate their acquisition of the standard dialect. Finally, although previous research has put into question whether teachers of Standard Italian should differentiate materials based on a learner’s regional dialect with regard to the acquisition of the standard dialect’s syntactic structures, I intend to explore this issue in greater detail in this investigation.
CHAPTER 4. ITALIAN CLITICS AND WORD ORDER

To better appreciate the aims and results of the present study, it is necessary to understand how clitic placement functions in Standard Italian and in regional Italian dialects, with particular attention to constructions with clitic climbing.

Italian has clitics, weak pronouns and strong pronouns. In contrast, English uses mostly non-clitic pronouns. Present in most Romance languages (Cardinaletti & Starke 1999; Montrul 2010a, 2010b), clitics differ from strong pronouns in that they must attach to a host, which in Italian is the verb. In what immediately follows, I introduce clitics and their placement in Standard Italian, NIDs and SIDs in addition to presenting examples of clitic climbing.

4.1. CLITICS AND CLITIC CLIMBING IN STANDARD ITALIAN

“Object clitics” can refer to accusative (direct object) and dative (indirect object) clitics. Table 1 lists these clitics in Standard Italian.

Table 1. Direct vs. Indirect Object Clitics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIRECT OBJECT CLITICS</th>
<th>INDIRECT OBJECT CLITICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mi (1sg. Acc) ‘me’</td>
<td>mi (1sg. DAT) ‘to/for me’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ti (2sg. Acc) ‘you’</td>
<td>ti (2sg. DAT) ‘to/for you’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lo (3sg. masc. Acc) ‘him, it’</td>
<td>gli (3sg. masc. DAT) ‘to/for him’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la (3sg. fem. Acc) ‘her, it’</td>
<td>le (3sg. fem. DAT) ‘to/for her’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ci (1pl. Acc) ‘us’</td>
<td>ci (1pl. DAT) ‘to/for us’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi (2pl. Acc) ‘you (all)’</td>
<td>vi (2pl. DAT) ‘to/for you (all)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>li (3pl. masc. Acc) ‘them’</td>
<td>gli (3pl. masc. DAT) ‘to/for them’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>le (3pl. fem. Acc) ‘them’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The finiteness of the verb determines a clitic’s placement. Object clitics can procliticize on to, i.e. precede, a finite verb in Standard Italian, as shown in example in (1b).

(1a) Gianluca compra il latte.
    Gianluca buys the milk
    ‘Gianluca buys the milk.’
Ungrammaticality occurs if the object clitic remains in the complement position of the verb, as in example (1c). In contrast, full NPs and strong pronouns follow a finite verb in unmarked sentences. Table 2 indicates strong pronouns in Italian.

Table 2. Strong Pronouns in Italian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STRONG PRONOUNS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>me (1sg. Acc)</td>
<td>'me'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te (2sg. Acc)</td>
<td>'you'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lui (3sg. masc. Acc)</td>
<td>'him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lei (3sg. fem. Acc)</td>
<td>'her'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noi (1pl. Acc)</td>
<td>'us'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voi (2pl. Acc)</td>
<td>'you (all)'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loro (3pl. masc./fem. Acc)</td>
<td>'them'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For strong pronouns, the main verb still precedes its complement. Examples (2a) and (2b) demonstrate this point:

(2a) Lucca chiama suo fratello.
Lucca calls his brother
‘Lucca calls his brother.’

(2b) Lucca chiama lui.
Lucca calls cl-him-3rd sg. mas. Acc.
‘Lucca calls him.’

(2c) * Lucca lui chiama.
Lucca cl-him-cl-him-3rd sg. mas. Acc. calls
‘Lucca calls him.’
Now consider these constructions in which (3a) has one verb and (3b) involves two:

(3a) Gianluca vede Maria.
    Gianluca sees Maria
    ‘Gianluca sees Maria.’

(3b) Gianluca desidera veder-la.
    Gianluca desires to see - cl-her-3rd sg. fem. Acc.
    ‘Gianluca desires to see her.’

In (3b), the accusative clitic represents the complement of the second verb vedere. When infinitives are involved, object clitics encliticize on to, i.e. follow and attach to, the infinite form of the verb, remaining in the lower position.

On the other hand, there are verbs that embed infinitives and allow for object clitics to optionally occupy a different position. These verbs include modal verbs (dovere, volere, potere, sapere), aspectual verbs (cominciare, finire, continuare, stare) and motion verbs (andare, venire, tornare). Consider the following examples with volere (‘to want’):

(4a) Paola vuole vedere Gabriele.
    Paola wants to see Gabriele
    ‘Paola wants to see Gabriele.’

(4b) Paola vuole veder-lo.
    Paola wants to see - cl-him-3rd sg. masc. Acc.
    ‘Paola wants to see him.’

(4c) Paola lo vuole vedere.
    Paola cl-him-3rd sg. masc. Acc. wants to see
    ‘Paola wants to see him.’

(4d) *Paola vuole lo vedere.
    Paola wants cl-him-3rd sg. masc. Acc. to see
    ‘Paola wants to see him.’

Although the accusative clitic lo (3sg. masc. Acc) can attach to the non-finite verb (as in [4b]), there is
another placement for the object clitic pronoun in Standard Italian. In (4c), we see that the accusative clitic can procliticize to the finite verb, similar to the construction in (1b). When an object clitic (lo, in [4b]) moves out of its lower position and climbs up to reach the matrix verb [volere (vuole)], “clitic climbing” is said to have occurred. Two essential points must be noted here. First, when clitic climbing occurs in Standard Italian, the clitic must climb up to left-adjoin the matrix verb. Unlike other Romance languages, in Italian the clitic cannot climb to the position between the matrix verb and the imbedded infinitive, as in (4d). Second, it is important to reiterate that clitic climbing cannot always take place whenever an infinitive is embedded by another verb. Example (3c), in contrast to (3b), illustrates this ungrammaticality:

(3b) Gianluca desidera veder-la.
Gianluca desires to see - cl-her-3rd sg. fem. Acc.
‘Gianluca desires to see her.’

(3c) *Gianluca la desidera vedere.
Gianluca cl-her-3rd sg. fem. Acc. desires to see
‘Gianluca desires to see her.’

Clitic climbing can only occur for infinitives embedded by modal, aspectual and motion verbs. Given that desiderare does not belong to any of these three classes, it cannot allow for clitic climbing and thus results in the ungrammaticality of (3c).\(^{47}\) I will later address what makes the syntactic structure of these three groups of verbs distinct from that of other verbs in section 4.3.

In the next section, I introduce clitic placement in Italian dialects with modal, aspectual and motion verbs.

4.2. CLITICS AND CLITIC CLIMBING IN ITALIAN DIALECTS

While in Standard Italian there are two options for clitic placement (preceding a finite verb and following a non-finite verb), Italian dialects generally do not permit such flexibility.\(^{48}\) Cardinaletti and Shlonsky (2004) assert that within Italy, clitic climbing varies greatly due to significant dialectal

\(^{47}\) Other verbs that embed infinitives include proporre [to propose] and anelare [to yearn for]; see Napoli (1981) for examples.

\(^{48}\) See Rohlfs (1966) for examples of enclisis and proclisis across a variety of non-standard Italian dialects.
differences. Most SIDs have obligatory clitic climbing. When the infinitival verb is embedded by modal, aspectual or motion verbs, clitics are required to move to a higher position preceding the verb. Observe an example of Conflenti, a southern dialect spoken in Catanzaro, the capital of Calabria.

(5) Clitic placement with a modal verb in Conflenti

a. `vuajju 'harɛ cl-it-3rd sg. Acc. (I) want to do
   ‘I want to do it’

b. * `vuajju 'harɛ u cl-it-3rd sg. Acc.
   (I) want to do ‘I want to do it’

(Manzini & Savoia 2005)

Example (5b) illustrates that it is ungrammatical in Conflenti for the object clitic `u (3rd sg. masc. Acc.) to remain in the lower post-verbal position. Rather, it must climb to left-adjoin the matrix verb, as shown in example (5a), paralleling one grammatical option in Standard Italian (similar to 4c).

Conversely, clitic placement in NIDs parallels the other grammatical option in Standard Italian. NIDs generally do not allow for clitics to climb out of the lower position in these structures. Instead, clitics are usually restricted to their post-verbal position, as noted in this example of Veneziano (Venetian), a Northern dialect spoken in the Veneto:

(6) Clitic placement with a modal verb in Veneziano

   (I) want to do ‘I want to do it’

b. *O vojo far cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc. (I) want to do
   ‘I want to do it’

(Hansson 2007)

As example (6b) illustrates, placing the clitic before a finite verb is ungrammatical in Veneziano.

Generalizing the characteristics of these two dialects to others in their respective geographic areas, the examples presented thus far ([5a, 5b] and [6a, 6b]) demonstrate that Italian dialects permit one, but not both, of the grammatical clitic placement options in Standard Italian. Table 3 summarizes clitic placement
in these three systems.

Table 3. Clitic Placement with infinitives embedded by modal, aspectual or motion verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language System</th>
<th>Standard Italian</th>
<th>Northern Italian Dialects (NIDs)</th>
<th>Southern Italian Dialects (SIDs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clitic Placement</td>
<td>Two options exist for clitic placement: (1) the lower position attaching to the infinitive; (2) a higher position left-adjoining the matrix verb</td>
<td>Clitics are not permitted to climb: clitics must remain in the lower position following the infinitive</td>
<td>Clitic climbing is obligatory: clitics must move to a higher position left-adjoining the matrix verb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. ANALYSIS OF CLITIC CLIMBING

Rizzi’s (1982) biclausal approach is the most widely cited generative analysis in language acquisition studies (see Montrul 2010a & 2010b for references) investigating Romance clitic word order, as we will see in Chapter 5. Rizzi classifies modal, aspectual and motion verbs as “restructuring verbs.” Additional examples of structures without climbing (8a) and with clitic climbing (8b) are shown here:

(7) Sentence with a modal verb (potere ‘to be able to’)

Francesco può raccontare la storia
‘Francesco is able to tell the story’

(8a) Sentence with a modal verb (potere ‘to be able to’) and a clitic in the lower position

Francesco può raccontarla
‘Francesco is able to tell it’

49 Although in my current study I limit my discussion of clitic placement in Standard Italian to generative analyses, see also other relevant works outside of the generative framework on clitic placement, especially in historical contexts (e.g., Dieter 1974; Wineapple 1983).
(8b) Sentence with a modal verb (potere ‘to be able to’) and clitic climbing

Francesco [ la può raccontare
Francesco cl-it-3° sg. ACC is able to tell
‘Francesco is able to tell it’

Sentences with infinitives embedded by restructuring verbs, and those with infinitives embedded by non-restructuring verbs share the same structure initially. In either case, there are two clauses; the infinitive is treated as a separate clausal complement (CP), as shown in (9a) and (9b).

(9a) Initial structure with a restructuring verb (potere ‘to be able to’)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{[CP} \\
\text{io [ posso [CP comprare quell’anello ]]]} \\
\text{I am able to buy that ring} \\
\text{‘I am able to buy that ring’}
\end{array}
\]

(9b) Initial structure with a non-restructuring verb (desiderare ‘to wish’)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{[CP} \\
\text{io [ desidero [CP comprare quell’anello ]]]} \\
\text{I wish to buy that ring} \\
\text{‘I wish to buy that ring’}
\end{array}
\]

Rizzi argues for a Restructuring Rule in Italian syntax governed by modal, aspectual and motion verbs which “optionally reanalyzes” verbs of these three classes with the infinitive (1982, 5). In other words, in the presence of a restructuring verb, the restructuring process may occur, but does not have to. The sentence can keep its initial structure (9a), or it can undergo restructuring (9c):

(9c) Restructured sentence with a restructuring verb (potere ‘to be able to’)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{(CP} \\
\text{io [VP posso comprare quell’anello ]]} \\
\text{I am able to buy that ring} \\
\text{‘I am able to buy that ring’}
\end{array}
\]
Examples (9d) and (9e) demonstrate the same contrast with a clitic:

(9d) Non-restructured sentence with a restructuring verb (*potere* ‘to be able to’) and a clitic

\[
\text{[CP io [posso [CP comprarlo]]]} \\
\text{I am able to buy cl-it-3rd sg. ACC} \\
\text{‘I am able to buy it’}
\]

(9e) Restructured sentence with a restructuring verb (*potere* ‘to be able to’) and a clitic

\[
\text{(CP io [VP lo posso comprare])} \\
\text{I cl-it-3rd sg. ACC am able to buy} \\
\text{‘I am able to buy it’}
\]

Under Rizzi’s analysis, there are two significant consequences of the restructuring process. First, the initial CP-complement (the embedded infinitive) is transformed into a VP-complement and is joined together with the restructuring verb to form a single “complex VP” (as shown in examples [9c] and [9e]). The other significant consequence of restructuring is that the formation of this complex VP renders the new sentence monoclausal while the embedded infinitive loses its clausal status. As a result, the infinitive’s original clausal boundaries become ineffective, allowing for the realization of transparency effects, such as clitic climbing, auxiliary change and long object preposing. For the purposes of this current investigation, I will focus only on clitic climbing. In sum, once the “complex VP” is formed, the clitic must climb freely within the now monoclausal sentence in order to left-adjoin the restructuring verb located higher in the clause.

Nevertheless, it is important to reiterate that in Rizzi’s (1982) analysis, restructuring is optional. If restructuring does not take place, the clitic must remain in the lower position because the embedded infinitive upholds its clausal boundaries, keeping the sentence as two separate clauses and impeding the clitic from climbing, as illustrated in (9d). On the other hand, only if restructuring has obtained does clitic climbing become operant. I provide a summary of Rizzi’s analysis in Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification of modal, aspectual and motion verbs</th>
<th>Restructuring Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial structure</strong></td>
<td>Restructuring verbs and non-restructuring verbs share the same syntactic structure: their embedded infinitives are always CP-complements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transparency Effects (e.g., clitic climbing)</strong></td>
<td>Restructuring is optional. Modal, aspectual and motion verbs can, but do not necessarily, trigger restructuring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If restructuring does not occur, clausal boundaries are upheld and transparency effects cannot be realized across the two separate clauses.</td>
<td>If restructuring occurs, transparency effects are realized because the sentence becomes monoclausal as a result of the formation of a complex VP.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rizzi (1982) explains that clitic climbing occurs as a result of a speaker’s choice to optionally restructure. The fact that clitic climbing is “optional” renders his analysis somewhat arbitrary. Specifically, in order to account for clausal architecture he uses one explanation for structures in which there is clitic climbing (monoclausal with a complex VP), while he uses another explanation for structures in which there is no climbing (biclausal). From a psycholinguistic perspective, a question that remains open is what motivates speakers’ choosing to restructure or not to. I attempt to address this issue for my study’s target population - i.e., HSs of non-standard Italian dialects who are learning Standard Italian.

In an effort to maintain consistency with previous language acquisition studies in the literature, in the remainder of my study I will follow Rizzi’s (1982) approach and refer to modal, aspectual and motion verbs as “restructuring verbs” and syntactic constructions in which modal, aspectual and motion verbs embed infinitives as “restructuring contexts.”

4.4. CLITIC PLACEMENT IN IMPERATIVES

In this section I explore clitics in imperative constructions, with particular attention on the syntactic
structures of negative imperatives in Standard Italian and Italian dialects.

4.4.1. STANDARD ITALIAN

In Standard Italian, clitic placement rules differ between second-person formal imperatives (Lei, Loro), and second-person informal imperatives (tu, voi) and first-person plural imperatives (noi). The former group possesses a rigid clitic word order: object clitics can only procliticize on to second-person formal imperatives. Examples of a second-person singular formal (Lei) imperative are shown in (10a) through (10e):

(10a) Scriva la lettera!  
write-IMP-2nd. sg. form. the letter  
'Write the letter!'

(10b) La scriva!  
cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. write-IMP-2nd. sg. form.  
'Write it!'

(10c) * Scrivala!  
'Write it!'

(10d) Non la scriva!  
Neg cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. write-IMP-2nd. sg. form.  
'Don't write it!'

(10e) * Non scrivala!  
'Don't write it!'

As shown above, an object clitic appearing in the post-verbal position leads to ungrammaticality in both affirmative and negative constructions for second-person singular formal (Lei) imperatives. The same
clitic word order rules apply to second-person plural formal (Loro) imperatives; see examples (11a) through (11e):

(11a) Scrivano \textit{la lettera}!
\begin{tabular}{ll}
write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl. form. & the letter \\
\end{tabular}

'Write the letter!'

(11b) La \textit{scrivano}!
\begin{tabular}{ll}
cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. & write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl. form. \\
\end{tabular}

'Write it!'

(11c) * Scrivan\textit{ola}!
\begin{tabular}{ll}
write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl. form. & cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. \\
\end{tabular}

'Write it!'

(11d) Non \textit{la} \textit{scrivano}!
\begin{tabular}{ll}
Neg cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. & write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl. form. \\
\end{tabular}

'Don't write it!'

(11e) * Non \textit{scrivan\textit{ola}!}
\begin{tabular}{ll}
Neg write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl. form. & cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. \\
\end{tabular}

'Don't write it!'

Since the structures of second-person formal (Lei, Loro) imperatives do not permit variability in clitic placement, they fall outside the scope of my current study focusing on variable object clitic placement; therefore, I will limit my discussion of them.

In contrast, first-person plural (noi), second-person singular informal (tu), and second-person plural informal (voi) negative imperatives in Standard Italian possess somewhat more flexible clitic word order rules. Object clitics can encliticize on to the verb in both affirmative and negative imperatives. Observe the following examples for second-person singular informal (tu) imperatives:
Furthermore, negative imperatives also allow procliticization, as in (13c), whereas affirmative imperatives do not:

(13c) Non la scrivere!

Neg cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. to write
‘Don’t write it!’

(13d) * La scrivi!

cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. write-IMP-2nd. sg.
‘Write it!’

These same placement rules are also applicable to first-person plural (noi) imperatives, as shown in (14a) through (14f), and to second-person plural informal (voi) imperatives, as shown in (15a) through (15f):
(14a) Scriviamo la lettera!
write-IMP-1st. pl. the letter
'Let’s write the letter!'

(14b) Scriviamola!
write-IMP-1st. pl. - cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc.
'Let’s write it!'

(14c) Non scriviamo la lettera!
Neg write-IMP-1st. pl. the letter
'Let’s not write the letter!'

(14d) Non scriviamola!
Neg write-IMP-1st. pl. - cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc.
'Let’s not write it!'

(14e) Non la scriviamo!
Neg cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. write-IMP-1st. pl.
'Let’s not write it!'

(14f) * La scriviamo!
cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. write-IMP-1st. pl.
'Let’s write it!'

(15a) Scrivete la lettera!
write-IMP-2nd. pl. the letter
'Write the letter!'

(15b) Scrivetela!
write-IMP-2nd. pl. - cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc.
'Write it!'
(15c) Non scrivete la lettera!
    Neg write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl. the letter
    ‘Don’t write the letter!’

(15d) Non scrivetela!
    Neg write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl. - cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc.
    ‘Don’t write it!’

(15e) Non la scrivete!
    Neg cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl.
    ‘Don’t write it!’

(15f) * La scrivete!
    cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc. write-IMP-2\textsuperscript{nd}. pl.
    ‘Write it!’

Table 5 offers a summary of these clitic placement rules in Standard Italian.

Table 5. Standard Italian Clitic Placement Rules for Imperatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperatives in …</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Person Plural (noi)</td>
<td>Enclitics only</td>
<td>Proclitics or Enclitics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-Person Singular (tu)</td>
<td>Enclitics only</td>
<td>Proclitics or Enclitics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-Person Plural (voi)</td>
<td>Enclitics only</td>
<td>Proclitics or Enclitics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although proclitics are also grammatical with negative imperatives, Standard Italian overall tends to support imperative encliticization – a common feature found in imperatives across different languages (cf. Zagona 2002: 265).

Zanuttini (1994; 1997) distinguishes between true imperatives (verb forms whose morphology is
not shared by the same person and number in any other tense) and suppletive imperatives (infinitives, gerunds, or verb forms that are morphologically identical to the same person and number of an existing tense) (cf. Rivero 1994; Han 2002). In Standard Italian, only second-person singular informal (tu) affirmative imperatives are formed using true imperatives. For instance, the second-person singular informal affirmative imperative of dire (‘to say’/‘to tell’) is di’; this form is morphologically distinct from the other second-person singular informal (tu) forms of dire in other tenses: dici (present indicative); dicevi (imperfect indicative); dica (present subjunctive); dicesi (imperfect subjunctive), etc. Other than second-person singular informal (tu) affirmative imperatives, all other imperatives forms are expressed using suppletive imperatives: the infinitive of the verb is used to form second-person singular informal (tu) negative imperatives (e.g., non dire), whereas the respective present indicative forms are used to form both first-person plural (noi), and second-person plural informal (voi) affirmative and negative imperatives (e.g., diciamo, non diciamo; dite, non dite). Table 6 summarizes the formation of imperative structures in Standard Italian.

Table 6. Classification of Imperatives in Standard Italian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperatives in …</th>
<th>Affirmative</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second-Person Singular (tu)</td>
<td>true imperatives</td>
<td>suppletive imperatives (infinitive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Person Plural (noi)</td>
<td>suppletive imperatives (present indicative)</td>
<td>suppletive imperatives (present indicative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-Person Plural (voi)</td>
<td>suppletive imperatives (present indicative)</td>
<td>suppletive imperatives (present indicative)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon closer examination, however, classifying second-person singular informal (tu) affirmative imperatives as 'true imperatives' is somewhat problematic in Standard Italian. There are numerous verbs whose second-person singular informal (tu) affirmative imperative form is morphologically identical to the same person and number in another tense in the system, namely the majority of verbs in the second and
third declensions (those whose infinitives end in –ere or –ire). For instance, for the verbs prendere (‘to take’) and aprire (‘to open’), both the affirmative imperative form and the present indicative form are prendi and apri, respectively, in the second-person singular informal. Although the classification of “true imperatives” may hold better for other Romance languages, such as Spanish, it does not fully capture the case of Standard Italian.

4.4.2. REGIONAL ITALIAN DIALECTS

The structure of negative imperatives in regional Italian dialects does not generally permit variability in object clitic placement. In fact, clitic word order is generally more rigid in Italian dialects than it is in Standard Italian. Many NIDs prefer encliticization; see example (16) for an example of veneziano (Venetian), a dialect spoken in a northeastern area of Italy.

As shown in (16a) and (16b), in veneziano only encliticization, either on the auxiliary verb or on to lexical verb, is grammatical. On the other hand, SIDs generally have obligatory procliticization. Below are examples of clitics in negative imperative structures in pugliese and tarantino, dialects spoken in southern Italy:
Clitic placement of a negative imperative sentence in *pugliese*50

(17a) No **me** pəŋɛ̀nna! Neg cl-me-1st sg. Acc. stinging
'Don't sting me!'  

(Zanuttini 1997: 203)

(17b) * No  pəŋɛ̀nnəma! Neg stinging-cl me-1st sg. Acc.  
'Don't sting me!'  

Clitic placement of a negative imperative sentence in *tarantino*51

(18a) No **'u** scé pigghjannah! Neg cl-it-3rd sg. Acc. Aux (to go) taking
'Don't take it!' (2nd person singular)  

(18b) No **'u** sciata pigghjannah! Neg cl-it-3rd sg. Acc. Aux (go) taking
'Don't take it!' (2nd person plural)  

(Zanuttini 1997: 205)

(18c) * No scé pigghjannah'u! Neg Aux (to go) taking - cl-it-3rd sg. Acc.
'Don't take it!' (2nd person singular)  

(18d) * No sciata pigghjannah'u! Neg Aux (go) taking - cl-it-3rd sg. Acc.  
'Don't take it!' (2nd person plural)

The examples in (17b), (18c) and (18d) show that encliticization is ungrammatical in the negative imperative structures of many SIDs. The pronomial clitics must precede either the lexical verb or an auxiliary; they cannot follow a gerund in this context (Zanuttini 1997: 205).

In brief, the clitic word order of negative imperative structures in Italian dialects appears overall to be less flexible than in Standard Italian. Whereas Standard Italian allows for proclitics and enclitics, NIDs and SIDs generally permit one, but not the other; NIDs tend to favor encliticization, while SIDs exhibit obligatory procliticization. Table 7 summarizes these differences.

---

50 Negative imperative structures in *pugliese* are formed using the gerund.

51 Negative imperative structures in *tarantino* are formed using an auxiliary verb (*scé* [to go]) and the gerund.
Table 7. Clitic Placement in Negative Imperative Structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language System</th>
<th>Standard Italian</th>
<th>Northern Italian Dialects (NIDs)</th>
<th>Southern Italian Dialects (SIDs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clitic Placement</td>
<td>Two options exist: proclisis or enclisis; either before or after the imperative verb</td>
<td>Clitics generally occupy a post-verbal position (enclisis)</td>
<td>Clitics tend to occupy a pre-verbal position (proclisis)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the following subsections I turn my attention to the variability in object clitic placement in the first-person plural (*noi*), second-person singular informal (*tu*), and second-person plural informal (*voi*) negative imperatives in Standard Italian – i.e., the three imperative structures tested in my study. Although exactly where the verb and object clitics are in the syntactic structure of negative imperatives remain uncertain (Zanuttini 1997; Tortora 2000), I provide an overview of Kayne’s (1992)\(^{52}\) null modal approach.

4.4.3. THE NULL MODAL APPROACH

Kayne (1992) argues that the variability of object clitic placement in negative imperative structures is due to restructuring, or lack thereof. Evidence that supports Kayne’s interpretation of these structures as restructuring contexts lies in the fact that a non-finite form (e.g., the infinitive in Standard Italian) is often used is used to form informal second person singular (*tu*) negative imperatives. He draws on evidence from the syntactic construction of negative imperatives in *padovano* (Paduan) and some other NIDs: there is an overtly realized modal or auxiliary verb form that appears only in negative imperative constructions (as shown in example [19a]); its formal presence is ungrammatical in affirmative imperative constructions (see example [19b]). In *padovano*, for example, the auxiliary verb *stá* is used before the infinitive.

Kayne argues that the pre-verbal negative marker licenses an overt modal, which in turn licenses the infinitive.

For language systems that do not have an overt modal present in negative imperative constructions, such as Standard Italian, Kayne (1992) proposes that there is still a modal present, albeit a covert/empty one. The syntactic structure of such a sentence is represented in example (20a).

In brief, for Kayne, a sentence such as (20) represents a restructuring context. The structure in example (20a) represents a sentence that has not undergone restructuring, and therefore, is still biclausal. If restructuring occurs, a complex verb will form and the structure becomes monoclausal (cf. Rizzi 1982); see example (20b).
Upon expressing this sentence using an accusative object clitic \( (lo) \), the clitic will remain in the lower complement position if no restructuring occurs, as in example (20c). If restructuring does occur, transparency effects (i.e., clitic climbing) are operant, as in example (20d).

In (20d), the accusative clitic \( (lo) \) has left-adjoined to the matrix verb, which is a phonetically null modal (\( \emptyset \)). Thus, with respect to clitic placement in Standard Italian negative imperatives structures, when restructuring occurs procliticization results from clitic climbing; yet, when restructuring does not occur, the result is encliticization.
form. The object clitic would then be able to "climb" and left-adjoin to the matrix (null auxiliary) verb.

Examples (21a) and (21b) illustrate this point.

(21a) Sentence without restructuring:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
[CP \ Non \ [VP \ \emptyset \ [CP \ comprate[lo]])] \\
\text{Neg} & \text{Modal} & \text{IMP-2^{nd}. sg. - cl-it-3rd sg. fem. Acc.}
\end{array}
\]

'Don't buy it!'

(21b) Sentence with restructuring:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
[CP \ Non \ [VP \ \text{lo} \ \emptyset \ comprate]]
\end{array}
\]

Neg \ cl-it-3rd sg. masc. ACC \ Modal \ IMP-2^{nd}. sg.

'Don't buy it!'

Yet, there may be little evidence to support Zanuttini’s (1997) proposal. Kayne’s (1992) null modal approach is limited to addressing only suppletive imperatives that are in the infinitive form since restructuring contexts require the presence of an infinitive. The foundation of Kayne’s argument lies in the fact that modals (whether covert or overt) can be followed by an infinitive, which is the verb form required for second-person singular informal (tu) negative imperatives. Thus, extending this analysis to the other suppletive imperative form, namely the present indicative used to form first-person plural (noi) and second-person plural informal (voi) negative imperatives, seems less plausible since there are no auxiliary or modal verbs that accept the present indicative as their complement (cf. Zanuttini 1997: 149); this is true of not only Standard Italian, but of other Romance languages as well (e.g., Spanish, French, etc.). Examples (22a) and (22b) illustrate this point.

**Standard Italian**

(22a) * Vogliamo piangiamo.
(We) want (I) cry
(S) \ V_{\text{restr}} \ V_{\text{non-finite}}

'We want to cry'
Nonetheless, putting aside this limitation, for the purposes of my study I consider Zanuttini's (1997) hypothesis of extending Kayne's (1992) null modal approach for first-person plural (noi) and second-person plural informal (voi) negative imperatives.

4.5. CHAPTER SUMMARY.

*Clitic climbing* occurs when the clitic leaves its lower position to left-adjoin the matrix verb. The majority of HLA and SLA studies follow Rizzi's (1982) approach in analyzing clitic climbing: “restructuring verbs” are modal, aspectual and motion verbs and “restructuring contexts” are structures in which restructuring verbs embed infinitives; in Standard Italian restructuring contexts, clitic climbing can, but does not necessarily have to, occur. Rizzi argues that clitic climbing occurs when speakers choose to optionally restructure. Yet, from a psycholinguistic perspective, an issue that remains open is what motivates speakers to optionally restructure. In SIDs, only clitic climbing – i.e., procliticization – can occur in restructuring contexts, whereas in NIDs, no clitic climbing – i.e., encliticization – is generally permitted.

Object clitic placement in Standard Italian is also variable, namely proclisis or enclisis, in the negative imperative constructions of first-person plural (noi), second-person singular informal (tu), and second-person plural informal (voi) imperatives. In regional Italian dialects, however, NIDs generally exhibit enclisis for these negative imperative constructions, whereas SIDs usually require proclisis.

There is evidence to suggest that these negative imperative constructions, in particular, may also be restructuring contexts as well. Thus, it is possible that previous research on the acquisition of clitic climbing may also inform us on the acquisition of clitic placement in first-person plural (noi), second-person singular informal (tu), and second-person plural informal (voi) negative imperative constructions. In the next chapter, I provide an overview of the literature on the acquisition of clitics and clitic climbing.
CHAPTER 5. ACQUISITION OF CLITICS AND CLITIC CLIMBING

In this chapter, I begin by discussing the acquisition of Romance clitics for L1 speakers, HSs, and L2 learners. The acquisition of clitics in all these language systems is important to my present investigation because of the interplay that takes place among them when learners acquire clitics in a third system (Montrul et al. 2011; Flynn, Vinnitskaya and Foley 2004; Rothman 2011), even though the role that each individual language system plays for multilinguals continues to generate some debate (cf. Rothman 2011). Although studies focusing on the L3 acquisition of Romance clitics have begun to emerge only recently in the literature, I will also address the preliminary findings in this area of research. Finally, I suggest a possible universal principle for encliticization based on the results of these studies.

5.1. L1 ACQUISITION OF CLITICS

In monolinguals, the acquisition of clitics is not very problematic. Monolingual children acquire clitics early, usually during age 2, after they acquire inflectional verb morphology (indicative forms) (Caprin and Guasti 2009). Although some errors, such as clitic omission, occur at this early stage, children rarely ever mistake clitic placement with finite and non-finite verbs (Torrens, Gavarró, and Wexler 2004; Guasti 1993/1994). In fact, some researchers, such as Müller, Schmitz, Cantone and Kupisch (2006), Caprin and Guasti (2009), and Coene and Avram (2012), argue that L1 acquisition errors that involve Romance clitic omission dissipate by age 3. Additionally, object fronting and clitic left dislocation emerge before or around age 3 (Grinstead 2004). It appears that overall, knowledge of clitics becomes robust in early childhood.

Yet, Müller, Schmitz, Cantone and Kupisch (2006) write that monolingual children acquire object clitics in French and in Italian with much more effort than other syntactic categories; for instance, in the monolingual acquisition of Italian, object clitics appear in child speech after age 2, which is later in development than subject clitics, strong subject and object pronouns (Guasti 1993/1994; see Müller et al. [2006] for other references). Some researchers (Guasti 1993/1994; Antelmi 1992) propose that this delay, albeit short, that children experience when acquiring object clitics is attributed to the general

53 Marinis (2000) also finds evidence for the emergence of clitics at an early age. She suggests that in Modern Greek, children start producing object clitics shortly after 24 months, subsequent to the appearance of definite articles in their speech.
difficulty children initially experience in forming the A-chain (the first step in cliticization) (cf. Antelmi 1992). Nevertheless, children do overcome this difficulty since usage of clitics is positively correlated with age (Guasti 1993/1994).

For monolingual children, acquiring clitic placement with non-finite verbs, namely infinitives, is more difficult than acquiring clitic placement with finite verbs. Guasti (1993/1994) investigated whether Italian children at early stages are able to distinguish between finite and non-finite verbs. To this end, she examined young children’s clitic placement with respect to these two verb classes. The participants of her case study were three young children, who were 1 year 8 months, 1 year 10 months, and 2 years 7 months. A weakness of this study is that each of the three participants was not observed for the same length of time: the youngest was observed for over a period of ten months, while the oldest for only five months; perhaps a longitudinal study in which all children began participation at the same age would have improved the study’s methodology. Nonetheless, the results of Guasti’s study revealed that children are aware of the distinction between finite and non-finite verbs. Furthermore, she argues that children acquire clitic placement with finite verbs before they acquire clitic placement with non-finite verbs: clitics appear with infinitives (e.g., in restructuring contexts) shortly after age 2; this is roughly the same time period when children’s use of clitics with finite verbs becomes stable. Even at this young age, children produce structures with clitic climbing with correct clitic placement. Yet, the question that arises is what factors motivate children’s acquisition of clitic placement with finite verbs before that of clitic placement with non-finite verbs. Guasti argues that the complexity of structures with non-finite verbs, such as those with clitic climbing, take more time for children to acquire, as opposed to structures with finite verbs alone: clitic placement with finite verbs involves only a one step A-movement, whereas clitic placement in structures with clitic climbing involve two steps – thus rendering the latter more complicated than the former.  

As language proficiency increases, usage of clitics does as well. In a recent study investigating the early L1 acquisition of morphemes in Italian, Caprin and Guasti (2009) analyzed data of 59 children,
ranging from 22- to 35-months old, in order to examine the use and omission of articles, clitics, the
copula, and auxiliary verbs. The methodology of this experiment included videotaping children while they
played with toys. To account for the variability in language development within this age group, the
researchers divided participants into three groups based on their mean length of utterance (MLU) in
words. Based on the results of their cross-sectional study, their overall conclusion was that omission of
morphemes is subject to certain constraints; shortly I will discuss in greater detail one of these constraints
as it relates to clitics. Caprin and Guasti's data show that overall usage of object clitics positively
correlates with children's MLU. That is, children with higher MLU produce more clitics in comparison to
children who have a lower MLU, a finding that is in line with Guasti's (1993/1994) research. In addition,
an interesting finding is that although children from all three groups produced both proclitics and enclitics,
those in the group with the highest MLU produced significantly more enclitics in comparison to the other
groups.

Their data indicated that children in the group with the highest MLU produced more dative clitics than the
other groups. In fact, dative clitics were entirely absent from the speech of their peers in the group with
the lowest MLU. Therefore, Caprin and Guasti contend that accusative clitics emerge before dative clitics
in monolingual child language development. Despite this, however, one of Caprin and Guasti's main
findings was that among the other children who used both accusative and dative clitics, they tend to omit
accusative clitics more than dative clitics. Caprin and Guasti attribute this finding to previous research (cf.
Torrens et al. 2004) suggesting that in languages where the past participle agrees with accusative clitics,
such as Italian and Catalan, children tend to omit clitics more often than monolingual children who are
acquiring languages where there is no agreement between the past participle and the accusative clitic
(e.g., Spanish).  

Observe the contrast in the following examples:

---

55 In Standard Italian, agreement between the past participle and the accusative clitic is obligatory only when third person clitics are
used, namely lo, la, li, and le. Agreement is optional when other accusative clitics (i.e., mi, ti, ci, vi) are used. There is no
agreement between dative clitics and the past participle.
In (11b), agreement between the past participle and the accusative clitic is obligatory in Standard Italian, whereas in Spanish, such agreement results in ungrammaticality as shown in (12c). Thus, unlike in some other Romance languages, it appears that one of the constraints motivating accusative clitic omission in Italian is tense (e.g., whether it is used in conjunction with a past participle).

Further evidence of language-specific differences that may impact the L1 acquisition of clitics is found between the monolingual acquisition of Italian and that of French. Schmitz and Müller (2008) contend that the acquisition of object clitics occurs faster in L1-Italian compared to L1-French. They explored the acquisition of object clitics in French and in Italian by monolingual children, and by bilingual German-French and German-Italian children. The researchers examined a corpus of recorded spontaneous interactions by adults with children. The participants of their study included one
monolingual Italian child, one monolingual French child, two German-French bilingual children, two German-Italian bilingual children. As simultaneous bilingual acquisition is not the focus of my investigation, I focus only on the monolingual data from their study relevant to my current investigation. Despite the small sample-size of participants in each language, their longitudinal research showed that French children use more DPs (e.g., full noun phrases) in object position than their Italian peers. In addition, Italian children omit more objects than their French peers. Finally, Italian children use more object clitics than their French peers.

The discrepancy in the rate of acquisition of clitics between L1-Italian monolingual children and L1-French monolingual children may possibly be due to differences in how each group licenses null objects. Müller, Schmitz, Cantone and Kupisch (2006) also explored possible language-specific differences in the development of object clitics in the monolingual acquisition of French and Italian. The participants in their study were children under the age 3. The results of this study suggested that French children and Italian children use different licensing strategies for null objects: French children use a pragmatic strategy to license empty objects, while Italian children license objects via AGR. With respect to the realization of object clitics, their findings are in line with those of Schmitz and Müller (2008): monolingual Italian children acquire object clitics faster than monolingual French children. Furthermore, very young French children tend to repeat the object DP in obligatory contexts for clitics (those in which the object can be presupposed by the speaker, namely when the antecedent is found previously in the discourse or in the immediate context), whereas their Italian counterparts tend to omit the objects altogether; these differences do become smaller later in the L1 child acquisition process. Thus, within Romance languages, the monolingual acquisition process of object clitics is, to some degree, language-specific.

Summarizing, the acquisition of clitics for L1 speakers occurs in early childhood and is generally not problematic: overall usage of object clitics and flexibility in clitic placement (proclitics vs. enclitics) positively correlate with children's age and expanding language proficiency. Monolingual Italian children acquire clitic placement with finite verbs before that with non-finite verbs, and in terms of case, accusative

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56 Although the researchers do not specific the exact age of “very young children,” their youngest participant was 1 year and 9 months old.
clitics before dative clitics. The rate of acquisition differs among Romance languages due to language-specific differences: for instance, tense appears to be a constraining factor for accusative clitic omission between Italian and Spanish, and the way in which speakers license null objects distinguishes the acquisition process between Italian and French. In regards to the latter pair, the acquisition of object clitics in L1-Italian occurs faster than it does in L1-French.

5.2. HERITAGE SPEAKERS’ ACQUISITION OF CLITICS AND CLITIC CLIMBING

In general, adult HSs have a strong control of clitics (Montrul 2010a, 2010b; Silva-Corvalán 1994). That said, as discussed in chapter 2, uncovering which particular clitic structures are more challenging for HSs is dependent upon where these structures lie, namely within a core aspect of grammar, or at a linguistic interface. With respect to the former, the HLA of clitics used within the domain of syntax-proper does not appear to be problematic at all (Montrul 2010a; 2010b); this further supports the argument that structures within a core grammatical domain is less vulnerable to the attrition, the incomplete acquisition, or the combination of both, that HSs typically experience with structures that lie at an interface (Montrul et al. 2008). Although recent investigations on HSs’ knowledge and usage of clitics (e.g., Montrul 2010a; 2010b) explore both syntax-proper and interfaces between syntax and other domains, in this section I limit my discussion to the research findings that focus on clitics in syntax-proper only, since clitic placement in restructuring contexts and in negative imperatives – the focus of my current research – falls within this linguistic domain, and not at any interface.

For HSs of Spanish who are reacquiring their HL in formal academic settings, Montrul (2010b: 197) suggests that pedagogues do not need to emphasize object clitic pronouns and clitic placement for HL learners. Since some formal academic institutions place HSs into foreign language classes (see chapter 3), it is not uncommon for HSs to study alongside L2 learners in the same classroom. The mixed student population within this academic context has motivated some researchers, such as Montrul (2010b), to examine the similarities and differences between HSs and L2 learners.

Montrul (2010b) argues that HSs have an advantage over L2 learners in these academic settings. She conducted an experiment that tested knowledge of Spanish clitic pronouns and word order. She
divided her participants into two experimental groups: the first was composed of 24 L2 learners, whereas the second was composed 24 HSs of Spanish; 24 native controls also participated in this study. A strength of this study is that the researcher attempted to first control for proficiency in Spanish – the weaker language for both HSs and L2 learners: a written proficiency test verified that participants in both experimental groups possessed the same low level of Spanish proficiency. Yet, one could make the argument that testing for proficiency through a written task is not the best assessment tool since HSs typically possess weak literacy skills in their HL (cf. Fairclough 2005: 63).

Montrul’s (2010b) experimental study consisted of an oral production task, a written grammaticality judgment task, and a speeded comprehension task. The particular structures examined included simple clitic placement (Cl - Finite Verb), clitic climbing (Cl - V_{Rest} - Verb), clitic doubling, and clitic left dislocation. Her overall conclusion was that HSs possess more native-like knowledge of Spanish than their L2 learner counterparts. For instance, on the grammaticality judgment task (in which participants rated sentences on a Likert scale with 5 = grammatical and 1 = ungrammatical), the high mean acceptability ratings between HSs and native controls were quite similar for structures with clitic climbing (4.24 and 4.95, respectively), and for those without climbing (4.85 and 4.99, respectively). Both groups also shared similar low ratings for the ungrammatical structure of the middle position (V_{Rest} - Cl - Verb): 1.49 and 1.04, respectively. Additionally, in terms of usage in the oral production task, HSs and native controls produced clitic climbing at very comparable rates, namely 73% and 68%, respectively. On the other hand, the L2 learners produced only structures without climbing in this task (paralleling the structure of their dominant language [cf. Klein-Andreu 1986]); clearly this result differentiates the English-dominant L2 learners from the English-dominant HSs in the study. By and large, the results of this study suggest that low proficiency HSs retain much of their knowledge of clitics after they become dominant in the majority language.

Knowledge of clitics is also quite robust for intermediate and advanced HSs. Montrul (2010a) explored the role of dominant language (English) transfer to heritage Spanish in clitic usage across three proficiency levels in Spanish: low, intermediate and advanced. The design of this study was somewhat similar to that of her other study (2010b) discussed above in this section – both studies compare the
performance of L2 learners and HSs of Spanish. Keeping within the focus of this chapter – clitic placement in simple structures and in restructuring contexts – I will not discuss her main conclusions regarding the vulnerability of linguistic interfaces and early vs. late bilingualism; see chapter 2 for a more detailed explanation. Relevant to our current discussion, however, is that based on the results of this study, Montrul (2010a) confirms that knowledge of clitics is also robust for intermediate and advanced HSs: intermediate and advanced HSs produced clitics at a mean rate of 62.8% and 65.8%, respectively, and very similar to that of native controls (60%). Furthermore, the overall usage of clitic climbing by HS-participants at all three proficiency levels combined is similar to that of monolingual native controls: in the oral narration task, HSs showed only a 5% difference in their mean production of clitic climbing when compared to that of native controls. In light of the results from Montrul’s other study (2010b) discussed earlier in this section, knowledge and usage of clitics (including clitic climbing) among HSs of Spanish at all proficiency levels – low, intermediate and advanced – remain strong and do not appear to be subject to dominant language transfer. Thus, in general, the reacquisition of clitics for adult HSs does not seem problematic.

According to Silva-Corvalán’s (1994) frequently cited work on heritage Spanish in Los Angeles, clitics do not represent an area of difficulty for HSs. In line with the results of Montrul’s studies (2010a; 2010b), Silva-Corvalán (1994: 125) found that although second- and third-generation HSs showed evidence of attrition in several grammatical areas, they demonstrated a high level of accuracy with clitics, omitting them only 2.7% of the time. With respect to restructuring contexts, Silva-Corvalán quantified the preverbal vs. post-verbal placement of clitics in restructuring contexts when restructuring verbs occurred more than ten times in the speech samples of 20 participants. The researcher found that second- and third-generation HSs tend to use structures with clitic climbing more so than those without climbing. This finding stands in clear contrast to what cross-linguistic influence would predict (cf. Klein-Andreu 1986b): since a parallel structure exists in English – the object is expressed using a post-verbal pronoun – transfer from the dominant language would result in a tendency for HSs to use enclitics in

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57 Silva-Corvalán (1994) refers to restructuring contexts as “verbal periphrases.” Most of the verbs in her analysis (e.g., *ir* ‘to go’, *deber* ‘must’, *empezar a* ‘begin’, *querer* ‘want’, etc.) are restructuring verbs (cf. Rizzi 1982).
Spanish.\textsuperscript{58} Yet, this is not confirmed by Silva-Corvalán’s (1994) data; in fact, her results suggest an opposite trend in which HSs favor proclitics in Spanish, even more so than first-generation immigrants for some restructuring verbs. For instance, in constructions using the verb poder ‘can/may’, both second- and third-generation HSs produced a higher percentage of tokens with clitic climbing (95\% and 83\%, respectively) than the first-generation participants (60\%).\textsuperscript{59} Table 8 is a selection of some of Silva-Corvalán’s results (1994: 129).

\textbf{Table 8.}

\textbf{Proclisis in Restructuring Contexts from Silva-Corvalán (1994)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matrix Verb</th>
<th>Group 1 (7 speakers)</th>
<th>Group 2 (5 speakers)</th>
<th>Group 3 (8 speakers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Ir a ‘go to’}</td>
<td>85 / 92</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>35 / 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Estar ‘be’}</td>
<td>30 / 33</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>19 / 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Poder ‘may/can’}</td>
<td>23 / 38</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18 / 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Tener que ‘have to’}</td>
<td>17 / 30</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>12 / 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{Querer ‘want to’}</td>
<td>6 / 19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6 / 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the table above, second-and third-generation HSs’ percentage of proclitic usage matches, or is near, that of the first-generation immigrants.

The strong knowledge and usage of clitics reflected in the findings of these three studies above follow Jakobson’s (1941) Regression Hypothesis, which states that what is learned earlier is better

\textsuperscript{58} This prediction is based on the assumption that HSs equate object clitic pronouns in Spanish with strong pronouns in English.

\textsuperscript{59} In light of this finding, Silva-Corvalán (1994: 130) argues that this aspect of Spanish grammar reflects “an ongoing change” which has accelerated in a language-contact situation.
maintained than what is learned later. Since clitics are acquired in early childhood, the Regression Hypothesis would predict that adult HSs would show very little attrition in this area. Given that HSs acquire clitics well before they are typically exposed to the dominant language (which occurs after age 5), they would also be spared the effects of incomplete acquisition. No cross-linguistic influence inhibits their acquisition process to fully attain clitics. Additionally, adult HSs’ knowledge of clitic placement is robust because this area falls within the domain of syntax-proper, which is less vulnerable to instability (Montrul et al. 2008), as opposed to the interfaces.

Yet, there is recent evidence that suggests cross-linguistic influence impacting structures that are within a core linguistic domain as well. Pérez-Leroux, Cuza and Thomas (2011) argue that child HSs’ clitic placement in restructuring contexts differs from that of child monolingual Spanish speakers. Focusing on constructions in restructuring contexts in Spanish, Pérez et al.’s overarching goal was to investigate the degree to which language transfer occurs within the domain of syntax-proper for bilingual Spanish-English children. The participants included 23 Spanish-English bilingual children between the ages of 3 and 8; they were divided into two experimental groups: 13 simultaneous bilinguals (those born in, or who had arrived by age 3 to, North America; their families have been in North America for at least five years) and 10 sequential bilinguals (those born in Latin America and initiated contact with English after age 3; their families have been in the U.S. for no more than two years).60 Children performed an elicited imitation study of clitic placement in Spanish restructuring contexts. The researchers found that unlike monolingual Spanish child speakers who use more proclisis (Cl-V_{Restr}-Non-finite Verb) in restructuring contexts, the bilingual children overall tend to prefer enclisis (V_{Restr}-Non-finite Verb-Cl) in these contexts. In line with the Klein-Andreu’s (1986) prediction, it appears that bilingual children show a preference for using the Spanish structure that overlaps with that of English. Pérez-Leroux et al. put forward that based on these finding, cross-linguistic influence from the dominant language can encroach upon syntactic structures of the HL that are void of semantic and pragmatic effects.

When differentiating between the two experimental groups, Pérez et al. (2011) found that simultaneous bilinguals performed worse than sequential bilinguals. For example, simultaneous bilinguals performed worse than sequential bilinguals. For example, simultaneous bilinguals performed worse than sequential bilinguals.

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60 The age of 3 appears to be used as a benchmark age in Pérez-Leroux, Cuza and Thomas’ (2011) study, since the acquisition of clitics and clitic climbing occurs by this age, as per the discussion in section 1 of this chapter.
bilinguals committed non-target enclitic responses and much more clitics omissions. Additionally, sequential bilinguals outperformed simultaneous bilinguals in their ability to correctly imitate proclitic sentences. The researchers propose that age of onset of exposure to English may be a factor that impacts clitic placement in restructuring contexts: the earlier children acquire English (the majority language), the faster their control of clitic usage in heritage Spanish diminishes. Nevertheless, viewing the results of the two experimental groups as a whole, child HSs’ usage of clitics differs from that of monolingual child baseline speakers, in comparison to adult HSs whose usage of clitics parallels that of adult baseline speakers. Pérez et al. (2011) conclude that children’s diminishing usage of clitic climbing in Spanish restructuring contexts reflects language transfer from the majority language; cross-linguistic influence can occur even in constructions within core-syntax.

An issue that arises is what accounts for the discrepancy between child HSs’ preference for using enclitics in restructuring contexts (Pérez et al. 2011) and adult HSs’ preference for using proclitics in these same contexts (Montrul 2010a, 2010b; Silva-Corvalán 1994). To explain this difference, it may be necessary to view the developmental grammar of heritage Spanish speakers independent of the developmental grammar of monolingual Spanish speakers; that is, heritage Spanish should be viewed upon as a linguistic system in its own right, rather than as a system that may be somewhat similar to that of L1/baseline speakers (cf. Cook 2003). Under this assumption, one plausible motivation is that over time, heritage Spanish develops for speakers as a linguistic system that favors the usage of enclisis in restructuring contexts during childhood to one that favors the usage of proclisis in adulthood.

To recapitulate the main points of this section, knowledge and usage of clitics among adult HSs at all proficiency levels is not problematic. In fact, the rate at which HSs use clitics in oral production mostly parallels that of baseline speakers. There are two main reasons why knowledge and usage of clitics is robust for HSs: first, clitics are acquired during early childhood (before exposure to the majority language) and thus the effects of incomplete acquisition are avoided; second, since simple clitic word order and clitic word order in restructuring contexts fall within syntax-proper, clitics are less vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence, such as dominant language transfer. As a result, in instructed/formal HL (re-)acquisition settings, addressing clitic placement in simple structures and in restructuring contexts does
not generally represent a pressing priority. Nevertheless, recent research findings suggest that child HSs tend to use more enclisis in restructuring contexts, in comparison to child baseline speakers who prefer proclisis.

5.3. L2 ACQUISITION OF CLITICS

L2 learners’ acquisition of Romance clitics is more complex than that of monolinguals and HSs. Studies have indicated a delay in the acquisition process for clitics for both children and adults (Bruhn-Garavito and Montrul 1996; Duffield and White 1999; White 1996; among others61). Yet, there are some differences in the acquisition process between children and adults. In White’s (1996) investigation, two L1-English children learning French as L2 showed similar acquisition patterns as children acquiring French as L1: acquiring object clitics is slower than acquiring subject clitics; and there are few errors of object clitic morphological agreement and object clitic placement. On the other hand, for L1-English learners acquiring French as L2 after puberty, researchers (Towell and Hawkins 1994; Herschensohn 2000, 2004) have found effects of cross-linguistic interference from the L1. Regardless of these age differences, nonetheless, L2 learners do successfully master clitics eventually (Duffield and White 1999; Duffield et al. 2002; Santoro 2007). In fact, some researchers (Montrul 2010b; Santoro 2007) argue that L2 acquisition of clitic placement in simple structures occurs early without problems.

The L2 acquisition of clitic case morphology in Romance languages also occurs early, even if the L2 learners’ L1 has a different object pronomial system; for instance, although Romance languages morphologically differentiate accusative and dative pronouns, English does not. Thus, a central question driving Santoro’s (2007; 2011) generative linguistic research is how L1-English students who are formally studying Spanish or Italian as an L2 learn to morphologically distinguish object clitics in their L2. In his investigation of accusative and dative clitic-acquisition in adult L2 Italian, Santoro (2007) found that not all properties are acquired at the same rate: L2 learners were found to master clitic placement, including clitic climbing, faster than clitic case morphology. Once clitic projections were in place, however, the development of clitic case morphology was accelerated. Native controls in this experiment were 12

61 Some studies suggest evidence that there is a severe delay in the L2 acquisition object clitics in other non-Romance languages, such as Modern Greek (Chondrogianni 2008).
university-educated monolingual Italian speakers, whereas the participants in the experimental group consisted of 36 students who were studying Italian at various colleges in New York City. A strength of his research design is that there was an even number of proficiency levels within the experimental group, namely 12 beginner learners, 12 intermediate learners, and 12 advanced learners; the variety of proficiency levels provides a better understanding of how the acquisition process of clitics progresses. Yet, a limitation of Santoro’s work is that he tested exclusively for procliticization (Cl-Finite Verb and Cl-V Restr-Non-finite Verb) without examining encliticization (V Restr-Non-finite Verb-Cl). Despite this, however, what is interesting is that his findings support previous studies on the L1- and L2-acquisition of clitics: first, even if categories are absent from a learner’s L1, they can still be activated during the L2 acquisition process, allowing for eventual mastery of clitics (Duffield and White 1999; Duffield et al. 2002); second, L2 learners’ sequence of acquiring clitic placement before acquiring clitic morphology parallels that of child monolingual and heritage acquisition.

Although the L2 acquisition of clitic case morphology occurs early, full mastery entails a timely process (cf. Bruhn and Montrul 1996; Duffield and White 1999; Duffield et al. 2002). Santoro has attempted to address the factors motivating this lengthy process by examining the morphological variability of accusative and dative clitics in the interlanguage grammars of L2-leaners of Italian (2007; see above), and that of L2-Spanish learners (2011). For his research on L2-Spanish, the participants of this study were all adults and were divided into three groups: one group of native controls (12 participants); two experimental groups of high-beginner learners (17 participants) and high-intermediate learners (15 participants). The participants in the experimental groups were L1-speakers of English who were studying Spanish at various New York City colleges; their proficiency level was determined by the amount of formal instruction they had received: high-beginner learners completed 10 months (one academic year) of foreign language instruction, while the high-intermediate learners complete 20 months (two academic years) of instruction. The results revealed that for high-beginner L2 learners, clitic morphological variability is widespread, with errors involving more dative pronouns than accusative pronouns, whereas for high-intermediate L2 learners, the amount of errors is less, and evenly spread between accusative and dative pronouns. In addition, although errors in clitic case morphology still
occurred for those who had completed two academic years of formal instruction, cross-linguistic influence from the learners’ L1 (English) was more evident in the high-beginner group than in the high-intermediate group. In other words, L1 transfer effects were less noticeable in the group whose length of study was longer. Finally, Santoro points out that after only a brief period of exposure and formal instruction, L2 learners accurately use accusative pronouns at a high rate (69%), a finding which supports the results of his earlier work on the L2 acquisition of Italian clitics (Santoro 2007). Santoro (2011: 65) concludes that for adult L2 learners, categories and properties unavailable in L1 grammars may be retrieved with the help of UG.

5.3.1. L2 ACQUISITION OF CLITIC CLIMBING

Although many of the above studies treat the L2 acquisition of Romance clitics in general, there are others that focus on clitics in “restructuring contexts”, (cf. Rizzi 1982). In this subsection, I provide an overview of the literature on L2 acquisition of clitic climbing.

L2 learners are able to successfully acquire clitic climbing, even though it requires more effort that their acquisition of simple clitic placement (those involving finite verbs only, e.g. Cl-Finite Verb). Bruhn-Garavito and Montrul’s (1996) conducted a bi-directional investigation of the L2 acquisition of French and Spanish by L1 speakers of Spanish and French, respectively.\(^{62}\) The researchers’ principal objective was to determine whether L2 learners are able to reset a parameter of UG related to the position of the infinitive. The differences between Spanish and French in the syntactic structure of infinitives within restructuring contexts, namely that the position of the infinitive is higher in Spanish (and in Italian) than it is in French [cf. Kayne 1991], lead to different surface clitic word orders: French does not allow for enclitics, whereas Spanish and Italian do.\(^{63}\) The participants (20 L1-French speakers who were intermediate-level L2 learners of Spanish; 30 L1-Spanish speakers who were intermediate-level L2 learners of French; and 15 adult native controls from each language) were given both a Production Task

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\(^{62}\) The relevance of this study to my investigation is important since, as Bruhn-Garavito and Montrul (1996) point out, clitic word order between Spanish and Italian are quite similar (cf. Rizzi 1994).

\(^{63}\) French allows only the middle position in restructuring contexts (e.g., Mod-Cl-V). According to Kayne (1991), infinitive verbs in French raise from V to Infin, whereas infinitive verbs in Spanish and Italian can move leftward from Infn (past the object clitic) and adjoins to T (a higher position).
and a Grammaticality Judgment Task. Both tasks tested for simple clitic placement and restructuring contexts. For the participants acquiring L2 Spanish, although some were found to have successfully acquired the position of clitics, the questions involving clitic climbing (or lack thereof) proved to be more problematic for them than the questions involving simple structures. Bruhn-Garavito and Montrul (1996: 133) concluded that “even after a parameter has been reset initially, it may take some time before all the characteristics associated with it are in place”. It appears that the findings of Bruhn-Garavito and Montrul fall in line with those of Santoro (2007) in that the mastery of clitic climbing takes longer than that of simple clitic placement.

L2 learners are able to acquire clitic placement regardless of whether or not their L1 has clitics. Duffield and White (1999) argue that L2 acquisition is not strictly limited to properties instantiated in the L1. The purpose of their study was two-fold. First, these researchers sought to examine whether cross-linguistic influence from L1 affects clitic placement in the interlanguage grammars of adult L2 learners of Spanish. Second, they sought to evaluate the methodological effectiveness of experimental tasks, namely grammaticality judgment tasks vs. a sentence matching task, in tapping implicit grammar; I will discuss this second objective in greater detail in a subsequent section in this chapter. The participants were L1-English speakers and by L1-French speakers; these experimental groups were further divided by proficiency level in L2 Spanish: the L1-English group had 13 advanced learners and 14 intermediate learners, whereas the L1-French group had 13 advanced learners and 15 intermediate learners. Additionally, 15 native controls also participated in this experiment. The researchers selected these two languages in particular in order to test for L1 effects: English does not have clitics, whereas French does. The results of their study showed that overall, the L2 acquisition of clitics in Spanish by both L1-English learners and L1-French learners is not problematic. This finding is in line with those of previous studies by Bruhn-Garavito and Montrul (1996) and Santoro (2007). Duffield and White conclude that universal properties determining clitic placement are still available to adult L2 learners, even if their L1 does not have clitics.

In regards to restructuring contexts, however, it should be noted that L2 learners have a higher acceptance rate of structures without climbing (V_{Restr} - Verb - Cl). Their interlanguage grammars do not
readily accept clitic climbing structures (Cl - V_{Rest} - Verb). Although this higher acceptance rate for enclitics was more pronounced for the L1-French group, it was significant in the L1-English group as well. This finding provides further evidence that universal properties determining clitic placement are more likely to be at play, as opposed to cross-linguistic influence from the differing L1s – one has clitics while the other does not.

To sum up the main points of this subsection, in L2 acquisition both clitic placement and clitic case morphology are acquired early. Nevertheless, not all properties are acquired at the same rate: L2 learners acquire clitic placement rules (including clitic climbing) at a faster rate than clitic case morphology; in fact, although noticeable accuracy of the latter occurs early, full mastery may be a quite timely process. Turning the focus to clitic climbing, the rate of acquisition for structures with climbing is lengthier than that of simple structures (Cl-Finite Verb). Nonetheless, L2 learners are eventually able to reset a parameter of UG related to the position of the infinitive. Furthermore, it appears that universal properties regarding clitic placement are available to adult L2 learners, irrespective of whether the learners’ L1 has clitics or not. Thus, the difficulty of restructuring contexts may not be attributed to external influences, such as previous language systems, but may rather point toward language-internal influences, namely "universal tendencies" (cf. Polinsky and Kagan 2007: 382) in language encoding, such as properties of UG (within a generative framework) or more general universal principles in language learning (cf. Klein and Perdue 1997).

In a later section of this chapter, I address the issue of a possible universal tendency for encliticization. For now, however, I turn to the emerging literature on L3 acquisition of clitics.

5.4. L3 ACQUISITION OF CLITICS

Since research on learners acquiring Romance clitics in a third language system has begun to emerge only in recent years, the body of literature within this area is not as sizeable as that for L1, L2 and HS learners.\textsuperscript{64,65} Despite this, however, in this section I present an overview of Montrul, Dias and Santos’

\textsuperscript{64} According to Rothman et al. (2010), research devoted to L3 acquisition as a whole, especially within the generative framework, has only begun to grow in the past decade.
(2011) study that focuses on this aspect of syntactic acquisition. Their initial findings may begin to shed light on object clitic placement in Romance for learners acquiring a third language system.

The typological closeness that learners perceive between a previous language system and the L3 that they are learning plays an important role in the acquisition of clitics in a third language system. The 54 participants of Montrul, Dias and Santos’ (2011) study were divided equally among three groups, two of which were experimental: aside from the group of native controls, the first experimental group consisted of L1 speakers of Spanish who had acquired English as L2, while the second group was composed of L1 speakers of English who had acquired Spanish as L2. All participants in both experimental groups were university students (both graduate and undergraduate) engaged in the formal (academic) study of Portuguese as L3. The results of these researchers’ work were based on the findings from two studies. The first study entailed three semi-spontaneous oral production tasks aimed at eliciting 1st, 2nd, and 3rd person subject and object pronouns in speech – the differentiation of person was analyzed in this study for two reasons: (1) 3rd person clitics are disappearing from colloquial Brazilian Portuguese; (2) in written/formal Brazilian Portuguese, object clitic placement in the 3rd person is different from 1st and 2nd; in restructuring contexts 1st and 2nd person clitics allow for both no-climbing and middle position (V_Restr - Cl - Non-finite Verb) only, while 3rd person allows for no-climbing, and sometimes, clitic climbing. The results of this first study indicated cross-linguistic influence from Spanish (as L1 or as L2) for both experimental groups; the researchers argued that this finding is attributed to the “structural similarity” between the two typologically close languages – Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese.

Cross-linguistic influence from the typologically-closer language appears to play a role in the metalinguistic errors that L3 learners make in their acquisition of clitics. Montrul, Dias and Santos (2011) attempted to confirm the results of their first experiment by creating a second study to verify the transfer effects from Spanish. This second study was a written acceptability judgment task that tested knowledge of clitics and clitic placement. The results revealed that overall L3 learners of Brazilian Portuguese are aware of the availability of clitics and their syntactic distribution in the L3; transfer effects from Spanish,

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65 Bardel and Falk (2010) have recently conducted research on the L3 acquisition of German word order and object pronouns. I have excluded their work from my literature review for two reasons: first, the target language of acquisition in their study (i.e., German) is not a Romance language; second, unlike Standard Italian and Italian dialects, object pronouns in German are expressed by non-clitic (e.g., strong) pronouns.
nevertheless, were found in clitic placement with non-finite verbs and in restructuring contexts, especially with clitic climbing (Montrul et al. 2011: 50). The results of Montrul et. al.’s (2011) study suggest that in the presence of other models that have been introduced in the L3 acquisition literature, such as the CEM (Flynn, Foley and Vinniskaya 2004) and the L2-Status Factor (Bardel and Falk 2007), the role of psychotypology is a critical factor in determining which previous language system a L3 learner will most likely transfer.

Montrul et al.’s (2011) findings support Rothman’s (2011) TPM model: since learners intuitively consider Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese as typologically closer – both are Romance languages – they are more likely to transfer from Spanish (as an L1 or an L2), rather than from English – a Germanic language. Although a strength of Montrul et al.’s (2011) study is that it is made up of two experiments, with the second experiment designed to confirm the findings of the first, one may argue against the validity of the findings since only six participants participated in both studies; the overwhelming majority of the participants in the second study were not the same ones as those who had participated in the first study.

To sum up this section, the literature on the L3 acquisition of clitics has only recently begun to emerge. Psychotypology plays an important role in the acquisition of clitics in L3 acquisition: cross-linguistic influence is most likely to derive from a previous language that the learner considers to be typologically closer to the L3, and not necessarily from their dominant language.

5.5. A POSSIBLE UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE FOR ENCLITICIZATION

A closer analysis of the grammaticality judgment task data from the works of Bruhn-Garavito and Montrul (1996), Duffield and White (1999), and Montrul (2010a & 2010b) show a uniform preference amongst all speakers (native controls, HSS and L2 learners) for constructions with encliticization (VRestr - Verb - Cl) than for those with procliticization (Cl - VRestr - Verb) in Spanish - a language whose clitic placement rules are similar to those of Italian in restructuring contexts. Whether this preference is found

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66 Only Montrul’s (2010a, 2010b) research explicitly accounts for HSS.

67 Romance languages whose restructuring contexts do not allow for encliticization at all, namely French, or only for certain subjects
in learners acquiring a third linguistic system remains to be seen, since there is currently little to no research on clitic climbing in L3 Spanish or Italian. For now, however, the results of these three groups in previous studies point toward a possible universal principle for encliticization in restructuring contexts.

Two important points must be noted, however. First, although this tendency is found in all groups in the studies above, it is more pronounced for L2 learners and HSs than native controls. For instance, Duffield and White (1999: 156) found that L2 learners prefer clitics to be associated with the lower verb – the infinitive – in restructuring contexts. Second and most importantly, this preference for enclitcization presents itself primarily in grammaticality judgment tasks. Since grammaticality judgment tasks are ones in which participants are confronted with discrete test items that intensely focus on form, it has been argued that grammaticality judgment tasks tap primarily metalinguistic awareness (a speaker’s conscious knowledge about language and its use)\(^{68}\) and not implicit grammar (unconscious knowledge of language) (Ellis 2005). Since metalinguistic awareness is linked to prescriptive grammar (Roehr & Ganem-Gutierrez 2009), there is some evidence suggesting that prescriptive grammar favors encliticization. For instance, Silva-Corvalán (1994) reports that many of her first-generation participants recall formal/academic language learning experiences in Latin America where instructors explicitly corrected students’ usage of procliticization with encliticization in restructuring contexts. As a result, there exists the possibility that grammaticality judgment tasks are the result of learned metalinguistic knowledge from explicit instruction. In light of all these causes, grammaticality judgment tasks might not be the best task to use when examining universal principles, which are, to quote Klein and Perdue (1997), “intrinsic” and associated with implicit grammar.

On the other hand, it should be noted that there are some researchers (e.g., Carrol and Meisel 1990) who have suggested that linguistic competence (implicit grammar) can be tapped through grammaticality judgment tasks. In fact, Duffield and White (1999: 134) observe that earlier research on UG and L2 acquisition relied heavily, though not exclusively, on grammaticality judgment tasks since these tasks provided researchers with an indirect method of assessing learners’ knowledge of

\(^{68}\) Since metalinguistic awareness is linked to prescriptive grammar (Roehr & Ganem-Gutierrez 2009), there is some evidence suggesting that prescriptive grammar favors encliticization. See Silva-Corvalán’s (1994) work for a discussion.
ungrammaticality (i.e., what is not possible in interlanguage grammars). Even though Duffield and White (1999) argue that other tasks more effectively tap implicit grammar, they do make the argument that if the results of a study's grammaticality judgment task corroborate with those of other tasks that do not rely on metalinguistic knowledge, “this provides indirect confirmation that the grammaticality judgment task results do, in fact, reflect interlanguage competence, rather than learned knowledge” (155). Yet, the fundamental problem that arises with using grammaticality judgment tasks to test for implicit grammar is that although it may serve as an indirect approach to uncovering what is possible (or not possible) in interlanguage grammars, it is rather difficult to tease apart any potential unconscious knowledge from metalinguistic awareness, the latter of which many researchers argue is the focus of grammaticality judgment tasks (cf. Ellis 2005).

In fact, evidence against the universality of encliticization can be found in Montrul (2010a, 2010b) where participants completed not only a grammaticality judgment task, but also an oral production task (storytelling based on visual cues). Results showed that HSs and native controls produced much more clitic climbing than L2 learners did: L2 learners used encliticization exclusively, while HSs and native controls used both encliticization and procliticization. Thus, it is possible that the preference for enclitics in grammaticality judgment tasks is due to a task effect since a preference for encliticization does not appear to exist in the implicit grammars of all speakers.

5.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

To summarize the major points in this chapter, the acquisition of clitic placement is generally uncomplicated for L1 acquiring children (monolinguals and HSs), who demonstrate target-like performance by age 3. Adult HSs produce clitics at high rates, similar to those of their native-speaker counterparts. For adult L2 learners, on the other hand, acquisition of clitics is more complex. Although they have difficulties with clitic case morphology, clitic placement rules are well established at the beginning-level. Irrespective of the learner’s L1, the acquisition of clitics in restructuring contexts appears to be more problematic than that of clitics in simple contexts. Thus, the difficulty of restructuring contexts may not be attributed to external influences, such as previous language systems, but may rather point
toward language-internal influences, namely universal principles in language learning. Finally, an observed preference for enclitics seen in grammaticality judgment tasks is not replicated in oral production tasks, an issue I will also address in my current study.
CHAPTER 6. THE STUDY

6.1. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I conducted a small-scale pilot study to shed light on some of the issues surrounding non-standard Italian dialect HSs’ acquisition of clitic placement in restructuring contexts and in negative imperatives. In chapter 1 I proposed three potential sources of influence: (a) non-standard heritage dialect; (b) universal principles in language learning; (c) dominant language transfer. Upon closer examination, two important factors argue against including dominant language transfer [hypothesis (c)].

The first factor that weighs against considering dominant language transfer is that, from a methodological perspective, the word order of the particular languages involved in this experiment prevents us from distinguishing dominant language transfer (English) from universal principles as both hypotheses predict clitic placement in the lower position. Although English uses a non-clitic pronoun in examples (25a) and (25c), a structurally parallel equivalent in Standard Italian would use a clitic, as seen in (25b) and (25d):

**English**

(25a) I want to do it
S V V O

**Standard Italian**

(25b) Voglio far-lo
(I) want to do - cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc.
(S) V_restr V-O-cl
‘I want to do it’

**English**

(25c) Don’t eat it!
Neg V O

**Standard Italian**

(25d) Non mangiarlo!
Neg V-O-cl
‘Don’t eat it!’

If HSs were to show a preference for encliticization in Standard Italian, it would be necessary to tease apart whether universal principles or dominant language transfer is motivating clitic placement in the
lower position.\textsuperscript{69} Therefore, it is necessary to eliminate one of these two sources from a methodological standpoint. The question that remains, however, is of these two sources that predict encliticization, what motivates my choosing to eliminate dominant language transfer, and not universal principles, from consideration in this study.

The second significant factor motivating the exclusion of dominant language transfer is the role of psychotypology. HSs would most likely consider their dominant language (English) as typologically more distant (from Standard Italian) than their heritage non-standard Italian dialect. Hence, of these two potential sources of cross-linguistic influence, the dominant language (English) would be the less likely one. If any cross-linguistic influence were at play, it would more likely derive from the heritage non-standard Italian dialect. In light of the methodological issues and psychotypology, I chose not to focus on dominant language transfer in this present investigation.

To explore the remaining sources motivating non-standard Italian dialect HSs’ acquisition of clitic placement in Standard Italian, the primary research questions guiding this study are as follows:

(1) To what degree does knowledge of a heritage non-standard Italian dialect constrain speakers’ clitic placement in learning Standard Italian?

(2) Is there evidence for the preference for encliticization?

As seen in the previous chapters, several factors come into play in the acquisition of clitics and I will consider some of these in my discussion of the hypotheses that I present.

6.1.1. HYPOTHESIS (a): HERITAGE NON-STANDARD ITALIAN DIALECTS

I offer separate predictions for the two different dialectal groups of Standard Italian learners. First, for NID HSs, I expect that they will be less likely to use procliticization; instead, they will likely opt for structures with encliticization in Standard Italian, as shown in (26a) and (26b), which follow their dialectal

\textsuperscript{69} In fact, if NID HSs showed a preference for structures with encliticization, it would be even more difficult to ascertain whether any preference for structures with encliticization in Standard Italian were due to influence from the heritage non-standard dialect, universal principles, or the dominant language (English), as all three sources would predict that the pronoun or clitic follows the embedded infinitive. Therefore, the results of the SID HSs would be more relevant since the word order of their heritage dialects contrasts with that suggested by universal principles and by the dominant language. Nevertheless, I will report the results of both NID HSs and SID HSs in my study.
word order, as exemplified in (26c) and (26e):

**Standard Italian**

(26a) Voglio far-lo
(I) want to do - cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc.
(S) V_restr V-O-cl
'I want to do it'

(26b) Non mangiamolo!
Neg eat-IMP-1st. pl. - cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc.
'Let's not eat it!'

**Northern Italian Dialect (Veneziano)**

(26c) Vojo far-lo
(I) want to do - cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc.
'O want to do it'

(26d) *O vojo far.
cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc. (I) want to do
'I want to do it'

(26e) No magnemolo!
Neg eat- IMP-1st. pl. -cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc.
'Let's not eat it!'

(26f) * No lo magnemo!
Neg cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc. eat- IMP-1st. pl.
'Let's not eat it!'

Conversely, I expect SID HSs will be more disposed to use structures with procliticization in the Standard, as shown in examples (26g) and (26h), reflecting their dialectal word order, as demonstrated in (26i) and (26k):

**Standard Italian**

(26g) Lo voglio fare.
cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc. (I) want to do
O-cl (S) V_restr V
'I want to do it'

(26h) Non mi pungere!
Neg cl-me-1st sg. Acc. sting-IMP-2nd. sing.
'Don't sting me!'
6.1.2. HYPOTHESIS (b): UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES

It is plausible to consider that learners’ placement of object clitics in Standard Italian may be restricted by one of the universal phrasal constraints, namely that of NP_{1-}V-NP_{2}, in Klein and Perdue’s (1992) Basic Variety model. Additionally, from a generative perspective, Kayne (1994) makes the same prediction since his analysis maintains that SVO is the underlying, universal word order. Observe in (27b) how an object clitic in Italian can be post-verbal (encliticization) and the original complement position of the full NP that this clitic represents is also post-verbal in examples (27a):

Standard Italian

(27a) Marco vuole fare il compito
Marco want to do the homework
NP V V NP
‘Marco wants to do the homework’

(27b) Marco vuole far-\textit{lo}
Marco want to do - cl-it-3rd sg. masc. Acc.
NP V V- NP
‘Marco wants to do it’

Another phrasal constraint of the Basic Variety, namely V-NP_{2}, would also predict for the object clitic to assume the same post-verbal position that the full NP must occupy. Examples (27c) and (27d) illustrate
Thus, in both restructuring contexts and negative imperatives, if universal principles are at play, all speaker groups should show a preference for encliticization in Standard Italian because the lower position is where the object would have appeared as a full-NP, following the Basic Variety phrasal constraints, namely (1) NP₁-V-NP₂ and (2) V-NP₂. Furthermore, evidence for a “universal” principle should be found across all tasks.

6.2. METHODOLOGY

6.2.1. PARTICIPANTS

Since HSs form a heterogeneous group, careful selection measures were taken in order to reduce variability. All participants completed a linguistic background questionnaire. First, the participants in this study shared the following characteristics: they were born in the USA and, having been exposed to English by age 5, are dominant in English (the majority language of their country of residence and the language of their schooling); are learning, or have learned, Standard Italian as a third language system through the intermediate-low level. Second, participants completed a short proficiency test in Standard Italian. This measure was intended to maintain a level of consistency among all participants in their knowledge of Standard Italian. Third, all participants have already received explicit instruction and extensive oral and written practice with clitic word order in restructuring contexts and in negative

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70 For a further description of “intermediate-low” foreign language learners, see the ACTFL proficiency standards.
imperatives in their Standard Italian language studies. Finally, since the primary HS group under investigation in this study is adolescents and young adults, the age of participants in this study ranged between 12 and 20. The mean age of all participants was 16.

The participants’ proficiency in their heritage non-standard Italian dialect was also controlled for in this study’s methodology. Participants in this study were those who either understand their family’s heritage non-standard Italian dialect well, but don’t speak it, or understand only some of it; they self-reported these levels of proficiency in their respective heritage non-standard Italian dialect on the linguistic background questionnaire. All participants have had naturalistic exposure to their family’s non-standard Italian dialect. This may include participants’ being (or having been) spoken to in the non-standard Italian dialect by older family members, hearing (or have heard) the family's non-standard dialect being spoken among other family members in the home (e.g., parents, uncles/aunts and grandparents, etc.). These participants possess low-proficiency (“minimal aural comprehension,” as defined by Polinsky and Kagan [2007]) in their heritage non-standard Italian dialect. I also classified participants according to their regional heritage dialects: there were seven NID HSs and ten SID HSs.

In addition, there were six participants who served as baseline/native controls. The baseline speakers were older than the participants of the experimental group (mean age = 50); they acquired their family’s non-standard Italian dialect as an L1 and have since maintained a high level of proficiency in it. Furthermore, they were fluent speakers of Standard Italian, as verified by their performance on a proficiency test and informal conversations with the experimenter. One could argue that there should have been another group of baseline speakers in this experiment: monolingual Standard Italian speakers.

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71 These levels of language proficiency in the heritage dialect fall at the lower end of the wide range of HS proficiencies as outlined by Rothman (2009) and Valdés (1995).

72 Ideally, participants could have been tested for proficiency in their heritage non-standard Italian dialect. Yet, such a control measure would be difficult to create since there is a great deal of variation within each of the non-standard Italian dialects themselves; for example, which dialect of siciliano would the proficiency test be based upon (e.g. palermitano, catanese, etc.)?

73 These have traditionally represented the basic requirements for classification as a HS in the literature (cf. Au et al. 2003; Polinsky 2011; Rothman 2009; among many others).

74 It is possible that since these HSs possess low proficiency in their heritage non-standard Italian dialect, it is less likely to influence their acquisition of Standard Italian. However, since previous research (cf. Rast 2010) suggests that minimal knowledge of a previous language can influence the acquisition process, in this study I hypothesize that even low proficiency in a typologically related language (i.e., a non-standard Italian dialect) will constrain their acquisition of Standard Italian.

75 As with the participants in the experimental groups, each baseline speaker's proficiency in his/her heritage dialect was self-reported in the linguistic questionnaire.
who, by definition, have no previous knowledge of a non-standard Italian dialect. Yet, in following Cook’s (2003) multicompetence model, I argue that a more accurate baseline for my study’s participants are multilingual speakers who are fluent in Standard Italian, their heritage non-standard Italian dialect, and English (their dominant language). According to Cook (2003), bilingual and multilingual speakers have different mental representations of a language than monolingual speakers. Under this interpretation, the use of speakers fluent in English, their heritage non-standard Italian dialect and Standard Italian provides a much more accurate comparison for the experimental group. In some cases, the baseline speakers (i.e., control group) tested for this investigation were parents of the participants in the experimental group; this methodological design is well in line with what Prada Pérez and Pascual y Cabo (2011) have proposed: the language of the parents can serve as an appropriate baseline for evaluating the language of their children (cf. Pascual y Cabo and Rothman 2012).

6.2.2. TASKS & DESIGN

Participants performed four tasks. First, they completed the linguistic background questionnaire. Second, they completed a Standard Italian proficiency test. Third, they carried out an oral elicited imitation task. Finally, participants performed an off-line written grammaticality judgment task.

The linguistic background questionnaire sought very detailed information from participants. One of the main purposes of the questionnaire was to ascertain participants’ proficiency in their heritage dialect. As discussed in the previous subsection, participants’ proficiency in the heritage non-standard Italian dialect was kept constant among all participants. In addition, participants identified which regional non-standard Italian dialect is used in their family. This information was used to classify them as either NID HSs or SID HSs. Participants were also asked to list the languages that they spoke or heard at different age ranges since birth. Of particular interest was which language they used and with whom (e.g., what language did they use with their parents, with their siblings, etc. at different age ranges). Finally, the questionnaire also requested other basic information, such as age, place of birth of participants and some of their family members/ancestors, and their reasons for choosing to formally learn Standard Italian. In terms of language usage, as discussed in the previous section, the data gathered
from the questionnaire indicated that all participants in this study have heard, and continue to hear, a non-standard Italian dialect spoken in the home/family. Furthermore, another commonality among the participants is that they have always spoken, and continue to speak, English to their parents and siblings; only two participants from the experimental groups indicated that they spoke their heritage non-standard Italian dialect to grandparents.

The second task was the Standard Italian proficiency test. The test consisted of multiple choice grammar questions, with varying degrees of difficulty. This task was designed to maintain consistency among participants in their knowledge of Standard Italian. Only participants whose knowledge of Standard Italian was at the intermediate-low level took part in this study.76

There were two experimental components of this study. First, participants completed an oral elicited imitation task. The aim of this task was to examine HSs’ usage of clitics in restructuring contexts and negative imperative structures in Standard Italian. There were 24 items in this task: 12 were actual test items pertaining to object clitic usage, whereas the other 12 were fillers involving noun-gender morphological agreement and noun-number (i.e., singular vs. plural) morphological agreement. Participants heard a prompt consisting of two related sentences: the first sentence established a context, whereas the second sentence contained static noise recorded over the property being tested. That is, in the second sentence the possible placements for the object clitic were masked with noise. Sample test items are shown in examples (28a) and (28b), whereas sample filler items are shown in examples (29a) and (29b):

Note: ___ indicates where participants hear masking (i.e., static noise).

SAMPLE TEST ITEMS

(28a) Ho molti compiti da fare stasera. ___ devo finir___.
(28b) Il forno è guasto. Non ___ usar___!

76 To demonstrate proficiency at this level of Standard Italian, participants had to answer 8 out of 10 questions correctly on this proficiency test. A further step to maintain consistency among participants’ Standard Italian proficiency was taken in the questionnaire (i.e., “How many years have you studied Standard Italian?”).
Upon hearing the prompt, participants had to immediately repeat the entire second sentence and fill the void left by the static noise. The purpose for providing two related sentences as aural prompts for participants was because in order for object clitics to be used authentically, participants needed a clear context in which they could establish the noun to which the elicited object clitic pronoun referred. The context-establishing sentences (i.e., the first sentences) were structured so that the direct object would not always appear at the end of the sentence.\(^\text{77}\)

Unlike other studies on Romance clitics (e.g., Montrul 2010a; Montrul 2010b), the oral task in my current investigation was not a free-response narration. Although free-response narration tasks may elicit spontaneous oral production that taps implicit grammar, there is no guarantee that participants will use object clitics in their speech sample.\(^\text{78}\) On the other hand, the oral elicited imitation task in my study obliged participants to use object clitics in their oral responses. Furthermore, since participants heard a prompt and had to respond immediately, their usage of clitics in this type of task may still provide a clear image of their implicit grammar (see section 5.5 in the previous chapter).

The other experimental task in this investigation was an off-line written grammaticality judgment task (GJT) that examined HSs’ knowledge of clitics in restructuring contexts and negative imperative structures in Standard Italian. This task consisted of 32 items, 16 of which were actual test items, while 16 were fillers (noun-gender and noun-number morphological agreement). The number of correct vs. incorrect responses for test items and for filler items was equalized. Participants had to judge the acceptability for each sentence using a Likert scale between 1 and 5 (1 = unacceptable; 5 = acceptable); I

\(^{77}\) If the direct object appeared at the end of all (or most) of the context-establishing sentences, there exists the possibility that participants would always be inclined to use enclitics.

\(^{78}\) Non-production of a given construction in the free-response (oral narration) task cannot be taken as evidence that the relevant knowledge has not been acquired.
will provide more details about this task when reporting the results in the next section. Target sentence types under investigation are shown in test item examples (30) through (36), while filler items are shown in examples (37) through (40).

**SAMPLE TEST ITEMS**

(30) Lascio i broccoli qui. **Giorgio può finirli.** \(V_{\text{Restr}}-V-\text{Cl} \quad \text{(correct)}\)

(31) Ho cucinato i carciofi. **Giorgio li può finire.** \(C-I-V_{\text{Restr}}-V \quad \text{(correct)}\)

(32) La lavatrice è guasta. **Gabriele deve la cambiare.** \(*V_{\text{Restr}}-C-I-V \quad \text{(incorrect)}*\)

(33) Questo problema è molto grande. **Luigi lo cerca di risolvere.** \(*C-I-V_{\text{Non-Restr}}-V \quad \text{(incorrect)}*\)

(34) Il programma è noioso. **Non guardiamolo!** \(\text{Neg}-V_{\text{Imp}}-C-I \quad \text{(correct)}\)

(35) Lo spettacolo non è interessante. **Non lo guardiamo!** \(\text{Neg}-C-I-V_{\text{Imp}} \quad \text{(correct)}\)

(36) La televisione è noiosa. **La non guardare!** \(*C-\text{Neg}-V_{\text{Imp}} \quad \text{(incorrect)}*\)

**SAMPLE FILLER ITEMS**

(37) **Le professoresse sono grasse.** Gender (correct)

(38) **I dottori sono simpatiche.** \(*\text{Gender (incorrect)}*\)

(39) **La studentessa è fedele.** Number (correct)

(40) **I signori sono antipatico.** \(*\text{Number (incorrect)}*\)

Similar to the design of the oral elicited imitation task, there were two related sentences in each of the test items of the GJT. The purpose of having two related sentences in each test item was again to establish a context in order to present the object clitic pronouns as authentically as possible. Participants were instructed to assess the grammaticality of the bolded (second) sentence in the test items. In contrast, previous studies' (e.g., Montrul 2010a & 2010b) GJTs generally provided only the sentence with the object clitic without any context.

In sum, the combination of the two tasks provided a more accurate picture of HSSs’ linguistic mastery of object clitic placement in Standard Italian, both in terms of usage and knowledge.
6.3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Although this current investigation is a small-scale study, the results obtained thus far can provide a glimpse into the degree that heritage non-standard Italian dialects constrain HSs’ usage and knowledge of the standard. In this section, I present the results of both the Oral Elicited Imitation Task and the GJT.

6.3.1. ORAL ELICITED IMITATION TASK

Of the 24 items in this task, 12 were test items examining HSs’ usage of object clitics in Standard Italian. The objective of this task was to compare proclitic and enclitic use between the two experimental groups. Raw counts of participants’ enclitic vs. proclitic usage were submitted to statistical analysis. Table 9 shows the mean percent of proclitic usage in this task for restructuring contexts and for negative imperative constructions.

Table 9. Oral Elicited Imitation Task Results. Mean percent of proclitic usage in restructuring contexts and negative imperative constructions by group.79

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Italian Dialect HS</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.1905</td>
<td>.29936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Italian Dialect HS</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.6083</td>
<td>.26367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Baseline Control</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.2222</td>
<td>.25458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Baseline Control</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.8611</td>
<td>.24056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results from a one-way ANOVA analysis, $F(1, 15) = 9.26978466$, $p < 0.01$, revealed a significant difference between the two experimental groups. The data indicate that SID HSs have a preference for procliticization, while NID HSs strongly prefer encliticization. Additionally, the results from a separate Chi-

79 In this statistical analysis comparing proclitic and enclitic usage, a figure of "0" was coded as enclitic, whereas a figure of "1" was coded as proclitic. The table above shows the mean proclitic usage of the experimental and control groups.
Square analysis, $X^2 (1, N = 17) = 14.765$, confirmed that there was a significant difference between the two experimental groups in their usage of object clitics ($p < 0.001$). In other words, the different usage patterns in object clitic placement between the two experimental groups does not appear to be random.

6.3.1.1. ITEM ANALYSIS

The mean percent of proclitic usage was also calculated for each test item. A surprising finding was that out of the twelve test items, both experimental groups showed the highest and the lowest mean percent of proclitic usage for the same items; see Table 10.

Table 10. Test items with the highest and the lowest mean percentage of proclitic usage within each experimental group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>NID HSs</strong></th>
<th><strong>SID HSs</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest Proclitic Usage: Test item #9</td>
<td>42.86%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest Proclitic Usage: Test item #20</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest mean percent of proclitic usage for both NID HSs and SID HSs was found for test item #9:

(9) Non ci piace la poesia. **Non ____ leggiamo____.**

This finding across both experimental groups may be pointing toward the possibility that HSs prefer the pre-verbal position for negative imperatives in the first-person plural (*noi*). The mean percentage of proclitic usage was highest for this construction, as opposed to the others tested (i.e., restructuring contexts, negative imperatives in the second-person singular/plural) for both NID HSs and SID HSs. Nevertheless, this apparent preference across both groups for proclisis in item #9 was not supported by other statistical analyses. First, a one-way ANOVA analysis for this item, $F (1, 15) = 11.76470588, p <

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80 There also exists the possibility that other pragmatic factors are also controlling participants’ variability in object clitic placement. Furthermore, one researcher points out that there may be a possibility that participants were primed to produce proclisis because a proclitic was used in the first (contextual) sentence of this test time. For now, I put these factors aside in my current discussion of this pilot study; I intend to take these factors into consideration when designing a similar, but larger-scale, study in the future.
0.01, indicated that there is a significant difference between the experimental groups: NID HSs tend to favor encliticization while SID HSs show a strong preference for procliticization in this test item. Second, a separate Chi-Square analysis, $X^2 (1, N = 17) = 7.473$, also indicated a significant difference in clitic placement between the two experimental groups in item #9 ($p < 0.01$). Thus, the higher mean percent of proclitic usage within each of the two groups may not, in fact, be statistically significant. Since this investigation is a small-scale pilot study, the population size, particularly for NID HSs, was limited and this item was the only negative imperative in the first-person plural tested in this task. As a result, it is difficult to generalize HSs’ overall preference for proclisis in this particular negative construction. Nonetheless, the higher mean percent of proclitic usage within both groups for this particular item suggests the need for further research in the variability of clitic placement for negative imperative constructions in the first-person plural (noi).

On the other hand, the lowest mean percent of proclitic usage for both NID HSs and SID HSs was found for test item #20. That is, an overwhelming majority of participants from both experimental groups chose to use an enclitic for this item:

(20) Marco è appena arrivato alla stazione. ___ vado a trovar__

The mean percentage of proclitic usage was lowest for this construction across both experimental groups, as opposed to the other items that tested restructuring contexts and also those that tested negative imperatives. Other statistical analyses confirmed the apparent strong preference for enclisis in this test item: first, the results of a one-way ANOVA analysis, $F (1, 15) = 0.686, p = 0.42$, showed no significant difference between the NID HSs and SID HSs for this test item; second, the results of a separate Chi-Square analysis for this item, $X^2 (1, N = 17) = 0.744$, also revealed that there is no significant difference between the experimental groups ($p = 0.388$). Based on the initial results for this test item, it is plausible to consider that when a preposition separates a restructuring verb from the infinitive that it embeds, HSs generally tend to prefer that the clitic remain in the post-verbal position. It should be taken into consideration, however, that since this investigation was a small-scale pilot study, the number of test items included was limited; this item represents the only restructuring context in which the restructuring
verb was separated by a preposition and thus, any findings from this pilot study should be considered preliminary and subject to more in-depth future research.

Nonetheless, based on the data obtained thus far, a pedagogical implication is that HSs, regardless of their regional non-standard Italian dialect background, need additional practice in using proclisis in constructions where a preposition separates the restructuring verb from the infinitive. That is to say, HSs need to recognize that the preposition is not a boundary that prohibits the object clitic from climbing out of its argument position. Finally, it is important to point out again that, despite these two particular test items, the overall results for the oral elicited imitation task show that there are significant differences between NID HSs and SID HSs in terms of their usage of clitics: NID HSs show a strong preference for encliticization, whereas SID HSs prefer procliticization. A pedagogical implication from this overall finding may be that HSs of both regional dialect groups need additional practice to feel comfortable using the structure that is not permitted in their dialect. For instance, contrastive analysis activities (cf. Danesi 1991) may include transformation exercises in which NID HSs change enclisis structures to proclisis, whereas SID HSs transform proclisis structures to enclisis.81

To sum up the results of the oral elicited imitation task, it appears that HSs generally parallel their heritage dialectal word order for clitic placement in Standard Italian. That is to say, the heritage non-standard dialects appear to constrain HSs' usage of the standard.

6.3.2. GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT TASK

Of the 32 items in this task, there was a total of 16 test items assessing HSs' knowledge of object clitic placement: six questions focused on clitics in restructuring contexts (two for Cl-V_{Restr-V}; two for V_{Restr-V}-V-Cl; two for * V_{Restr-Cl-V}), while six other questions focused on clitics in negative imperatives (two for Neg-Cl-V_{IMP}; two for Neg-V_{IMP}-Cl; two for * Cl-Neg- V_{IMP}). Sentences were randomized and presented with a 5-point Likert acceptability scale: 1 = “I would never say this” (i.e., completely unacceptable), 2 = “I

81 Yet, at the same time pedagogues should keep in mind that the overall goal of such activities would be to add a different grammatical structure into HSs' usage of Standard Italian, and not to replace the other grammatical structure that already exists in their usage of object clitic placement. Thus, pedagogues should pay close attention to the frequency with which they administer these activities and any sociocultural factors that may come into play for non-standard Italian dialect HSs in the Standard Italian classroom (see Chapter 3).
would usually never say this”, 3 = “not sure”, 4 = “I would say this”, 5 = “I would say this in the right context” (i.e., perfectly acceptable). The mean acceptance rates of grammatical constructions in restructuring contexts and negative imperatives are presented in graphs; see Figures 1 through 4. The data are also indicated in Table 11.
Figure 1. Mean acceptability rating on **grammatical** sentences with clitics in restructuring contexts.

![Grammaticality Judgment Task: Grammatical Structures for Clitics in Restructuring Contexts](chart1)

Figure 2. Mean acceptability rating on **ungrammatical** sentences with clitics in restructuring contexts.

![Grammaticality Judgment Task: Ungrammatical Structures for Clitics in Restructuring Contexts](chart2)
Figure 3. Mean acceptability rating on **grammatical** sentences with clitics in negative imperatives.

**Grammaticality Judgment Task**
**Grammatical Structures for Clitics in Negative Imperatives**

NID HS  | SID HS  | NID Baseline  | SID Baseline
---|---|---|---
3.86  | 4.45  | 5.00  | 3.00  
3.67  | 3.27  | 3.50  | 3.00  

Neg.Cl-VImp  | Neg.VImp-Cl

Figure 4. Mean acceptability rating on **ungrammatical** sentences with clitics in negative imperatives.

**Grammaticality Judgment Task**
**Ungrammatical Structures for Clitics in Negative Imperatives**

NID HS  | SID HS  | NID Baseline  | SID Baseline
---|---|---|---
2.82  | 3.50  | 1.00  | 1.75  

*Cl-Neg.VImp
Table 11. Mean acceptability rating on grammatical and ungrammatical sentences with clitics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence Types</th>
<th>NID HSs</th>
<th>SID HSs</th>
<th>NID Baseline Speakers</th>
<th>SID Baseline Speakers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 7</td>
<td>n = 10</td>
<td>n = 3</td>
<td>n = 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clitics in restructuring contexts</strong></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17) V_{Restr}V-Cl</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(18) Cl-V_{Restr}V</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(19) * V_{Restr}Cl-V</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clitics in non-restructuring contexts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20) * Cl-V_{Non-Restr}V</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative Imperatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(21) Neg-V_{Imp}Cl</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(22) Neg-Cl-V_{Imp}</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(23) * Cl-Neg-V_{Imp}</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>1.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the results reveal that both NID HSs and SID HSs demonstrate knowledge of the possibility for both encliticization and procliticization: both groups are able to recognize the grammaticality in Standard Italian of both the structure permitted and the one not permitted in their respective heritage non-standard Italian dialect. One-way ANOVAs indicated that there are no significant differences between the two experimental groups, nor between each experimental group and its corresponding control group (i.e., the baseline speakers from the same regional area).

Yet, an important observation is that the mean acceptability ratings for grammatical proclitic constructions, namely Cl-V_{Restr}V and Neg-Cl-V_{Imp}, are somewhat higher for SID HSs in comparison to NID HSs: the mean difference between both groups is at least 0.5 for grammatical proclitic constructions. Examples of these constructions are reproduced below.
(31) Ho cucinato i carciofi. **Giorgio li può finire.**  \( \text{Cl-V}_{\text{Restr}}-\text{V} \)  (grammatical)

(35) Lo spettacolo non è interessante. **Non lo guardiamo!**  \( \text{Neg-Cl-V}_{\text{Imp}} \)  (grammatical)

It appears that SID HSs show a stronger preference for procliticization than their NID HS counterparts. In fact, the results suggest that SID HSs tend to be more accepting than NID HSs of also the ungrammatical constructions tested where the clitic does not remain in the lower position, namely clitic climbing with non-restructuring verbs (*\( \text{Cl- V}_{\text{Non-Restr}}-\text{V} \)), clitic in the middle position (*\( \text{V}_{\text{Restr}}-\text{Cl- V} \)), and clitic appearing before the negator in negative imperatives (*\( \text{Cl-Neg- V}_{\text{Imp}} \)). Examples of these constructions are reproduced below.

(32) La lavatrice è guasta. **Gabriele deve la cambiare.**  \( \ast \ \text{V}_{\text{Restr}}-\text{Cl- V} \)  (ungrammatical)

(33) Questo problema è molto grande. **Luigi lo cerca di risolvere.**  \( \ast \ \text{Cl-V}_{\text{Non-Restr}}-\text{V} \)  (ungrammatical)

(36) La televisione è noiosa. **La non guardare!**  \( \ast \ \text{Cl-Neg-V}_{\text{Imp}} \)  (ungrammatical)

In all of these examples, the clitic has moved out of its lower, complement position and climbed into a higher position. It appears that SID HSs are less comfortable with leaving the clitic in the lower position, even if this results in ungrammatical sentences. Therefore, a pedagogical implication that arises from this finding is that SID HSs may require additional practice in order to better master the variability of clitic placement rules in restructuring contexts and negative imperatives, particularly with the structure that is generally not permitted in their heritage dialect – i.e., enclisis.

Among these three ungrammatical structures, the data suggests the necessity for further research for one structure in particular – clitic climbing constructions with non-restructuring verbs [example (33): **Luigi lo cerca di risolvere.**  \( \ast \ \text{Cl-V}_{\text{Non-Restr}}-\text{V} \)]. A closer analysis of this ungrammatical structure shows that the majority of SID HSs found the construction \( \ast \ \text{Cl-V}_{\text{Non-Restr}}-\text{V} \) to be grammatical. This high mean acceptability rate was not found for their NID HS counterparts. This suggests that SID HSs who are learning Standard Italian at the intermediate-low level have not yet mastered variable clitic placement rules in terms of which verbs allow for restructuring and which do not. Rather it seems as though at this level, SID HSs are undergoing a process of simplification in which they incorrectly
generalize the variable clitic placement rules for restructuring verbs in Standard Italian to non-restructuring verbs also.

Furthermore, it is important to point out that the SID baseline control group also showed a strikingly higher mean acceptability rate for this ungrammatical construction than the NID baseline control group: the mean difference between both control groups is at least 2.0 for this ungrammatical construction, as shown earlier in Table 11, reproduced here in Table 12 for this item alone.

Table 12. Mean acceptability rating on grammatical and ungrammatical sentences with clitics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sentence Types</th>
<th>NID HSs n = 7</th>
<th>SID HSs n = 10</th>
<th>NID Baseline Speakers n = 3</th>
<th>SID Baseline Speakers n = 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clitics in non-restructuring contexts</td>
<td>M  S.D.</td>
<td>M  S.D.</td>
<td>M  S.D.</td>
<td>M  S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20) * Cl-V_{Non-Restr}^V</td>
<td>3.00 1.63</td>
<td>4.36 0.92</td>
<td>2.67 1.53</td>
<td>4.67 0.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, the high acceptability of this ungrammatical construction seems to span across generations: SID HSs’ knowledge of clitic placement parallels that of the previous generation (cf. Prada Pérez and Pascual y Cabo [2011]).\(^\text{82}\) In light of these results, a pedagogical consideration would be that in comparison to NID HSs, SID HSs at this level of Standard Italian proficiency may need more practice in distinguishing between the verbs that allow for clitic climbing and those that do not. That is to say, SID HSs need to become more aware of the fact that not all verbs that embed infinitives allow for clitic climbing.

Nonetheless, once again, since this was a pilot investigation, the number of test items included was limited; this was the only test item involving the ungrammatical construction of clitic climbing with a non-restructuring verb. Therefore, although this observation of higher mean acceptability rates can be only suggestive at this time, future research on this type of construction is needed.

Finally, there does not seem to be a universal preference for encliticization. In other words, a

\(^{82}\) There exists the possibility that dialectal variation is at play: the construction Cl-V_{Non-Restr}^V may be grammatical in some Southern Italian dialects. It is possible that the Southern non-standard Italian dialects are constraining HSs and baseline speakers’ usage of Standard Italian.
higher acceptability rating for enclitics does not appear across all groups. On the contrary, SID HSs tend
to demonstrate high acceptability ratings for proclitic structures. Thus, in general, HSs do not show a
preference for enclitic structures in their explicit knowledge.

In sum, the overall results of the grammaticality judgment task indicate that HSs are generally
aware of the grammaticality of the two different clitic placements in restructuring contexts and in negative
imperative constructions in Standard Italian. The heritage non-standard dialects do not appear to
constrain HSs’ knowledge of the standard.

6.4. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The differences found between NID HSs and SID HSs leave little doubt that non-standard Italian
dialect influence is at play with respect to variable object clitic placement, although this is not a finding
that is evident across all tasks. For the production tasks, we see that any preference between the
different syntactic choices in Standard Italian is constrained by heritage non-standard Italian dialectal
input: NID HSs showed a preference for encliticization (no clitic climbing in restructuring contexts and
post-verbal clitics in negative imperatives), while SID HSs showed a preference for procliticization (clitic
climbing in restructuring contexts and pre-verbal clitics in negative imperatives). Furthermore, the results
of this study have provided us with a glimpse as to what motivates non-standard Italian dialect HSs to
“optionally” restructure (cf. Rizzi 1982), or not, in restructuring contexts.

For the GJT, however, HSs and baseline speakers showed that they are aware of the possibility
of both constructions (procliticization and encliticization) in Standard Italian: participants accepted both
structures at similar rates. If we assume that production tasks reflect usage to a greater degree, while
GJT’s reflect metalinguistic knowledge, the results show that HSs’ dialectal influence tends to appear in
usage-based modes. Collectively, the two tasks revealed that there is a difference between HSs’ usage
of clitics and their metalinguistic knowledge of clitics. Furthermore, across all tasks there was little
evidence to support any universal preference for encliticization in restructuring contexts.
CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION

The goal of this pilot study was to examine HSs from an unexplored perspective: non-standard dialect HSs learning the standard dialect of the HL as a third system. Specifically, I provided a critical examination of the HLA literature summarizing various factors that might influence HSs’ acquisition of clitic placement in Standard Italian. Three sources were theoretically viable: the heritage non-standard Italian dialect, universal principles, and the dominant language (English). Although previous HLA research findings by Rothman (2009) investigated whether heritage non-standard dialectal input constrains learners’ knowledge of the standard dialect, my study’s design examined the constraints of heritage non-standard dialectal input on learners’ knowledge and usage. Additionally, I have attempted to link my research findings to pedagogical implications for the HL classroom.

The overall results of this investigation have provided some key findings. First, the results of the study have highlighted the important role of the heritage non-standard dialect for HSs who are learning the standard dialect of their HL in usage based tasks. Cross-linguistic influence derived from the heritage non-standard dialects, and not from the dominant language (English). This finding attests to the strength of psychotypology as it is a key factor in determining the source language of transfer when more than one previous language system is at play. The differences in the syntactic properties between regional dialects appear to affect non-standard dialect HSs’ usage of the standard dialect.

The implications of this finding shed light on both theoretical and practical issues in linguistic research. From a psycholinguistic perspective, this finding reveals why non-standard Italian dialect HSs choose to “optionally” restructure (cf. Rizzi 1982), or not, in Standard Italian restructuring contexts: their regional heritage dialects constrain their choice whether to “restructure,” or not to. From an applied linguistics perspective, namely that of language pedagogy, although Danesi (1974) has argued against differentiating instruction by regional dialect groups in the teaching of standard dialect syntax, my research findings suggest otherwise. That is, it appears that language pedagogues should take into account the regional dialect background of their students, not only in the teaching of other linguistic domains (e.g., phonology, etc.), but in the teaching of syntax as well.83 In line with awareness

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83 For instance, as discussed in the previous chapter, contrastive analysis practice activities can serve to expand each regional
approaches in SDA educational programs, learners’ heritage non-standard Italian dialects can be used as a resource to aid pedagogues in the teaching of Standard Italian syntax.

Since there is no semantic difference in Standard Italian between structures with clitic climbing and those without, one could make the argument that learners’ usage of clitic climbing, or lack thereof, does not render them better or worse speakers of the standard dialect. For instance, both ‘Lo voglio fare’ (Cl-V_{Restr-V}; ‘I want to do it’) and ‘Voglio farlo’ (V_{Restr-V}-Cl; ‘I want to do it’) are acceptable across the Italian peninsula. Thus, it may seem questionable whether pedagogues should devote time to differentiating instruction based on learner’s heritage dialectal background with regard to object clitic placement. On the contrary, I argue that it is indeed worthwhile since, as the item analysis results have shown, there are related structures that some HSs have incorrectly generalized based on their heritage dialect. For example, SID HSs tend to accept structures that are ungrammatical in Standard Italian (i.e., *Cl-V_{Non-Restr-V}; *Cl-Neg-IMP) at much higher rates than their NID counterparts.

The second key finding of my study is that despite the significance of heritage dialect influence in usage modes, it is not found in a task tapping knowledge. Specifically, the production task showed that HSs’ revert back to their heritage non-standard dialectal word order, while the GJT revealed that HSs demonstrate knowledge that both constructions with proclisis and those with enclisis are permissible in Standard Italian. Thus, there is an apparent difference between HSs’ usage and knowledge of clitic placement: although HSs prefer to use the Standard Italian clitic word order that parallels their heritage non-standard dialects, they are nevertheless aware that another clitic word order is possible in the standard dialect. In other words, non-standard dialect HSs’ implicit grammars allow for both proclisis and enclisis in Standard Italian.

Third, this pilot study exhibited no evidence of a universal preference for encliticization, as it was not found across all groups and all tasks. In fact, in the GJT many SID HSs tended to disfavor encliticization at all costs, even choosing ungrammatical structures that contained partial clitic climbing (i.e., the middle position: “* Daniele vuole lo chiamare”). Therefore, what may seem to be a universal preference found in tasks tapping metalinguistic knowledge in previous SLA and HLA research (Bruhn-
Garavito & Montrul, 1996; Duffield & White, 1999; Montrul, 2010a; 2010b) merits further investigation by examining them further across usage-based tasks as well. For example, since my current study investigated non-standard Italian dialect HSs who have achieved a low-intermediate proficiency of Standard Italian, future research should explore this same population of HSs learning Standard Italian, but who have achieved different proficiency levels in their language learning.

Finally, it is important to reiterate that the results from this pilot study are preliminary. Future, more larger-scale research investigating non-standard Italian dialect HSs’ acquisition of clitic placement in Standard Italian can provide more conclusive results. In addition, since the participants in this experiment are intermediate-low level learners of Standard Italian and possess low proficiency in their heritage dialect, caution should be taken when generalizing the study’s findings for HSs beyond the intermediate-low level of Standard Italian learning, or for those that possess greater proficiency in their heritage dialect. Nevertheless, the preliminary findings specific to this group of HSs have revealed that even with their low proficiency in their heritage dialect, the dialect still constrains these learners’ usage of the standard dialect.

An additional research question that surfaces after this experiment is how learners of Standard Italian at the intermediate-low level overcome the influence of their heritage non-standard dialects to eventually “master” (Santoro, 2007) clitic placement in Standard Italian. That is to say, how do they acquire usage of the clitic placement rule that is not reflective of their heritage non-standard dialect? Furthermore, as these learners move beyond the intermediate-low level in their proficiency of the standard, what will account for their variability, if any, in choosing to optionally restructure (Rizzi, 1982) in restructuring contexts? Whether the heritage dialect will continue to be a strong source of influence at later levels of language learning for this population remains an open question. These issues serve as points of departure for future investigations.

Nonetheless, the preliminary findings from this study have shed some light on a mostly unchartered area of HLA: non-standard dialect input in the acquisition of the standard. The results of this study can serve to inform not only current theoretical HLA research, but also to inform pedagogical practices in the HL classroom.
APPENDIX A - PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Participant Number: ______

Please complete the following information. Read questions carefully before answering.

Age ______ Place of Birth _______________ How long have you lived in the U.S.? ______

Which Italian dialect(s) does your family speak? ____________________________________________

*** You can list more than one on each line, if applicable. ***

Which language/dialect, or languages/dialects, did you hear at these ages?

Ages 1-5 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 6-10 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 11-15 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 15-now _____________________________________________________________

Which language/dialect, or languages/dialects, did you speak at these ages?

Ages 1-5 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 6-10 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 11-15 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 15-now _____________________________________________________________

Specifically what language(s) or dialect(s) did you speak primarily to your parents when you were between …?

Ages 1-5 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 6-10 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 11-15 _____________________________________________________________
Ages 15-now _____________________________________________________________
Specifically what language(s) or dialect(s) did **you** speak primarily to your siblings when you were between ...?

Ages 1-5  

Ages 6-10  

Ages 11-15  

Ages 15-now  

Who, specifically, in your family speaks Italian dialect(s)?  
How often do/did you see them? (list the family members on the appropriate line)

Often/very often  
Sometimes (a few times a year)  
Rarely to almost never (once every few years)  

How well do you know Italian dialect(s) **NOW**? (check one response)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of dialect: ______________________</th>
<th>Name of dialect: ______________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ] I speak it very well</td>
<td>[ ] I speak it very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] I speak it well</td>
<td>[ ] I speak it well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] I speak it, but not well</td>
<td>[ ] I speak it, but not well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] I understand it well, but don't speak it</td>
<td>[ ] I understand it well, but don't speak it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] I understand only some of it</td>
<td>[ ] I understand only some of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] I don't understand it at all</td>
<td>[ ] I don't understand it at all</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Have you ever studied Standard Italian (in school or in college)?  
If so, for how many years?  
Why are you studying/did you study Standard Italian?  
____________________________________________________________________________________
Given the variety of other foreign languages offered, what made you choose to study Italian in particular? What is it about Italian that you like? (you may check more than one answer)

____ I am interested in learning more about my roots.
____ I want to visit the country of my ancestors.
____ I am interested in Italian civilization and culture.
____ I have relatives in Italy.
____ I regularly travel to Italy (every summer, every couple of years).
____ I want to work in Italy.
____ I have friends or a boyfriend/girlfriend in Italy.
____ Other reasons (explain) ____________________________________________________________

In your opinion, did/does speaking an Italian dialect help you learn Standard Italian? Explain how.
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX B - STANDARD ITALIAN PROFICIENCY TEST

STANDARD ITALIAN

Instructions: Choose the most logical answer to complete each statement.

Ø = nothing

1. Quando ______, prendo qualcosa da bere.
   (A) ho sete
   (B) ho ragione
   (C) ho paura
   (D) ho torto

2. ______ piace questa bibita.
   (A) I ragazzi
   (B) Il ragazzo
   (C) Ai ragazzi
   (D) Per i ragazzi

3. Ho visto quel film tre ______.
   (A) volte
   (B) tempi
   (C) ore
   (D) momenti

4. Due anni fa ______ a Torino.
   (A) siamo andati
   (B) andremo
   (C) andresti
   (D) andiamo

5. ______ molto freddo d'inverno.
   (A) È
   (B) Fa
   (C) Sta
   (D) Fanno
6. Franco non _____ il film.
   (A) ho visto
   (B) veda
   (C) ha visto
   (D) via

7. Dobbiamo _____ questi libri.
   (A) leggiamo
   (B) leggere
   (C) letto
   (D) letti

8. Ieri sera _____ la televisione per tre ore.
   (A) ho guardato
   (B) guardo
   (C) guarderò
   (D) guarderei

9. Ti piace _____ in bicicletta?
   (A) vai
   (B) andare
   (C) sei andato
   (D) andando

10. Non capisco _____ hai detto.
    (A) niente
    (B) quello che
    (C) tutto
    (D) cui
APPENDIX C - ORAL ELICITED IMITATION TASK TEST-ITEMS

SAMPLES: Listen to each sentence. Repeat only the last sentence you hear.

La macchina non funziona. ___ devo riparar___.
I biscotti non sono buoni. Non ___ mangiar___.
Il dottore è pigro. La dottoressa è ________.
La casa è verde. Le case sono ______.
TEST ITEMS (Participants hear these items; ____ represents static noise)

1. Ho molti compiti da fare stasera. ___ devo finire ___.
2. Il forno è guasto. Non ___ usar ___!
3. I signori sono intelligenti. Le signore sono __________.
4. Questa poltrona è troppo grande. Non ___ comprare ___!
5. Tommaso ha cucinato le vongole. ___ possiamo mangiar ___.
6. La ragazza è alta. Il ragazzo è __________.
7. Mi piace tantissimo la torta che hai fatto. ___ voglio mangiare ___.
8. Quelle arance non sono fresche. Non ___ prendere ___!
9. Non ci piace la poesia. Non ___ leggere ___!
10. Quell’asciugamano è abbastanza grande. ___ possiamo usare ___.
11. Voglio la finestra aperta. Non ___ chiudere ___!
12. Le dottoresse sono brave. I dottori sono __________.
13. Il professore è severo. La professoressa è __________.
14. Il treno arriva in orario. ___ possiamo prendere ___.
15. La penna è rossa. Le penne sono __________.
16. I ragazzi sono buffi. Le ragazze sono __________.
17. Gli alberi sono alti. L’albero è __________.
18. L’armadio è piccolo. Gli armadi sono __________.
19. Le poltrone sono verdi. La poltrona è __________.
20. Marco è appena arrivato alla stazione. ___ vado a trovar ___.
21. Le tavole sono lunghe. La tavola è __________.
22. Il computer è nuovo. Non ___ destruggere ___!
23. Il signore è grasso. La signora è __________.
24. Lo zaino è grande. Gli zaini sono __________.
APPENDIX D - GRAMMATICALITY JUDGMENT TASK TEST-ITEMS

Read these Standard Italian sentences and rate the bolded sentences using this scale:

5 = I WOULD SAY THIS in the right context. 😊
4 = I would say this.
3 = not sure
2 = I would usually never say this.
1 = I WOULD NEVER SAY THIS. 😞

(1) Il programma è noioso. Non guardiamolo! 1 2 3 4 5
(2) Questo problema è molto grande. Luigi lo cerca di risolvere. 1 2 3 4
    5
(3) I signori sono antipatico. 1 2 3 4 5
(4) I biglietti sono persi. Li non cerchiamo! 1 2 3 4 5
(5) Il ragazzo è russo. 1 2 3 4 5
(6) Maria è partita ieri. Non cercatela! 1 2 3 4 5
(7) La studentessa è fedele. 1 2 3 4 5
(8) Lo spettacolo non è interessante. Non lo guardiamo! 1 2 3 4 5
(9) La donna è comprensive. 1 2 3 4 5
(10) Claudia è andata in vacanza. La non cercate! 1 2 3 4 5
(11) Riccardo deve studiare stasera. Lo non chiamare! 1 2 3 4 5
(12) La scrittrice è tedesco. 1 2 3 4 5
(13) I signori sono forti. 1 2 3 4 5
(14) Lo studente è francese. 1 2 3 4 5
(15) Lasciamo i peperoni qui. Giorgio può li finire. 1 2 3 4 5
(16) La chiave non funziona. Gabriele deve cambiarla. 1 2 3 4 5
(17) Il pittore è spagnoli.

(18) Le professoresse sono povera.

(19) Il sugo è pronto. Daniele lo vuole assaggiare.

(20) La lavatrice è guasta. Gabriele deve la cambiare.

(21) Il professore è stanca.

(22) Le signore sono russi.

(23) Le professoresse sono grasse.

(24) La televisione è noiosa. La non guardare!

(25) Le donne sono intelligenti.

(26) Lascio i broccoli qui. Giorgio può finirli.

(27) Marco è impegnato adesso. Non lo chiamare!

(28) I dottori sono simpatici.

(29) Ho cucinato i carciofi. Giorgio li può finire.

(30) Gli uomini sono ricchi.

(31) La ragazza è magra.

(32) Patrizio c’è a casa. La ragazza vuole lo chiamare.
REFERENCES


