

Learner error in second language acquisition: the transfer of form or concept?

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April 2016

**This thesis is submitted to Cardiff University
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Summary

Italian L1 speakers of English L2 make specific and predictable errors when expressing particular temporal concepts in English. This study was principally designed to ask to what extent these errors are caused by L1 *conceptual* transfer: the influence of conceptual knowledge and patterns of conceptualisation from one language on production of another; A cognitive linguistics framework was adopted to:

- i) delineate the cognitive processes that may underlie conceptual transfer in general;
- and ii) reveal areas of potential conceptual difference for investigation within the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian.

Taking a mixed methods approach, a twenty item cloze test was developed to target areas of potential conceptual difference between Italian and English. This was also used to generate qualitative *think aloud* reports. Allowing the investigator access to the thought processes underlying tense choice for target concepts, *think aloud* reports were able to reveal and explain more specifically examples of conceptual transfer in the first instance, and also as analysis progressed to distinguish between *concept* and *conceptualisation* transfer. Concept transfer refers to the influence of L1 stored conceptual knowledge and conceptualisation transfer to the influence of L1 conceptualisation patterns - both developed through exposure to one language - on the production of another. This thesis provides evidence for these two types of transfer as two distinct stages in interlanguage development. All participants - 54 Italian L1 speakers of English L2 (experimental

group), 30 native English speakers (control), 50 native Italian speakers (control) and 40 Maltese speakers (control) - completed the cloze test, and 6 of the experimental group did this while thinking aloud. All the participants also performed a non-verbal task. Results of the statistical analysis show the experimental group had an increased error rate for target concepts. The concurrent *think aloud* protocols were analysed and cross referenced with the cloze test results. *Think aloud* reports indicated that participants thinking for the target concepts is constrained by L1 mediated cognitive processes giving rise to potential evidence for conceptual transfer distinguishing it from formal transfer and revealing L1 conceptual influence even in ‘correct’ responses. Moreover, the *think aloud* reports also provided evidence with which to differentiate between *concept* and *conceptualisation* transfer. This novel methodological approach represents an important and original contribution to the state of the art of conceptual transfer research to date as it serves to unmask conceptual transfer despite its numerous guises.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the inspiration, support and marginalia of my supervisor Dr. Tom Bartlett. My heartfelt thanks also go to my family who have also worked for every word I have written; my husband Giuseppe, parents Clare and Christopher and finally, Giulio, my son, who was not even born when I started, but lost his first milk tooth before I finished.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter sets out the background, context, and motivation for this study, as well as giving an idea of its structure. First, the context in which the idea was generated is detailed, followed by how this was developed into an MA project which gave rise to this PhD thesis and its consequent further development. Some important concepts are explained which represent a constant thread through the following chapters, the structure and content of which are also described.



On the left of the photo, Bredon Hill, Worcestershire, on the right Via Gaspare Palermo,74, Palermo, Italy.

When I was 25 I moved from rural Worcestershire to Via Gaspare Palermo in the hospital district of Palermo, Sicily. I lived in the first floor apartment at the bottom left of this building and worked as an English teacher. I was to make my home in Palermo and stayed for five years. As I became more and more involved and socialised into

Palermitan society through friends, colleagues and my partner's family, I noticed how culture and language meet to define who we are and how we interact with our immediate environment. I noticed the changes that I had to make to fit in, the linguistic and cultural norms that I had to adapt to and the difficulties that my students had with particular areas of the English language. As my knowledge of Italian increased, I could not help asking myself whether some of the errors made by my students were a result of influence from their first language (L1), and understanding more and more about the way they lived and looked at life, I dared to ask if there may be some sort of underlying conceptual difference between the two language groups. Of course then my ideas were general, and I had no idea about the controversy regarding the linking of language and thought, the emergence of the field of Cognitive Linguistics (CL), or research into what I thought I had identified in my second language learners: *conceptual transfer* (Bylund and Jarvis 2011:47; Jarvis 2011:1; Pavlenko and Jarvis 2008:192; Odlin 2005: 6). Conceptual transfer refers to the influence of conceptual knowledge and patterns of conceptualisation developed through exposure to one language, impacting on production of another language (Jarvis 2011:3). This may occur in L1 attrition and also second language (L2) learning.

I wanted to find out if the persistent errors with regard to the expression of temporal concepts using the English tense and aspect system which I encountered everyday with students, were a result of transfer at a conceptual level. I thought then, and even more so now, that such information would be instrumental in helping teachers understand the reasons for their students' difficulties with particular areas of the English language, and could also inform teaching techniques and material design. This thesis joins part of a body of evidence which addresses the former; the latter is, as yet, relatively unexplored. As an English language teacher in Palermo, I noticed that there were

particular difficulties with constructions such as the Present Perfect which denoted past to present time and set about, first with my MA, and now with my PhD, trying to find out why.

I first looked at the issue of conceptual transfer in the interlanguage production of Italian L1 learners in English L2 as they express certain temporal concepts for my MA thesis in 2008. At this point, I recognised the necessity of accessing areas of cognition relevant to temporal perspective taking and related to grammatical representation stored in the minds of L2 speakers for the investigation of conceptual transfer. Consequently, I drew upon the principals of Radical Construction Grammar (RCG) (Croft 2001) to develop semantic maps of temporal representation in English and Italian. Semantic maps (Laminate and Appendix 1) show the organisation of stored semantic and conceptual knowledge in the minds of speakers of different languages. This is achieved through the creation of a conceptual space showing the organisation of distinct concepts (mental representations of etic situations) in the mind of a speaker and the grammatical structures that cover them. The arrangement of the concepts is cross-linguistically consistent, so that comparisons may be made about how these concepts are represented (the structures that cover them) cross-linguistically. Categories are revealed where one construction covers a number of etic situations. Differences in category content and their extensions represent cross-linguistic conceptual difference. I found that semantic maps were very effective in predicting areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference, and as such have been extended and developed further for this study (Chapter 3).

For the MA, semantic maps were used to inform the design of the testing instrument with regard to creating the target concept for representation in terms of lexical, contextual and temporal cues. The MA testing instrument, was a ten item cloze test,

with a contextualising picture. Seven Italian L1 speakers of English L2 were asked to complete the cloze test and were then interviewed retrospectively about their responses. The responses both to the cloze test and the structured interview data were indicative of L1 influence, and in particular conceptual transfer, for concepts covered in English by the Present Perfect and Present Perfect Progressive.

The MA was an excellent opportunity for an exploratory study taking a cognitive approach to the study of L1 conceptual transfer, and was important for two reasons: i) it highlighted the potential for semantic maps in the comparison of different languages to identify target areas for investigation; ii) it revealed how qualitative data could be used in the identification of L1 influence and in particular conceptual transfer in L2 interlanguages.

The study that you have in your hands builds on, fully expands and extends the MA project in interesting and very significant ways. However, the thread which runs through both is the focus on temporal representation in the mind of a speaker, how that is formed through L1, affects L2 production and comes into play in the cognitive processes that are manifest when decisions are made about the representation of distinct temporal concepts in L2.

The representation of temporal concepts in the minds of speakers of English and speakers of Italian is revealed through an overview of the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian with respect to cognition (Chapter 3), the principles of cognitive linguistics are employed as a heuristic for explaining the impact of these L1 formed patterns of cognitive representation on interlanguage for temporal expression in Italian L1 learners in English L2 (Chapter 2). The cognitive processes which come into play when Italian L1 learners of English L2 make decisions about the constructions to use in distinct temporal contexts in L2 are accessed empirically through the use of *think*

aloud reports (Chapter 4) and supported by quantitative data (Chapter 4) bearing testimony to i) the prevalence of error where conceptual divergence exists cross-linguistically; and ii) the potential of *think aloud* reports for revealing L1 conceptual influence in decision making processes for L2 production (Chapter 5).

Moreover, the literature review brought to light a development in thinking with regards to conceptual transfer: that it could manifest in two possible ways; either as concept or conceptualisation transfer (Jarvis 2011:1). Concept transfer refers to the transfer of contrasting categories and their content which is stored in a speakers' long-term memory (represented on the semantic maps); conceptualisation transfer, however, refers to the selection of features of an event or situation and their organisation which follows L1 patterns rather than L2. Conceptual transfer, therefore, has its origins in the cognitive processes which come into play as a distinct situation is perceived by a speaker and the knowledge that is stored in the mind of that speaker relative to that situation is accessed for expression.

At the outset, the aim of this study was primarily to find evidence for conceptual transfer¹ alone, the idea of finding evidence for concept and conceptualisation transfer was to a certain extent in the background; however, as the project progressed and especially as the *think aloud* report analysis developed, patterns emerged which reflected both types of transfer and a way to distinguish them using a cognitive linguistics derived explanation of the cognitive processes underlying the two different types of transfer, and connecting this with their manifestation in the *think aloud* reports. These two forms of transfer are considered difficult to identify and distinguish

¹ The term conceptual transfer is used in this thesis to refer to the influence of L1 conceptual information in general on production in L2 and where it is either impossible or unnecessary to distinguish whether the transfer discussed is a result of concept or conceptualisation transfer or both.

(Jarvis 2011:1), and this study, drawing on the qualitative data obtained, is able to provide some preliminary thoughts on how that might be achieved.

This study comprises six chapters. Chapter 2, following, is the literature review, placing the thesis in the context of the contemporary literature and detailing the state of the art of conceptual transfer research to date. Firstly, the types of L1 transfer which have been proposed to date are explained and concept and conceptualisation transfer are fully defined with examples. The theoretical link between language, culture and thought which was discussed widely in the literature in the first half of the last century is explored and related to recent work in the fields of linguistic relativity, the emergence of the Thinking for Speaking (TFS) hypothesis (Slobin 1996) and the Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis (CTH) (Jarvis 2011). The latter accounts for both concept and conceptualisation transfer. The principals of cognitive linguistics are explored as a way of accounting for and explaining conceptual transfer in interlanguage and this is followed by a description and analysis of the research work in the field of cross-linguistic conceptual influence to date. The chapter concludes with a detailed explanation of the cognitive processes that are hypothesised to be involved in concept and conceptualisation transfer, and the type of evidence which would be necessary to verify them.

Chapter 3 is a contrastive analysis of the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian using semantic maps. Its aim is to reveal where there may be cross-linguistic conceptual difference in temporal concept representation in the minds of speakers of English and speakers of Italian. Therefore, it details the ways in which the tense and aspect systems of these two languages are used by native speakers to give their perspective on a particular situation. Semantic maps are used to suggest how conceptual knowledge is represented in the minds of speakers of each of the languages.

They show functions/concepts grouped together according to the construction which covers them. The meaning of the category/construction is derived from the concepts that it covers, with prototypical members placed at the centre of a category and non-typical members at the category boundary (Chapter 3). Often cross-linguistic conceptual difference occurs at category boundaries where core meanings are extended to cover non-prototypical members of the category. This is shown to be the case in this study, where target areas for testing are identified at category boundaries where constructions with contrasting core semantics cover a particular concept cross-linguistically. This analysis was used to develop the experimental design and testing instruments which are detailed in the following chapter 4.

Chapter 4 is a comprehensive discussion of the methodology employed for this study, which takes a mixed methods approach. It starts with an overview of the experimental methods currently favoured in transfer research in bilingualism and L2 acquisition. The advantages and disadvantages of a purely quantitative approach to data collection are discussed with particular reference to the work of Jarvis (2000), who proposes a methodology to ensure robustness in L1 transfer research. Jarvis' methodology is adopted, with the addition of qualitative *think aloud* reports as a way of accessing the processing which occurs in short-term memory when decisions are taken regarding form choice for temporal expression in L2. The results of pilot testing are discussed which give some indication as to the type of data that was expected to be produced by the *think aloud* reports. The chapter concludes with a full description of the testing instrument, a cartoon cloze test (Laminar and Appendix 2) carefully developed with a cartoonist to depict the target concepts.

Results are presented in Chapter 5, which is divided into two parts. In the first part, the quantitative results, which return some evidence for conceptual transfer, are discussed

with reference to Jarvis' criteria for robustness in transfer research. The importance of the *think aloud* data becomes evident as the chapter progresses. The *think aloud* data is analysed on an item-by-item basis together with numerical data pertinent to the item under discussion. The data reveal evidence for L1 conceptual influence on L2, and in particular evidence for concept and conceptualisation transfer. There is also evidence of the multifactorial reasoning which accompanies decision making for L2 production. Finally, in chapter 6, the major findings are summarised and discussed in relation to their contribution to the state of the art of conceptual transfer research to date. The strengths and novelty of the methodological approach are highlighted showing how they represent a move forward for the field, with particular reference to the types of evidence for conceptual transfer called for by Jarvis in his most recent article on the subject (Jarvis 2015). A detailed example of how concept and conceptualisation transfer may be differentiated using this approach is provided. The thesis concludes with a discussion of limitations and proposed future directions, drawing attention to the potential for this methodological framework in a wider exploration of L1 conceptual influence in learner language.

As detailed above, this study principally came in to being as a result of my experience in Italy as a language teacher dealing with particular and consistent errors in use of the English tense system by Italian L1 learners of English L2. As these errors are the supposed manifestation of L1 conceptual transfer, they would seem like the most logical place to start. The next chapter begins with an exploration of two such errors and how they may be a result of transfer at a conceptual level.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Overview

When Italian L1 speakers of English L2 attempt to express certain temporal concepts in English, they make some consistent and predictable errors. Two such errors are detailed in example 1 and 2 below. These errors are consistent as they persist over time, even at advanced levels of acquisition, and are seen in the interlanguage production of many Italian L1 learners of English L2. In addition, they are predictable, as they would seem to have at their root the L1 grammatical system as it exerts its influence on L2.

1) Teacher: *How long have you known your husband?* Student: *I know him from 10 years.*

2) Teacher: *What did you do yesterday?* Student: *I have been to the city centre.*

In example number 1, the student uses the erroneous English Present Simple tense to express a state *to know* which started in the past and continues into the present. The use of Present Simple is termed *erroneous* as it does not convey the expected temporal meaning and is part of a meaning making system which is not yet fully aligned with L2. The expected form in English would be the Present Perfect, *I have known*. It is the Present Perfect, in English which is used to express a state which starts in the past and continues into the present. In example 2, the student uses the erroneous English Present Perfect tense to talk about a past and finished event, where the required English tense would be the English Past Simple: *I went to the shops*. In English, past

and finished events are denoted using the Past Simple. It is reasonable to suppose that these errors have at their base the Italian L1 grammatical system, because the erroneous tenses used in English are the translation nearest equivalents to those used in Italian. Example 1 would require the Italian Presente Semplice: *Lo conosco da anni*, whereas example 2 necessitates the Italian Perfetto Composto: *Sono andata al centro*. These tenses are referred to as the nearest equivalents, as they are those which hold the most semantically similar features cross-linguistically. The notion of equivalence is explored more fully both here and in Chapter 3.

Cross-linguistic Influence (CLI) such as this is frequently noted by English teachers (Jarvis 2010:171; Swan 1997:157) and is well established in the literature as a feature of L2 interlanguage, the language produced by a learner as they move towards proficiency in their target L2 (Selinker 1972). In his 1972 paper, Selinker posits that L2 interlanguage, is influenced by a number of factors including teaching, fossilization, overgeneralisation, L2 learning strategies and L1 transfer.

This thesis is concerned with *L1 transfer*, particularly L1 conceptual transfer (Bylund and Jarvis 2011: 47; Jarvis 2011:1; Pavlenko and Jarvis 2008: 192; Odlin 2005:6), and its effect upon the L2 production of Italian L1 learners of English L2 as they try to express distinct temporal and aspectual concepts in English. Over the years, the notion of L1 transfer has developed and changed to encompass not only influence pertaining to the grammatical structure of the L1, but also the meaning of those structures and the concepts to which they refer. Transfer in general refers to the idea that a learner's L1 might have an impact upon the process of learning an L2, and has been well documented in the literature since the early 1940s and 1950s (Lado 1957; Fries 1945). Initially, transfer was discussed in relation to contrastive studies (Ringbom 1987:47). The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) holds that highlighting areas of structural

difference, as in the work on Italian and English by Agard and Di Pietro (1965), can be used to predict where learners could experience difficulties with the L2 (Gass 1983:70). However, over the last half century, the idea of transfer has developed along with thinking on the processes pertaining to both first and second language acquisition, the link between cognition and grammatical representation and linguistic typology. Since the 1970s, the idea of L1 transfer has developed from *formal transfer* (Selinker 1983:33; Agard and Di Pietro 1965:5), where solely structural aspects of the two languages are concerned, to *semantic transfer* (Pavlenko and Jarvis 2008:120; Odlin 2005:6; Gass 1983:70) where transfer occurs at the level of linking semantic representations and form (Pavlenko and Jarvis 2008:120; Odlin 2005:6; Gass 1983:70), and on to the possibility that speakers of different languages operate with different spatiotemporal conceptual frameworks as a result of socialisation through their L1 language system (Evans 2012: 83,85; Pavlenko and Jarvis 2008:114; von Steutterheim and Nuse 2003; Boroditsky 2001:1; Croft 2001:58; Langacker 2000:2; Levinson 1998:13) giving rise to *conceptual transfer* (Bylund and Jarvis 2011: 47; Jarvis 2011:1; Pavlenko and Jarvis 2008: 192; Odlin 2005:6). Under the umbrella term of conceptual transfer, two distinct types of transfer have been identified: *concept transfer* and *conceptualisation transfer* (Jarvis 2011:4). Jarvis (2011:4):

I have made a distinction between two types of conceptual transfer – concept transfer and conceptualisation transfer – where the former refers to cross-linguistic effects arising from differences in the structure or internal make-up of the concepts stored in the minds of speakers of different languages, and where the latter refers to cross-linguistic effects arising not from different

concepts, but from differences concerning which concepts are selected and how they are organised in a particular conceptualisation of a situation or event.

Applying these notions to examples such as 1 and 2 at the start of this section helps to distinguish these types of transfer and elucidate the nature of the two types of transfer elaborated by Jarvis (2011).

As an example for error 1, the learner uses the erroneous *I know him for years*, to express a state which starts in the past and continues into the present. The error may be a result of transfer of form, where the learner substitutes Italian Presente Semplice, for Present Simple with no recourse to other areas of processing; or on the other hand, if transfer occurs at a conceptual level, the speaker may rely on L1 constrained cognitive processes which serve to form an L1 influenced conceptualisation of the situation for expression. These processes may affect the features of the situation which are attended, how they are categorised and/or their organisation giving rise to a contrasting conceptualisation or perspective on the etic situation. In this case, the use of Present Simple by the Italian L1 speaker may represent a present orientation to the event, seeing it as belonging more to the present than to the past leading to present, as the use of the L2 Present Perfect would imply. If this could be revealed in the thought processes of a learner, together with the error, it might be accepted as an example of *conceptualisation* transfer. Conceptualisation transfer, therefore would necessitate evidence concerning how a speaker perceives a particular etic situation.

In contrast, concept transfer which refers to the impact of L1 category content on L2 production, would require a different type of evidence. In this case, a category is interpreted as a group of functions, all covered by the same construction. As language may only be described in its own terms (Halliday 1988:27), through abstraction, the

category assumes the meaning of the construction that covers it. If we suppose two categories, each of which cover different functions cross-linguistically, such as the Present Perfect in English and the *Perfetto Composto* in Italian which are similar in terms of form, but diverge in terms of meaning and use, we would need to see the L1 category influence the L2 category in some way. This may be evident where a form such as the Present Perfect is regularly used in L2 with a meaning which corresponds to the L1 *Perfetto Composto*: this may be supposed evidence for concept transfer as defined by Jarvis (2011). Moreover, this would need to be evident in the thought processes of the learner as they take the decision about which L2 form to choose, so that such transfer may be revealed to have a conceptual and not a formal aetiology. Error 2 above, may be an example of concept transfer, where the Present Perfect is used to denote a past and complete event. The only way to reveal this type of transfer is to access what this category means for the speaker in question.

So, at what level does L1 transfer operate, in particular with reference to the examples given above? Does the student transfer a structural equivalent, or are deeper areas of cognition which differ cross-linguistically involved, as is suggested by Jarvis (2011:4) through conceptual transfer? If the latter is true, how and where does L1 exert its influence on L2 and how can this be shown empirically? The aim of this thesis is to shed some light on these questions.

This chapter first explores theories of language and cognition, their potential interplay, and how this is important for research into the effects of cross-linguistic influence. The Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis (CTH) is discussed as a means of accounting for both concept and conceptualisation transfer and a cognitive linguistics approach is proposed as a heuristic for their investigation in the light of the previous research. Finally, examples of concept and conceptualisation transfer are elaborated within this model

and the framework of Radical Construction Grammar (RCG) is proposed as a means of revealing cross-linguistic conceptual difference with regard to stored concepts and conceptualisations.

2.1 The relationship between language and thought and the Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis (CTH)

The idea that cognition, language and culture could be linked was first postulated independently by Johann Herder (1744 – 1803) and Wilhelm von Humboldt (1762 – 1835), in the early nineteenth century. Notably von Humboldt ([1836] 1988:60) discussed the notion of a link between language and worldview:

By the same act whereby [man] spins language out of himself , he spins himself into it, and every language draws about the people that possess it a circle whence it is possible to exit only by stepping over at once into the circle of another one.

Later, American anthropologists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf embraced von Humboldt's idea, which would later develop into the hypothesis of *Linguistic Relativity*. Linguistic Relativity and the stronger form of the hypothesis, *Linguistic Determinism*, propose a link between inter-linguistic differences and human cognition and behaviour. It was principally Whorf who used his study of the expression of temporal concepts in the native American language of Hopi to elaborate his hypothesis that an individual's world view is to a large extent constructed through their native language (Whorf 1956).

Linguistic determinism, the idea that language conditions the way we perceive our world, has to a large extent been rejected since the emergence and popularity of the work of Chomsky (2005 see also Pinker 2010). Chomsky claims that language learning is an innate ability underpinned by a Universal Grammar (UG): a module in the mind which interacts with other areas of general cognition. However, linguistic relativity, which postulates that our native language predisposes us to think in a certain way (Kramsch 2006:237), and sees language learning as part of general cognition, has in recent years become more relevant to applied linguistics, as it is important in fields such as second language acquisition and bilingualism in which cross-linguistic influence is investigated.

Researchers working in the field of cross-linguistic influence differ with regard to the extent to which they believe that native language influences thinking. There are those such as Evans (2012:83), Levinson (2001:578) and Majid *et al* (2004) who take a relativist position, claiming that language may influence all areas of cognition, even those not connected to language. Majid *et al.* (2004) in particular found evidence for the involvement of language in the restructuring of the cognitive domain of spatial perception. Studies looking for evidence of linguistic relativity usually involve trying to establish a relationship between a particular linguistic feature and performance on a non-verbal task (Jarvis 2015:6) in order to link that linguistic feature to the targeted area of cognition.

On the other hand, there are those who believe that language may influence cognition only when it is connected to speech. These researchers typically follow the tradition of the Thinking for Speaking Hypothesis (TFS) proposed by Slobin (1991) which is discussed in detail in section 2.3. Slobin claims that when we speak we employ a special kind of thinking, which is the only kind of thinking which has the potential to

be affected by L1. He proposes that humans pay attention only to those features of an event that are grammaticalised in their native language, to the extent that learning a second language which encodes different features can prove very difficult. In such cases, L1 constrains thinking for speaking only, providing for the possibility of conceptualisation transfer at the level of the formation of the pre-verbal message as it is conceived by Levelt (Ellis 2005:12), and is specific to utterance formation, involving the identification of a communicative goal and retrieval of information relevant to achieving that goal. Areas of general cognition are not believed to be involved. Therefore, researchers working in the tradition of TFS most commonly look for evidence of L1 conceptualisation patterns in L2 verbal production (see von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003: 853).

However, the notion of conceptual transfer in temporal expression, which can encompass not only conceptualisations formed at the level of the pre-verbal message, but also the processes which access stored conceptual categories in the minds of speakers of different languages, requires an approach which accounts for those processes which may not be solely related to thinking for speaking (Jarvis 2007:63).

The formation of a temporal perspective in a cognitive linguistics approach, for example, has been hypothesised to involve not only the cognitive processes that generate speech, but also the general cognitive abilities involved in temporal cognition (Ellis 2008:116; Croft 2004). The two are separable and very different, but between them there is a necessary interplay. Temporal cognition is evident even in very young children (2 years) and involves the appreciation of the 'causal' arrow of time (Ellis 2008:116). The formation of a temporal perspective, however, involves the assimilation of the means of bending temporal descriptions to a variety of perspectives: those which place the speaker at a particular point in time, the reference points that

they take, and how they perceive themselves in relation to time. These means are provided by the prevailing sociocultural linguistic context and are subjective (Ellis 2008:116; Croft 2004). Therefore, the way in which a speaker perceives an event may involve areas of cognition that are not related to thinking for speaking (Jarvis 2007:63) but are nonetheless affected by it.

Jarvis (2011: 3) proposes the Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis (CTH) as a way of accounting for the possible involvement of non-linguistic cognition in conceptual transfer research. The CTH is a novel hypothesis and its breadth differentiates it from TFS. In particular, it recognises three levels of processing involved in conceptualisation as illustrated in Table 1 (Jarvis 2007: 54). The CTH holds that TFS may have underestimated the depth of conceptual difference which impacts upon interlanguage transfer. The TFS hypothesis assumes that transfer occurs at the level of speech planning processes (Levels **B** and **C** table 1) and that speakers make use of patterns of organisation and feature salience that are grammaticalised in L1. In contrast, the CTH does not rule out transfer at the depth of general cognition (Level **A** table 1). Indeed, it allows for learned language specific concepts and conceptualisations to be transferred through the application of entrenched L1 constrained schemas to distinct situations for expression in L2.

Table 1. Three levels of conceptualisation from Jarvis (2007:54).

A	General Cognition
B	Macro planning for speaking
C	Micro planning for speaking

Moreover, the CTH encompasses both concept and conceptualisation transfer. Concept transfer is the transfer of concepts stored in the long- term memory of

speakers, whereas conceptualisation transfer refers to transfer of the cognitive processes of selection, categorisation and organisation of conceptual content which forms a distinct perspective for verbalisation (Jarvis 2011:4), as described above.

CTH and TFS overlap in allowing for transfer at the level of speech planning process; however, CTH also allows for transfer in terms of storage and categorisation and accessing stored concepts. Where researchers working within the TFS framework, such as von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003), propose that language specificity regarding conceptual meaning is only relevant while the communication intention is being formed, CTH, in contrast, allows for transfer/specificity also in non-linguistic behaviour such as general cognitive processes related to perception, memory and categorisation which, for example, provide for the accessing of stored conceptual categories (Jarvis 2011:3). This falls within the domain of cognitive linguistics.

To sum up, both conceptualisation and concept transfer are accounted for using the CTH hypothesis, as well as the idea that general human cognitive abilities might be affected by language and therefore may differ cross-linguistically not only at the level of thinking for speaking, but also where these processes access stored conceptual content. Revealing convincing evidence for conceptual transfer in the expression of temporal concepts by Italian L1 speakers of English L2 means accessing the cognitive processes involved in construction choice. Cognitive linguistics offers a framework within which to delineate, explain and investigate these processes. Consequently, the following section outlines the principals of cognitive linguistics and cognitive grammar as they are applied to this study.

2.2 Cognitive Linguistics and Cognitive Grammar

Cognitive Linguistics seeks to connect generalised linguistic principals to what is already known about the mind and brain in fields such as cognitive psychology (Evans *et al* 2006:2). The basic tenet of cognitive linguistics is that language should be interpreted in terms of the concepts it represents. This is in direct contrast to generative grammars, for example, which interpret language in terms of the rules and laws that underlie the production of grammatically correct utterances. Generative grammarians such as Chomsky (2005) posit an autonomous language acquisition device which is innate in humans; their aim is to develop theory regarding the universal grammatical principals which exist inside this innate device.

In contrast, CL rejects the idea of universal grammatical principals and the field is based upon three main principals which link L1 socialisation, grammar and cognition. Firstly, cognitive linguists believe that language is learnt through socialisation into the norms of a particular discourse community, with linguistic knowledge emerging with language use. Secondly, that language is not an autonomous faculty, there is no innate language acquisition device, but rather that it is acquired through general cognitive abilities which are available for other types of learning. Thirdly, that grammar and conceptualisation are inextricably linked through construal (Croft and Cruse 2004). Construal refers to our way of viewing an event, situation or process - in other words, our conceptualisation of it - and this occurs as a result of the interplay of a number of general cognitive abilities or non-linguistic processes called construal operations (Evans 2012:78; Croft and Cruse 2004; Langacker 1987).

Cruse and Croft (2004) describe four general cognitive processes implicated in construal: 1) attention/salience; 2) judgement/comparison; 3) perspective/situatedness;

and 4) constitution/gestalt (Croft and Cruse 2004:46). These are the types of cognitive operations which come into play when a conceptualisation is formed. Category 1 (attention/salience) refers to the human ability to select elements of a scene on which to focus as well as the level of attention that is given to the various elements. Category 2 (judgement/comparison) refers to our capacity for comparing two entities in terms of their similarities and differences and categorising them. Category 3 (perspective/situatedness) as a construal operation refers to the construction of the event in terms of the spatial and temporal location of the speaker. It involves the speaker's viewpoint in terms of location and personal and temporal deixis. Category 4 (constitution/Gestalt) represents the basic conceptualised structure of the scene: it means putting the elements together and giving it a structure or a Gestalt (Croft and Cruse 2004:63) which may be stored and reapplied to new situations.

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the construal of particular temporal situations cross-linguistically; therefore, the construal operations most relevant to this thesis are those pertaining to perspective taking (Croft and Cruse 2004:46). Within the construal operations that pertain to perspective taking, Croft and Cruse (2004:59/60) refer to viewpoint (spatial orientation), deixis (context) and subjectivity (involvement of the speaker). The temporal perspective with which this thesis is concerned is included under deixis. Croft and Cruse (2004:60) maintain that temporal perspective taking is defined in relation to the speech event itself and propose two levels of conceptualisation for deictic elements, one relating to the positioning of the participants in space and time, and one relating to the shifting of the participants to another time and place. For example, the use of the Simple Past tense in (3) has the function of shifting the participant/deictic centre from the present speech time into the past, relative to the present moment of speaking. Croft and Cruse (2004:60) show how

perspective taking may be used to create a different temporal effect using the narrative present, as in (4). This tense choice has the effect of construing a past event as closer to the speech time than it really is. The aim of the speaker is to shift the deictic centre from *past in relation to speech time* to *overlapping with speech time*.

(3) I saw him last week

(4) He comes up behind me, I stop suddenly, and he rams into me.

Tense choice is therefore, a reflection of the temporal perspective that we take and our communicative aims. Indeed, Croft and Cruse (2004:63) maintain that perspective taking, as a non-linguistic general cognitive ability, is a result of our awareness of where we are in the world, or our state of being and of the event that we wish to communicate.

It seems that our choice of tense is rooted in our construal of an event: each tense choice reflects a different construal. In terms of example 4 above, the contrasting choice of the Past Simple would have entailed a past and complete reading of the event, with an event time in the past relative to the deictic centre. When we speak in our L1, we have a plethora of constructions available to us to match to our conceptualisation of the event which we seek to describe. We are able to manipulate our language automatically to reflect our particular perspective. In L2, however, these processes break down, as L2 construction semantics and the conceptualisations to which they are linked are often unclear or even unavailable to the speaker. As different languages possess the means for construing situations in different ways, we may find ourselves relying on L1 concepts and conceptualisations when seeking to describe events and situations in L2, and this is potentially the root of L1 conceptual transfer.

As mentioned above, construal is not only implicated in the formation of temporal perspective taking, it also drives the organisation of linguistic knowledge through a number of other general cognitive abilities. The most important of these processes are categorisation, schematisation and abstraction (Evans 2012:79).

The act of categorisation involves the recognition of a feature or experience as belonging to a larger group of similar entities due to its relationship of similarity to a prototype (Croft and Cruse 2004:74; Croft 2001: 108; Rosch 1973:329). Croft and Cruse (2004:74) refer to this group as a conceptual category. The prototype is commonly accepted to be the feature which best fits the category (Croft and Cruse 2004:81). As an example, in terms of the categorisation of events for the marking of tense and aspect, the verbal prototype for the category of perfective past has been shown to exhibit the following semantic properties: holding an end point; being instantaneous; and entailing a result. This would be illustrated by the phrase to *reach the summit* (Li and Shirai 2000:68). Semantic properties that fit the category less precisely would be those involving ongoing events or states, for example. The application of categorisation and prototype theory to the study of linguistic phenomena is a result of the work of Rosch (1973) whose research showed that when categorising an object or an experience, people rely less on the knowledge of categories themselves and more on comparison of the feature in question with a category prototype. It follows, therefore, that the way we construe an experience as like another will affect its categorisation with regards to the similarities and differences that are perceived and provide for different conceptual categories forming cross-linguistically. Where these differences impact upon production in L2, concept transfer is hypothesised as defined by Jarvis (2011:1) and described above.

Schematisation and abstraction are human capacities which allow for the viewing of an object or experience through a more generalised category (Croft and Cruse 2004). Abstraction refers to the emergence of a conceptual structure through frequent exposure to language, and recognition of its meaning through usage, leading to generalisations about patterns of language use (Langacker 2008; Croft and Cruse 2004). In the mind of the speaker, abstraction means: *for me structure X means Y because I use it for situation Z*. As an example, the Simple Past in English is most commonly used to denote past and completed events, so the Past Simple as a construction assumes a past and complete meaning. Schematisation is a form of abstraction which gives rise to a schema or mental structure formed through the extraction of commonalities, leaving aside any points of difference (Evans 2012). In the mind of the speaker, schematisation means: *I can use structure X in situation Z because situation Z and meaning Y which is connected to structure X have features in common*. Schematisation is essential to language and language learning as it provides for the application of existing knowledge to new experiences manifesting the same or similar configurations (Bylund and Jarvis 2011).

Cognitive linguistics and Cognitive Grammar therefore, by postulating conceptualisation as a distinct unit of meaning created through the interplay of semantic structure and general cognitive abilities or construal operations, offer a means of delineating the cognitive abilities and mental processes that underlie language acquisition and which connect thinking and speaking.

The present study is concerned with the influence of cross-linguistic difference in temporal concepts and conceptualisations formed as a result of socialisation into a particular L1 which gives rise to a distinct temporal perspective. CL postulates a role

for non-linguistic cognition in these processes and provides a window on the formation of this temporal perspective.

2.3 Thinking only for Speaking? A review of Conceptual Transfer research

Conceptual transfer research to date has principally followed in the footsteps of Slobin (1996:12; 1991: 11), and the TFS which is widely cited in the literature as a theoretical base for research involving the structuring and restructuring of cognition through bilingualism or acquisition of a second/third language, first language acquisition and historical change (Bylund 2011; Daller *et al* 2011; Jarvis 2011; Negueruela et al 2004; von-Stutterheim and Nuse 2003). As discussed above, the TFS hypothesis holds that language may influence thought only at the point of preparation of the pre-verbal message, not thought in general.

Slobin bases his TFS theory on contrasts that he noticed in event conceptualisation resulting from the use of aspectual devices by English, Spanish, Hebrew and German speaking children: the English and Spanish languages grammaticalise the distinction between perfective and imperfective aspect, where Hebrew and German do not.

Slobin drew on evidence from the verbal production of children speaking the languages given above as they described a story presented in pictures. He found that German speakers were more likely to focus on the boundedness of an event, whereas English and Spanish speakers marked the *imperfective/perfective* distinction in their narratives. In order to express an *imperfective* action, Hebrew and German speakers compensated by using a combination of past-tense for a finished action and present tense for unfinished action. Slobin (1996: 79/80) gives the following examples from a Hebrew and English speaking child.

5) English: The boy fell out and the dog was being chased by the bees.

6) Hebrew: *Hayeled nafal...ve hakelev boreax.*/He fell and the dog runs away.

The English child uses the Past Simple to describe the falling out of the tree, accompanied by a Past Progressive to indicate an ongoing action at the same time, whereas the same concept is represented by the Hebrew speaking child using the Past Simple and then Present tense for the ongoing action.

Slobin (1996:74) also noticed a difference regarding the identification of the imperfective feature of certain verbs, specifically *to see* between the Spanish and English speaking children. The picture that he asked participants to describe contains the image of an owl *seeing/observing* the action of the main protagonists. The Spanish speakers marked the verb *ver* (to see) as either imperfective (7) or perfective (8) depending on their viewing point. However, in English only the perfective form, the Simple Past, is available for the verb *to see*. This occurs in English for two reasons: 1) because the imperfective/perfective distinction is not made in the past in English (See below); 2) because the verb *to see* is a state verb in English which contrasts with the verb *to observe*, and therefore does not admit progressive aspect. Slobin concludes that, as a result, most probably the imperfective feature of the verb *to see* is not readily available to an English speaker (Slobin 1996:74).

However, this data may also be interpreted in terms of Spanish and English speakers holding qualitatively different perspectives on the situation described invoked by the L1 grammatical constructions (Spanish Imperfecto and English Past Simple) used to cover the etic situation in question, and which could invoke L1 constrained processes of event construal forming distinct conceptualisations of the event cross-linguistically.

7) *El búho veía que el perro corría.*/ The owl saw – IPFV that the dog was running. – IPFV

8) *El búho vió que el niño se cayó.*/ The owl saw – PFV that the boy fell – PFV.

from Slobin (1996:74)

Therefore, it is possible that not only the features of the etic situation perceived by the speaker and denoted by the verb *to see* are important here; but also, the meanings of the tenses used to cover the denoted function are pertinent. The imperfective past tense, found in romance languages like Spanish, Italian and French, serves to place the speaker/conceptualiser inside the denoted past situation, rendering it all the more real and vivid (Brisard 2013:223). This meaning is not available to an English L1 speaker who has the ongoing meaning or the Past Progressive or past and complete meaning of the Past Simple accessible for use. The former is impossible as the verb *to see* is stative and so the latter is chosen reflecting the past and complete nature of the action. Therefore, the use of the Imperfecto here by the Spanish L1 children in contrast to the Past Simple used by the English L1 children could point to differing perspectives on the event and therefore conceptual differences drawn from the meaning of the structures available for use by the speaker, rather than the unavailability of the means of expressing imperfectiveness to the English L1 children *per se* with regard to the etic situation of *to see*, as suggested by Slobin. The Spanish system, through the Imperfecto, provides for a distinct perspective which is not available to an English speaker. Through the general cognitive processes involved in construal it can be argued that this perspective is ‘hardwired’ through socialisation, giving rise to a schema which may be reapplied in similar situations in L1 or used erroneously in L2.

This means that where Slobin argues that features which are not encoded in L1 are generally ignored, but nevertheless perceived; a CL approach would suggest that perception has the potential to be qualitatively different cross-linguistically.

Such differing perspectives, driven by the L1 grammatical systems which coerce certain meanings and conceptualisations in particular situations seem to have an impact on verbal production. It is these cross-linguistic conceptual differences with their root in L1 grammatical systems and which have the potential to lead to conceptual transfer which will be a focus of this study.

Slobin also compared English and Spanish speakers in their descriptions of path and motion. According to Talmy (1991) languages may be either verb-framed (V-framed), where path of motion is encoded on the verb and manner is either omitted or expressed using a complement, as in Italian *entrare, uscire* or Spanish *entrar, salir*, or they may be satellite-framed (S-framed), where path of motion is encoded via a particle and manner is encoded in the verb, as in English *jump out, go in*. In S-framed languages such as English, manner would appear to be more salient than in V-framed languages such as Italian where the focus is placed on changes in location (Negueruela *et al* 2004:142). Additionally, in Spanish it is not possible to express manner and directionality in compound expressions as in English:

9) English: The bird flew down from out of the hole in the tree.

10) Spanish: *El pájaro salió del agujero del árbol volando hacia abajo.*/The bird
exited of the hole in the tree, flying towards below.*

from Slobin (1996: 82/83)

Slobin found that this difference in grammaticalisation led to systematic differences in the narratives of English and Spanish speakers. Where English speakers will specify a trajectory and imply the resultant location (9), Spanish speakers instead assert locations and directions leaving the trajectory to be implied (10). This is evident in the verbal production of Spanish speakers, who, for example, will tend to use participles to assert an end-state. Examples 11 and 12 below are from Slobin (1996:84).

11) English: The boy climbed the tree.

12) Spanish: El niño está *subido* en el árbol. /The boy is in a state of having climbed the tree.

Slobin's data led him to conclude that "categories that are not grammaticalised in the native language are generally ignored, whereas those that are grammaticalised are all expressed by children as young as 3" (Slobin 1991:17) and point to the influence of language on thinking for speaking from a very young age. Indeed, Slobin (1996:85) reports data showing that English three year olds very rarely use a verb of motion without elaborating a location, whereas Spanish three year olds use predominantly bare verbs of motion. It is important to note that Slobin refers to categories that are not grammaticalised in the native language as being '*ignored*'. He does not assume that the categories are not perceived by the speaker, just not considered salient enough to be represented verbally. This is also implied when we think about '*compensation*': when a category is not grammaticalised in a particular language, a speaker may seek to compensate, and therefore express it, but using other means, as with the use of a present tense for an ongoing action in example 6 above.

However, is the speaker seeking to compensate, or could the use of a distinct construction imply a new or different conceptualisation of the event, as is potentially implied with regard to the use of Past imperfective tenses in romance languages above? Speakers apply the linguistic knowledge that they have available to them so as to best represent the situation they wish to express the way they have perceived it. Socialisation into a particular discourse community where certain features of specific situations are grammaticalised could determine a particular construal of that event reinforced through consistent organisation of conceptual categories in the mind of the speaker, which is then reapplied in similar situations through the cognitive processes of schematisation and abstraction as detailed above. Therefore, we could hypothesise divergent conceptualisations of the same situation resulting from the regular processing of contrasting semantic and conceptual content, rather than attention being drawn only to particular features of a particular situation which are then expressed with the means available to the speaker.

Also working within the TFS framework and looking at the relationship between cross-linguistic grammaticalisation differences and thinking for speaking are Chistiane von-Stutterheim and colleagues (Schmiedtová 2013; Schmiedtová *et al* 2011; Carroll and von-Stutterheim 2003; von – Stutterheim and Nuse 2003). Linking grammar and perspective-taking, von-Stutterheim and colleagues have drawn on the model of language production conceived by Levelt (1989:9). This model elaborates the processes involved in preparing thoughts prior to linguistic expression. Levelt postulates a process consisting of five steps where conceptualisation occurs as the first of these steps in the *conceptualiser* (Levelt 1989:9). It is here that the communicative intention becomes a pre-verbal message as explained above (p.15) and therefore, thinking for speaking. In their 2003 paper, von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003: 853)

elaborate upon the planning processes that they propose to occur in the *conceptualiser*. They maintain that conceptualisations are formed through four planning processes of segmentation, structuring, selection and linearization (von – Stutterheim and Nuse (2003:854).

In describing the conceptualisation processes that are involved in event conceptualisation, von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003: 853) outline macro-planning processes of segmentation and selection along with micro-planning processes of structuring and linearization. *Segmentation* refers to the breaking down of an etic situation according to its component parts (Jarvis 2015:15; Bylund 2011:110): events may be segmented into smaller or larger units as has been highlighted by von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003), below. *Selection* involves choosing the elements that the speaker wishes to communicate, assuming that people do not often express all the features of the mental image they have formed (Jarvis 2015:15); these features could be entities, times, spaces or properties (Bylund 2011:110). *Structuring* relates to the spatial and temporal perspective taken on an event; this may refer to whether an event is construed as complete or ongoing, its organisation, and where the speaker places themselves in relation to the event. Finally *linearization* represents the linear ordering of the information which has been selected for verbalisation. Placing a certain feature first, for example may signify prioritisation of that piece of information.

Notably, von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003) found evidence for cross-linguistic difference in the processes of segmentation and selection in the language of English and German speakers based on the native language grammaticalisation or not of aspect. English grammaticalises aspect in the form of the *progressive*, where German does not. They report data from retellings of silent films and verbalisations of short video clips by English and German speakers in their native language, and conclude

that speakers segment events differently and select different components and establish varying perspectives during the formation of the pre-verbal message.

In terms of segmentation, the grammaticalisation of aspect in English seems to lead English speakers to verbalise many more events than German speakers, and they also parse the events into smaller sequences. As regards selection, German speakers mention more endpoints (13), whereas English speakers prefer to select a phasal segment of the event, portraying it as an ongoing activity (14) (von Stutterheim and Nuse 2003:862). Schmiedtová (2013:88) refers to this difference as a phasal (English) vs. holistic (German) perspective on event construal, which is driven by the difference in the grammaticalisation of particular concepts in L1.

13) *Er gräbt ein Loch im Sand.*/ He digs a hole in the sand.*

14) He is digging in the Sand. *

from von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003:861)

In example 13, the German speaker refers to the endpoint, or the result of the activity: the hole in the sand. This has the effect of closing the action, depicting it as a complete event. In contrast, the English speaker uses the progressive form construing the activity as ongoing.

Von Stutterheim and Nuse (2003) describe specific differences in perspective taking drawn from differences in information organisation, as mentioned above. German speakers were inclined to refer to bounded events as in (13) and fill a timeline with them, one following the other. No internal perspective was provided to the events, unlike in English (14). In German, the speaker construes the whole activity as a goal-

orientated series of events (von Stutterheim and Nuse (2003:867), whereas English speakers construe the activity as a number of ongoing, unbounded situations: the viewpoint is the deictic *now*, the speaker exerts less control over the temporal perspective, the event is related to the present and the relation of events to each other is inferred through context. This contrast may be seen in examples 15 and 16 where participants are describing a silent film, where in this sequence, as above, a protagonist is digging a hole in the sand. Examples 15 and 16 are from von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003: 866-868)

15i) und sucht nach dem Wasser/ and he searches for water (unbounded)

ii) und er gräb mhm erst ein kleines bisschen/ and he digs a little (bounded)

iii) und dann gräbt er immer stärker/ and then he digs more intensively (unbounded)

iv) bis ein Trichter entsteht/ until a funnel appears (boundary for iii, bounded)

16i) he's on his knees (unbounded)

ii) and he's starting to dig (inception phase, unbounded)

iii) and starts digging faster and faster (inception phase, unbounded)

iv) and the hole starts to multiply (inception phase unbounded)

Thus, Slobin (1991, 1996) and von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003) suggest that as we learn our native language we are sensitised to certain features of our experience - more specifically, those features that are grammaticalised in our native language - and this can affect what we express and the way in which we do it. In other words, the language that we speak drives our thinking, but only with regard to what we attend to when we

produce language. This has been influential in providing support for the hypothesis that the grammaticalisation of specific features in a language drives specific attention being paid to those features, thereby leading to language-specific event conceptualisations but only in thinking for speaking. Slobin (1996:89) notes that this can have implications for learning a second language; he posits that when learning an L2, language learners have particular difficulty with grammatical distinctions and categories which are not present in their native language.

Slobin (1991:17) argues that features which are not grammaticalised in L1 are simply ignored, but nonetheless perceived. If this is the case, learning to verbalise them in L2 should not prove so problematic, as these features are available to the speaker to be encoded in L2. However, a CL approach to cross-linguistic grammaticalisation differences would suggest that differing cognitive schemas (mental structures formed through the extraction of common features) are developed over time through contrasting construals of certain events which are reinforced through socialisation into a distinct L1 (Croft 2003: 139). Within this approach, the attention paid to particular features of a situation becomes less salient, as a schema is activated in response to a certain situation, and when learning L2 the focus is placed on the restructuring of this stored conceptual knowledge. Consistently, competent L2 production becomes a more complex task, resulting in more enduring errors.

This thesis takes a CL approach and the possibility is explored, that cross-linguistic differences in perspective taking occur as a result of general cognitive processes such as schematisation and abstraction. These are driven by differences in situation construal arising from contrasting semantic and conceptual content held in the mind of the speaker and it is here where potential target areas for conceptual transfer might

be found.. With this in mind, a full contrastive analysis of the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian has been undertaken (Chapter 3) from a cognitive perspective with the aim of identifying possible areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference for investigation.

2.3.1 Evidence for L1 concepts affecting L2 learning and L1 attrition within TFS

The theoretical frameworks described above by Slobin (1991) and von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003) have provided a starting point for more recent investigations of the effects of cross-linguistic differences in conceptualisation in general and *conceptualisation transfer* in particular, in learner languages (Carroll and von-Stutterheim 2003) and on L1 attrition in bilingualism (Bylund 2009). Work in this area has also principally focused on the grammatical contrasts that occur between aspect and non-aspect languages: the Grammatical Aspect Approach (Bylund 2011:109), and verb-framed versus satellite-framed languages (Talmy 1985; 1991).

The effect of L1 conceptualisation processes on L2 is examined by Carroll and von-Stutterheim (2003) using the framework developed by von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003) and described above. Notably, Carroll and von-Stutterheim consider differences in perspective taking regarding the management of temporal anchoring or topic time in information organisation for event description (Klein 1992) between German and English speakers and German L1 speakers of English L2. As described above, German is a non-aspect language and as such when describing a sequence of events, German L1 speakers prefer to refer to a number of different events with distinct temporal boundaries which are fitted into slots on a timeline (Carroll and von-Stutterheim 2003:389). However, English through the progressive form encodes

aspect and provides for the setting of a time span within which other events occur (Carroll and von-Stutterheim 2003:389).

Carroll and von-Stutterheim reported that German L1 learners of English L2, while they had learnt the grammatical forms (the progressive) enabling them to express the L2 temporal perspective, did not use them in the appropriate function and maintained a perspective rooted in L1. In L2 English the German L1 speakers, for example, while using progressive forms might combine them inappropriately with an adverbial such as *then* which signals an event boundary (17). (Example 17 is from Carroll and von-Stutterheim 2003:392).

17) then he is still searching for water

From this evidence, Carroll and von-Stutterheim conclude that the learners may remain constrained by the principals of conceptual organisation evident in their L1 when speaking L2 (Carroll and von-Stutterheim 2003:398). Nonetheless, it is perhaps difficult to conclude from the use of *then* that the German speakers in this study still perceive a bounded event, despite their use of the English Present Progressive. It would be important to consider what the use of progressive aspect means for the speaker of L2 English in this context, and how much of the meaning and use of the L2 has really been assimilated.

More recently, Schmiedtová *et al.* (2011) detail three studies including aspect encoding (Spanish, English, Modern Standard (MS) Arabic, Czech, Russian) and non-aspect (German, Norwegian) encoding languages. They used verbal production, eye tracking and speech onset time data to establish that viewing of goal orientated events is affected by cross-linguistic difference regarding the grammaticalisation of aspect.

Participants in these studies were presented with video clips and asked to describe what was happening. Instructions were given in the language being investigated and participants were asked to concentrate on the depicted event rather than the elements of the scene.

German speakers, whose L1 does not grammaticalise aspect, encoded more endpoints, and eye tracking data showed that German L1 speakers focused on possible endpoints of the event shown, before and after starting to speak. The speech onset time (SOT) of the German speakers was also later, as if they were waiting for the event to conclude before speaking. In contrast, English speakers mentioned fewer endpoints and their SOT was earlier than the German L1 speakers with respect to the described event. The eye tracking data of the English speakers showed that they would start to speak before attending to the event endpoint.

Schmiedtová *et al.* propose that this is because the English speakers possess the grammatical means (the progressive) for focussing on a sub-interval of an event. Where German speakers were inclined to focus on the endpoint of an event, perceiving it as a whole, the English speakers were more likely to refer to an event in progress using a progressive construction. Interestingly, these L1-rooted principals regarding event construal were evident in the SOT and verbal production data of English L1 speakers of German L2, but not so evident in the verbal production of German L1 speakers of English L2. English L1 speakers of German L2 mentioned statistically fewer endpoints when speaking German than L1 German speakers, reflecting L1 English patterns. Moreover, SOT times also resembled those of native English speakers. Therefore, native English speakers retained L1 English construal patterns while speaking in L2 German.

However, there was some evidence for restructuring of event construal, moving towards L2 patterns, in the L2 English of German L1 speakers who encoded fewer endpoints and whose SOT times were shorter compared to German monolinguals. Schmiedtová *et al.* point to the perceptual prominence of the progressive in English which facilitates its assimilation as a reason for this, compared to the holistic perspective in German which is not prominent and therefore more difficult to learn. (Schmiedtová *et al.* 2011:95).

Schmiedtová *et al.* also found evidence for L1 principals for the construal of goal-orientated motion in the L2 German of L1 speakers of Russian and Czech. Evidence from verbal production data showed that L1 Russian speakers mentioned statistically fewer endpoints in L2 German than L1 German speakers, and that L1 Czech speakers mentioned statistically more. This was ascribed to the similarity of Czech to German in terms of their conceptual preferences, Czech, like German invites a holistic perspective with the resultant verbalisation and conceptualisation of goal oriented motion events (Schmiedtová 2013: 90). Thus, it was not clear whether the success of the Czech L1 speakers in attaining native-like competence in this area in L2 was a result of conceptual restructuring in line with L2 or maintenance of the L1 perspective. Consequently, in a 2013 study, Schmiedtová compared the L2 verbal production elicited from the narration of short video clips by high-level L1 Czech speakers of English and English native speakers. English, unlike Czech, takes a phasal perspective on event construal as a result of the encoding of grammatical aspect. Schmiedtová found, as expected, that for goal-oriented motion events, Czech L1 speakers of English L2 encoded statistically more end-points than native English speakers bearing testimony to a holistic perspective.

Interestingly, in this study, Schmiedtová also looked at events with a resultant state, such as *posting a letter*. She found that Czech speakers were much more likely to encode a post-state 18) than native English speakers who would focus on the process 19). (Examples 18 and 19 from Schmiedtová 2013: 105)

18) He is putting the letter *inside of a letter box*. (poststate)

19) Someone is posting a letter (process, no poststate).

Moreover, Czech L1 speakers of English were also statistically more likely to use past tense forms marked with perfective aspect to encode events with a resultant state. This, therefore, implies the completion of the presented situation.

Schmiedtová *et al.* conclude that L1 event conceptualisations are grammatically driven and that this may pose a significant challenge when learning a new language (Schmiedtová 2013:109). The evidence points to speakers thinking in L1 when speaking in L2.

Further evidence for thinking for L1 while speaking L2 comes from Negueruela *et al* (2004) who examined the gesture-speech interface of advanced L2 speakers of Spanish and English with regard to their expression of motion events. English (as detailed above) is a *satellite-framed language* (S-framed) while Spanish is a *verb-framed* language. Results for narratives in English showed that Spanish speakers of English L2 expressed manner much more frequently through gesture than did English L1s. Spanish speakers rely heavily on gesture to express manner in English L2 especially when manner is not expressed in the verb, and this parallels L1 Spanish. Negueruela *et al.* conclude that participants in the study had not shifted their L1 TFS patterns towards those of the L2 and so participants had to use more creative ways of dealing

with the typological differences in the two languages. This is the case even in advanced speakers. The authors link this to TFS and a potential conceptual difference between V-framed and S-framed languages. They maintain (2004:142) that in English manner is an inherent component of a directed motion, but for Spanish speakers it is much less important as attention is focused on change in location and setting:

English speakers are inclined to conceive of manner and motion along a path as “a single conceptual event”, while Spanish speakers conceive of these same events as “activities that take place in specified geographic regions.”

Here Negueruela *et al.* would appear to be referring to be differences in perspective taking in general as they refer to two different conceptions of the event in question, rather than *thinking for speaking* where salient features are encoded. It is interesting to note that the literature is sometimes unclear with regards to where TFS end and conceptual differences begin.

The studies detailed above have shown how L1 grammaticalisation of certain concepts may impact upon L2 production. There is strong evidence for conceptual difference occurring between the speakers of aspect vs. non aspect languages and Verb vs. Satellite framed languages, which then have an effect in L2 interlanguage. It would appear that developing L2 TFS habits is very difficult and perhaps only occurs in total immersion experiences in a new culture and the emergence of bilingualism.

Evidence from studies of supposed *conceptualisation* transfer effects in bilingualism have shown that bilinguals exhibit patterns of event description that are distinct from monolinguals (Flecken 2011) or fall between both languages (Schmiedtová 2013: 110; Daller *et al* 2011: 101). They also claim that conceptualisation transfer effects occur

and are linked to the dominant language environment (Daller *et al* 2011:115) and age of onset of bilingualism (Bylund 2009:305; Hohenstein *et al* 2006). In fact, evidence from bilingualism indicates that conceptualisation transfer may indeed be bi-directional from both L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 in specific environments (Hohenstein *et al* 2006).

As regards a bilingual specific system, Flecken (2011), posits a distinct bilingual conceptualisation system in early Dutch/German bilinguals. Like Schmiedtová *et al* above, Flecken looks at the grammaticalisation and use of aspectual devices across the two languages. Dutch and German have similar means of expressing aspect; however, the use of these constructions is restricted to specific contexts in German but not in Dutch. Using verbalisations and eye-tracking data, Flecken showed that bilinguals' use of the progressive form in Dutch was different to Dutch monolingual speakers in that bilinguals used the form (*aan het* construction) that is most frequently used in Dutch, underusing the alternatives which are less frequently used in Dutch by native speakers. Bilingual use of the progressive, was neither ungrammatical, nor subject to influence from German. Instead, these bilingual speakers were not sensitive to the full range of forms available to them in Dutch to express progressive meanings. This suggests a distinct bilingual conceptual system. Flecken's participants were all early bilinguals, who had had exposure to both languages from birth

In contrast, Daller *et al* (2011) investigated the event conceptualization patterns in descriptions of motion events in German/Turkish bilinguals. Turkish is a V-framed language and German is an S-framed language. Using picture stories to elicit verbal production, Daller *et al* found that although the bilinguals were sensitive to the typological characteristics of both languages, they would tend to follow the conceptualisation patterns of the dominant language of their residential area (Daller *et*

al 2011:115). Daller *et al* looked at two groups of bilinguals one resident in Germany and the other in Turkey; the group resident in Germany, for example, followed the pattern used by monolingual Germans.

The research work outlined above has established the effect of *conceptualisation* transfer on L2 acquisition and also in bilingual thinking for speaking. Researchers have drawn upon the frameworks proposed by Slobin (1991) (TFS) and von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003), both of which hypothesise that *conceptualisation* transfer may occur at the level of thinking for speaking and that this is most likely to occur when salient grammatical structures in L1 which are different to L2 draw a speaker's attention to specific features of the situation to be verbalised (Schmiedtová *et al* 2011:95; Slobin 1996:89). This may then result in non-native like production in L2, as unusual features of the situation (for the L2 community) are attended to and expressed.

However, in a recent paper looking at L1 attrition in Spanish/Swedish bilinguals living in Sweden, Bylund and Jarvis (2011) adopt a framework drawing on the principals of Cognitive Grammar (CG) (Langacker 1987) as outlined above. In contrast to TFS and the work of von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003), CG proposes that conceptualisations and the formation of the pre-verbal message are connected to general cognitive abilities that are important in learning, and that grammar and conceptualisation are linked. The meanings that grammatical structures hold inform and drive conceptualisation. So a CG framework posits that, rather than being sensitive to the features of a situation that L1 morphology grammaticalises, as described above in TFS, a speaker is sensitised to and assimilates the type of conceptualisation the L1 morphology invokes (Jarvis 2011:51), and this becomes schematised and applied to other situations.

The area of conceptual divergence that Bylund and Jarvis considered is that of grammatical aspect. Spanish grammaticalises aspect while Swedish does not. Drawing on the principals of CG the authors argue that this results in different viewing frames cross-linguistically. These viewing frames exist continually in the mind of a speaker and are formed through schematisation and abstraction. Contrary to TFS, their occurrence is not restricted to formation of the pre-verbal message. A maximal viewing frame, which sees situations in their entirety, is favoured by speakers of non-aspect languages. Whereas, an immediate viewing frame which focuses upon the action in progress excluding endpoints is preferred by speakers of languages which encode aspect (Bylund and Jarvis 2011:49). These differing viewpoints are proposed by Langacker (2008) who draws on the meaning of aspectual constructions to elaborate differing resulting perspectives on a particular situation. These differing perspectives have an effect on endpoint encoding in the two languages under investigation. Swedish L1 speakers encode more endpoints than Spanish L1 speakers as Swedish does not allow for the marking of ongoing aspect. Bylund and Jarvis (2011) used film retell tasks to elicit verbal production and paired this with a grammatical judgement task which tested the participants' formal knowledge of their L1 (Spanish) in terms of the use of incorrect imperfective morphology. Numerical data were produced by counting the number of endpoints encoded in the experimental and monolingual control groups for the film retell task. Further data was elicited through a grammatical judgement task which assessed participants' sensitivity to aspectual contrasts, gender agreement and verbal clitics. The results showed that bilingual Spanish/Swedish speakers encoded more endpoints in Spanish than Spanish monolinguals, and this correlated significantly with lower scores on the part of the grammatical judgement task testing knowledge of aspectual distinctions. This indicated that exposure to Swedish had affected both L1

Spanish speakers' verbal production, and judgements of that which is grammatically acceptable in terms of aspectual distinctions in Spanish. Inability to distinguish this grammatical acceptability in L1 Spanish could point to change in perspective with regard to viewing frames, such that persistent exposure to L2 had in some way changed the cognitive processes involved in event construal and the resultant conceptualisation in these subjects. Bylund and Jarvis (2011), in fact, take this as evidence for restructuring in line with the L2 dominant linguistic environment.

In this study, Bylund and Jarvis found evidence of L1 attrition as regards immediate viewing frames in both types of data (film retell and grammatical judgement task) and conclude that this consistency in both types of data justifies their CG approach. The fact that bilingual Spanish/Swedish participants were tolerant of incorrect imperfective morphology in Spanish in the grammatical judgement task suggests that the presence or absence of morphology does not play such a key role in conceptualisation (Bylund and Jarvis 2011:57) as suggested by von-Stutterheim and Nuse (2003). The implication is that the participants' L2 influenced viewpoint can persist in line with incorrect morphology to the extent that these errors in L1 are not picked up. This suggests that it could be the conceptualisation of the event itself which is salient, and not the L1 morphology which denotes salient features of the etic situation described. The persisting conceptualisation would have been restructured and refined through cognitive processes such as categorisation, schematisation and abstraction, as a result of constant L2 exposure in context, consistent with a CL approach.

The evidence presented here helps to build a picture of the cross-linguistic influence of prevailing conceptualisations in SLA, and L1 attrition in advanced bilinguals. Two diverging theoretical frameworks are used to interpret this form of cross-linguistic influence. One, deriving from the TFS framework, refers to a speaker's propensity to

pay attention to particular features of the etic situation according to their grammaticalisation in L1 (von-Stutterheim and Nuse 2003; Slobin 1996); the other, currently emerging from cognitive linguistics, proposes cross-linguistic conceptual influence in terms of conceptualisation differences driven by variations in the meanings of the constructions used to cover the concept to be represented cross-linguistically and their knock on effect on construal giving rise to an L1 constrained perspective on an event.

The cognitive linguistics approach to conceptual transfer research allows not only for transfer at the level of thinking for speaking, but also for the involvement on the general cognitive processes also involved in non-linguistic cognition.

Within this approach, conceptualisations are non-linguistic units formed through the interaction of stored knowledge (conceptual categories) and general cognitive abilities (construal operations) which are constrained by L1 socialisation into a particular discourse community. The conceptualisation represents an L1 defined perspective on the event being described and this may be transferred into L2.

Concepts, in contrast, are stored content, formed through the general cognitive processes of schematisation, abstraction and categorisation of etic situations according to L1 constrained construal. Likewise, these construals are formed and learned through constant reinforcement of the situation/construction pairing, such that the construction takes on the meaning of the category in which the etic situation it describes occurs (Croft 2003: 139).

Cognitive Linguistics allows for the interpretation of conceptualisation transfer in terms of an L1 perspective driven by the meaning of the construction that covers that concept in L1 which is transferred to L2. It allows for the elaboration of concept transfer in terms of the L1 constrained conceptual content which exists in the minds of

speakers of that L1 and which can be transferred into L2. These definitions are consistent with the definitions of concept and conceptualisation transfer outlined by Jarvis (2011).

So far, research work in this area and within the TFS hypothesis has primarily focussed on conceptualisation transfer and its manifestation in the verbal production of L2 learners and bilinguals. Verbal production data, has also been combined with co-verbal data such as eye-tracking data and SOT data to measure online processing in relation to targeted linguistic features with some very convincing results. However, concept transfer, which is more difficult to distinguish because of its relation to the meaning of stored conceptual content (Jarvis 2011:4) and which, therefore, may not appear in verbal production data, has been largely neglected. A cognitive linguistics framework, as described above, offers a suitable heuristic for explaining these two types of transfer, and as detailed below, also the means of investigating them.

2.4 Cognitive Approach to the investigation of Conceptual Transfer

The following section outlines how Cognitive Linguistics and Radical Construction Grammar (Croft 2001; Croft and Cruse 2004) offer an effective framework for investigating conceptual transfer. This framework has been adopted to: i) better enable the elaboration of an account of the processes underlying conceptualisation and the formation of linguistic categories in long term memory which may impact upon acquisition of an L2 through conceptual transfer, and ii) make the link between construction semantics and conceptualisation. It therefore provides for the transfer of grammatically driven conceptualisations as non-linguistic units (Evans 2012:78), rather than grammatically driven attendance to particular features, as detailed by Jarvis

(2011:51). Particular attention is paid to the general cognitive abilities that link grammar and conceptualisation and what that means about the nature of conceptual transfer in general, and conceptualisation and concept transfer in particular.

Radical Construction Grammar (RCG), in particular semantic mapping, has been adopted as a means of showing cross-linguistic conceptual difference in stored conceptual content in the minds of speakers of English and Italian.

2.4.1 Radical Construction Grammar (RCG)

RCG posits that a grammatical construction represents a conceptualisation, as it holds, in the mind of the speaker, not only syntactic, morphological and phonological information, but also semantic and conceptual information including schemas, frames, categories and prototypes as well as pragmatic elements (Croft and Cruse 2004; Croft 2001:18). Consequently, RCG allows for the interpretation of grammatical constructions in terms of the concepts that they represent and comparing these constructions cross-linguistically has the potential to reveal differences with regard to concepts and conceptualisations in the minds of speakers of different languages.

According to RCG theory, constructions and the functions that they represent are organised into conceptual categories as a result of categorisation (Croft 2001:27) and recognition of prototypes (discussed above Section 2.2). For example, in English the event *I have eaten the cake* would fall squarely into the category Present Perfect tense as it fits the prototypical meaning of the category *past action with present result state*. Less prototypical events or situations such as *I have known him for years* which describe a past to present state would fall closer to the category boundary. In contrast, the same two events, described in Italian or French would involve two categories, one

for the past action, the Perfetto Composto: *I have eaten the cake/Ho mangiato la torta* and one for the past to present state, the Presente Semplice : *I have known him for years/ Lo conosco da anni*. This occurs because the Italian system provides for an extended present where the Presente Semplice may cover situations or states which start in the past and continue into the present, the English system, on the other hand, provides for a result state meaning with the Present Perfect which in English, therefore, places both situations in the same category.

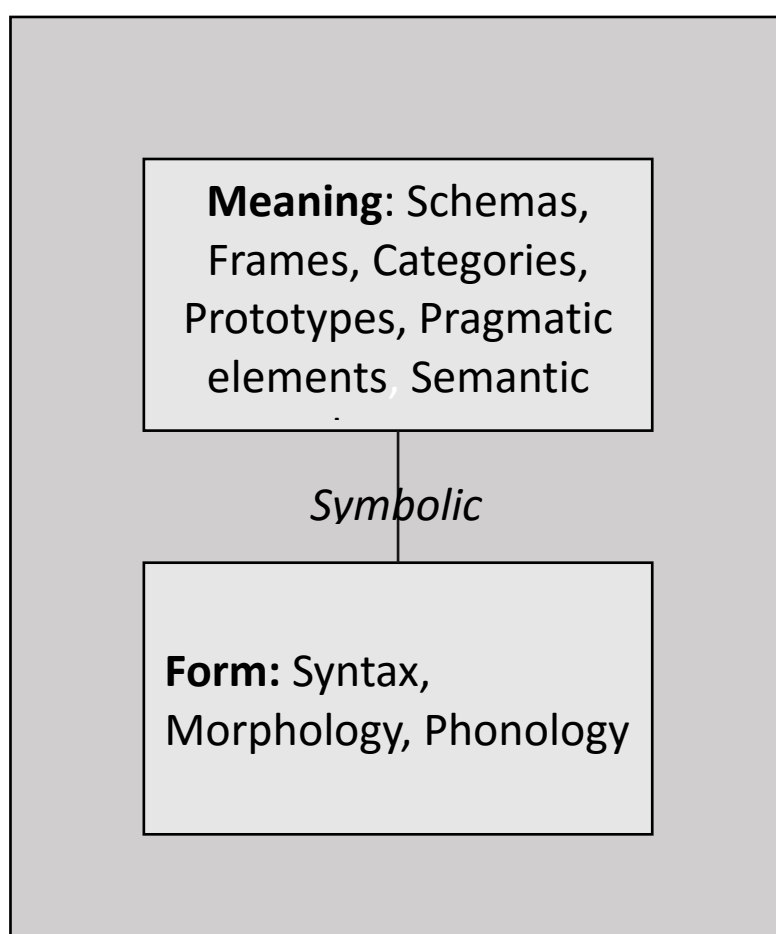


Figure 1. The symbolic structure of a construction in construction grammar. The construction is represented by the grey box, with the symbolic link between form and meaning internal to it.

In contrast, the same two events, described in Italian or French would involve two categories, one for the past action, the *Perfetto Composto*: *I have eaten the cake/Ho mangiato la torta* and one for the past to present state, the *Presente Semplice* : *I have known him for years/ Lo conosco da anni*. This occurs because the Italian system provides for an extended present where the *Presente Semplice* may cover situations or states which start in the past and continue into the present, whereas the English system, on the other hand, provides for a result state meaning with the *Present Perfect* which in English, therefore, places both situations in the same category.

These categories represent the linguistic knowledge available to a speaker as a socialised subject. In order to compare the content and organisation of categories cross-linguistically in RCG, Croft (2001: 2) proposes the creation of semantic maps. Semantic maps represent the categories that are available to the language user mapped onto a conceptual space. A conceptual space contains the various functions that are represented by constructions, and the relations of those constructions to each other (Croft 2001:93). The conceptual space is considered universal, whereas the categories derived from constructions available in a particular language that are mapped onto the conceptual space are language specific (Croft 2001:94). This would mean that where categories differ cross-linguistically, speakers of different L1s have different schemas and other conceptual content available cross-linguistically for the representation of the same concepts. Therefore, RCG as model of morphosyntactic representation which gives a large amount of explanatory power to semantic/conceptual structure and form/function pairings offers a method for cross-linguistic comparison at a conceptual level through semantic maps which are central to the theory. These maps capture similarities and differences in psychological categories, the comparison of which

points to contrasts in underlying concepts and conceptualisations in different languages seen against the universal conceptual space.

In this thesis, it is this approach that has been used to highlight areas of conceptual divergence in the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian, (See Chapter 3) which may lead to conceptual transfer in L2 production. This is fully explained and elaborated in its relation to this thesis in chapter 3.

The application of this approach to concept and conceptualisation transfer is described in the following section.

2.4.2 Cognitive Linguistics and L1 Conceptual Transfer

As detailed in the overview, to date four different types of transfer have been described in the literature: formal/syntactic, semantic, concept and conceptualisation transfer. This thesis is concerned with revealing instances of conceptual transfer in general and distinguishing possible instances of concept and conceptualisation transfer in the expression of distinct temporal concepts by Italian L1 learners on English L2. Both conceptualisation and concept transfer have at their base the conceptual categories which exist in the mind of the speaker and are represented, in this study, through RCG on the semantic maps. Within cognitive linguistics it is presupposed that these categories can differ cross-linguistically through socialisation into L1.

According to Jarvis, concept transfer refers to “cross-linguistic effects arising from differences in the structure or internal make-up of the concepts stored in the minds of speakers of different languages” (Jarvis 2011:4).

As we are socialised into our L1, we learn the form, meaning and use of the prevailing grammatical constructions in our L1. Each situation is matched to a construction which

is perceived to represent it most accurately. For example the etic *state up to the present* (*I have known him for years*) situation is matched to the Present Perfect construction in English; moreover, the Present Perfect is also used for other etic situations which in combination form the Present Perfect category. It is cross-linguistic differences in the content and therefore also meaning of these categories which may account for concept transfer, and these differences may be revealed through a comparison of semantic maps of the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian as described above and available in Chapter 3.

The stored knowledge that exists in the minds of a speaker or the conceptual categories, as described above, drive the construal operations or general cognitive processes which form conceptualisations of the etic situation to be described (Croft and Cruse 2004:46). Where L1 influences these construal operations, and therefore the formation of a conceptualisation, conceptualisation transfer is hypothesised. Jarvis (2011:4) describes conceptualisation transfer as:

cross-linguistic effects arising not from different concepts, but from differences concerning which concepts are selected and how they are organised in a particular conceptualisation of a situation or event.

The following example outlines concept and conceptualisation transfer, as it is interpreted to occur in this study.

Consider the etic concept of: *resultative past* in the following example:

20) *I have lost my iPhone. / Ho perso il mio iPhone.*

Often, an Italian L1 speaker can be heard using the Past Simple for this concept: *I lost my iPhone*. Or on other occasions, the required Present Perfect is used; however, inability to use this construction consistently in other contexts points to its incomplete assimilation. This incomplete assimilation may manifest in the use of the Present Perfect with a past and finished meaning in the resultative past context, consistent with the L1 category meaning as outlined in Figure 2 below. Evidence for the use of the Present Perfect with a past and finished meaning could be potentially be considered evidence for concept transfer as explored below.

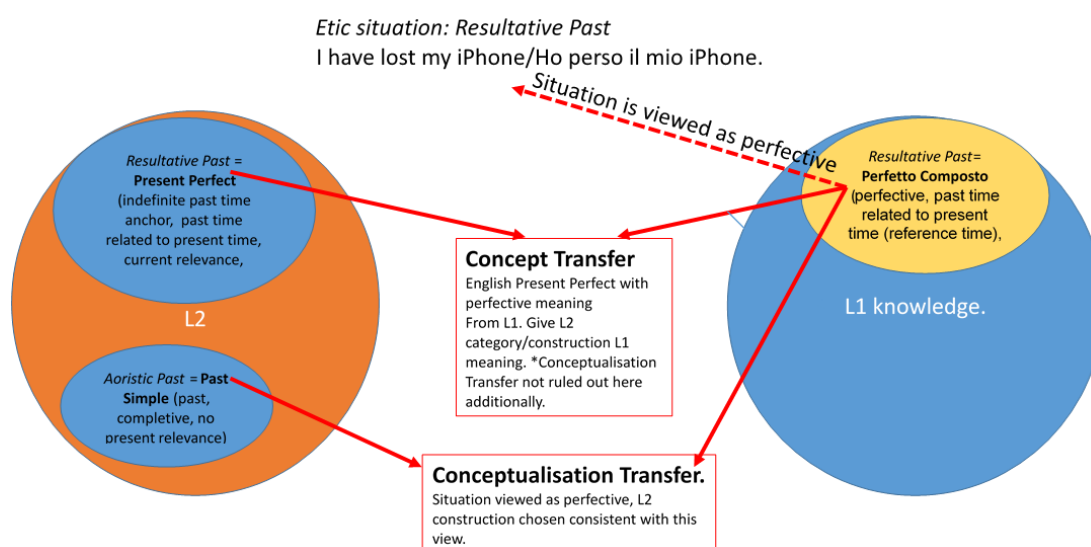


Figure 2. The processes hypothesised to result in concept and conceptualisation transfer according to this CL approach.

Figure 2 shows the knowledge held by the L1 speaker of Italian in the blue circle on the right with regard to the etic situation *resultative past*. The circle contains information regarding the form that is usually used to express this concept in Italian, the Perfetto Composto, and its core semantics. The left hand circle shows the organisation of conceptual content in L2 English for this concept, the Present Perfect, and for the tense which is often chosen by Italian speakers in this context, the Simple

Past. The core semantics are given for both. Core semantics are derived from usage and detailed fully in Chapter 3.

Concept transfer occurs where differences in category meaning between L1 and L2 impact upon L2 production. In this case, we can see that the English Present Perfect is used, but with a perfective category meaning taken from the L1 Perfetto Composto category.² As noted above, this would not be picked up as erroneous in everyday usage or even perhaps in a classroom context, but does point to the L2 speakers' incomplete assimilation of the Present Perfect Construction which could affect other areas of production.

Conceptualisation transfer occurs where L1 impacts upon the processes which form the conceptualisation which is then used to select an appropriate L2 construction. In this case, the perfective meaning of the Perfetto Composto in Italian constrains a past and finished interpretation of the event construed, neglecting the result state feature of the etic situation for expression. This results in a past and complete conceptualisation which is attached to what would be the correct L1 form for this conceptualisation, the Past Simple.

Importantly, in both scenarios, not only conceptualisation transfer, L1 impacts upon conceptualisation, as a past and finished perspective is evident in both cases. However, when it comes to concept transfer, this past and finished conceptualisation is matched to the L2 syntactic translation equivalent in L1. The Present Perfect, like the Perfetto

² There is a potential overlap between concept transfer (the transfer of conceptual category content) as defined here and semantic transfer (the transfer of form/meaning pairings). Odlin (2005) acknowledges that concept transfer always implies semantic transfer, while semantic transfer may occur without concept transfer. Therefore, distinguishing the two in practice from surface form is impossible, tests which target stored knowledge of conceptual categories are essential here in order to tease the two forms of transfer apart.

Composto, is formed using the present tense of *to have* as an auxiliary verb plus the past participle *I have lost/ Io ho perso*.

These examples show how difficult it could be to distinguish between and find evidence for these two different types of transfer, especially when they co-occur. Only by accessing the ongoing processing in the mind of the speaker while he/she makes decisions regarding tense and aspect forms, might it be possible to do so. To this end, this thesis has analysed *think aloud* reports (Chapter 4 and Results presented in Chapter 5) obtained as participants performed a task which required them to decide upon an L2 tense in a particular temporal context. The task, a cloze test (Chapter 4), was developed to target areas of conceptual difference existing between the English and Italian tense systems as highlighted through the tense and aspect analysis in Chapter 3. It was anticipated that the participant verbalisations would have the potential to reveal examples of conceptual transfer in general and also possibly within these distinguish between examples of concept and conceptualisation transfer in particular.

2.5 Conclusions and Research Questions

There is evidence to suggest that cross-linguistic difference in the grammaticalisation of certain concepts between L1 and L2 may result in learner error as a function of concept and/or conceptualisation transfer (Bylund and Jarvis 2011; Jarvis 2011). The Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis (CTH) provides for the possibility of this transfer occurring not only while the pre-verbal message is being formed, but also at the level of general cognition (Jarvis 2007). In order to access the cognitive processes that drive conceptualisation, a cognitive linguistic framework (Croft and Cruse 2004) has been adopted along with the methods of topological comparison offered through RCG

(Croft 2001). This offers a model where transfer can be explored in terms of its occurrence in different parts of the system for utterance formation: conceptual difference may be identified with regard to conceptualisation and stored conceptual content, allowing for the identification of areas vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence. In Chapter 3, which follows, a full and detailed comparison of the Italian and English tense and aspect systems which encompasses category content and conceptual structure is elaborated. This highlights the areas of conceptual difference which are targeted as part of this study. This is important, not only for the identification of areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference, but also in order to explore the idea of translational equivalence and what that means for Italian L1 speakers of English L2 when they express temporal concepts.

Based on the comparative analysis in Chapter 2 and a data collection method such as the *think aloud* report, we can access conceptualisations and concepts stored in the mind of a speaker as he/she makes decisions regarding tense choice. This will allow for the interpretation of concept and conceptualisation transfer in terms of the meanings that speakers hold of the grammatical structures which are available to them at the time of speaking. So far, studies in this area have looked at differences in language use accompanied by measurements of online processing (SOT times, eye-tracking data) (Schmiedtová *et al* 2011). This study takes another approach, looking at transfer from the perspective of what the constructions used mean to speakers in L1 and L2, and how these diverging meanings drive conceptualisation formation, construal and category formation which differ cross-linguistically, and result in distinct areas vulnerable to conceptual transfer in L2 interlanguage.

The framework and literature review outlined above, in addition to the tense and aspect analysis in Chapter 3 has motivated the following research questions:

- 1) The tense and aspect systems of English and Italian diverge in their grammaticalisation of temporal concepts. Do these point to underlying conceptual difference?
- 2) Italian L1 learners of English L2 predictably make production errors when expressing distinct aspects of temporality which are realised by the Present Perfect in English. Is this the result of transfer at a conceptual level?
- 3) Can evidence be obtained to distinguish between concept and conceptualisation transfer?

Chapter 3

An analysis of Tense and Aspect systems in English and Italian

3.0 Overview

The dual aim of the description of the tense and aspect systems in English and Italian elaborated in this chapter is to: i) identify potential areas of conceptual difference in the minds of the speakers of English and Italian which could be targeted for investigation (Chapter 4); and ii) aid the recognition of relevant conceptualisation processes in the *think aloud* reports. The description has also been instrumental in further elaborating on the role of congruence of L1/L2 forms in conceptual transfer as described by Jarvis (2000:275). According to Jarvis, the use of forms in L2 which are semantically and conceptually congruent with the L1 form used in a particular etic situation, can be indicative of conceptual transfer. The tense and aspect analysis detailed below has revealed that even close equivalents such as the Italian Perfetto Composto and English Present Perfect have differences between them which impact on tense choice in particular etic situations.

The areas of conceptual difference revealed though the analysis are used in the development of tests with the potential for revealing instances of conceptual transfer (Chapter 4). Jarvis (2011: 4) proposes that conceptual transfer may manifest as both transfer of a concept, and/or transfer of a conceptualisation, as detailed in chapter 2. According to Jarvis (2011: 4) a concept refers to the mental representation of “an object, quality, action, event, relationship, situation, sensation or any other perceivable or imaginable phenomenon for which the mind creates a mental category”, whereas, a

conceptualisation refers to the organisation of particular concepts which provide for a particular perspective on a situation (Jarvis 2011:4).

The description detailed in this chapter seeks to identify the mental representations and categories, giving rise to particular conceptualisations through the English and Italian systems which may become evident in L1 conceptual transfer. This is done through a detailed description and comparison of the grammatical constructions used in English and Italian to express temporal concepts. The construction, in accordance with RCG, is considered primary, with its core semantics (its prototypical features and meanings) driving conceptualisation and the organisation of conceptual categories in the mind of a speaker.

The core or prototypical semantics of a construction are derived from its use in context (Croft 2001:5). As an example, the English Past Simple is used when an event or situation takes place in the past and has no present relevance. Within a cognitive framework it is suggested that through a process of socialisation, the repeated exposure to linking of form, meaning and etic context, the past simple carries, in the mind of an English speaker, the semantic features *past* and *no present relevance* (See semantic map 4 and section 3.4.1 for a full description of Past Simple core semantics). Over time, as discussed in Chapter 2, these meanings become schematised, so that they may be reapplied and reused in a range of situations which are recognised by the speaker as having features which fit the meaning of the category, in this case the English Past Simple. In other words, the organisation of conceptual content reflects the speaker's stored knowledge of the etic situation to be expressed. This works in tandem with the cognitive processes which drive construal to give rise to distinct units of conceptualisation. Cross-linguistically, the etic core meanings remain constant, while emic constructions spread out to enclose different functions in their category.

The organisation of emic conceptual content in English and Italian has been represented through the development of semantic maps (Croft 2003:133). Semantic maps allow for some conclusions to be drawn with regard to conceptual variation, as they compare the constructions used to cover particular functions cross-linguistically. Therefore, they depict a speaker's language specific determined knowledge against that which is putatively universal. In this way, semantic maps are an excellent means for making cross-linguistic comparisons and have been widely used in linguistic typology (Croft 2001, 2003). The semantic maps are presented in Appendix 1 and for ease of reference on pull out laminate copies included with this thesis.

Semantic maps are constructed by mapping language specific grammatical categories onto a conceptual space. Croft (2003: 139) maintains that categories are derived from constructions. By this he means that a category, as it would be represented on a semantic map, is a cluster of functions all represented grammatically by the same construction. This category is then mapped on to the conceptual space which is universal. The conceptual space, as defined by Croft (2001:93), is "a structured representation of functional structures and their relationship to each other."

Hence, a semantic map allows for a comparison of form-function relations across languages (Croft 2003:14). In this case, the encoding of specific temporal functions in Italian and English.

The creation of a conceptual space onto which the language specific categories are mapped involves the organisation of linguistic functions according to the *Semantic Map Connectivity Hypothesis* (Croft 2003:137). This means that the functions, or nodes on the conceptual space, should: i) be arranged so that they are contiguous according to similarity in their semantic/pragmatic properties, and ii) be consistent across the languages being analysed (Croft 2006:30; Croft 2003:138).

As there is no universal agreement upon the design of semantic maps (de Haan 2004:1), for this study, a model has been developed based on that proposed by de Haan (2004) and exemplified by Croft (2006). In accordance with the Semantic Map Connectivity Hypothesis, functions have been grouped in relation to their functional proximity and enclosing boxes are used to indicate those functions within the same category (Appendix 1 Semantic Maps 1 – 6).

In order to construct the semantic maps, it was necessary to review the literature pertaining to the current expression of temporal concepts in English and Italian thereby elaborating the full meaning and use of each construction. The review detailed below is exhaustive and, while it may not be definitive, has provided a solid base upon which to build the semantic maps. Constant revision and reevaluation were important in order to ensure that functions were contiguous and consistent and that the maps do give a very good picture of the knowledge related to the constructions described in the mind of L1 speakers of English and Italian. The maps are not claimed to be unequivocal in their representation, but do provide a good heuristic for the interpretation of conceptual content in this context.

First of all, there follows below, a general review of what is meant by the terms tense and aspect and how they combine in temporal expression. Afterwards, the expression of temporal concepts in English and Italian is described, first those constructions that express present time concepts, followed by past time concepts and then past to present time concepts. Conceptual differences are highlighted and discussed; finally, the areas of conceptual divergence targeted in this study are presented and elaborated.

3.1 The Tense and Aspect Combination

The expression of temporal meanings in English and Italian is realised through their tense and aspect systems. These two systems express two distinct conceptual notions, but work together to denote complex temporal concepts. Michaelis (2006:2) claims that in the semantic analysis of a construction, the two are intimately related and one should not be considered without the other. Tense represents the grammaticalised expression of location in time, it is deictic and provides for the location of a situation on a timeline relative to the speech time. Aspect, on the other hand, affords for the expression of the internal consistency or structure of the action itself (Hackmack 2012:3, Michaelis 2006:2, Borik *et al* 2003:1; Hewson 1991:511). Consider examples (21), (22) and (23) below:

21) *I sit at the front in assembly.*

22) *I am sitting here.*

23) *I sat at the front last week.*

The difference between (21) and (23) is one of tense, Present and Past, the difference between (21) and (22) however is one of aspect; example (22) referring to an ongoing action in the present moment and example (21) referring to a habit that is relevant to the present time, but that may not be true at exactly the moment of speaking. In an analysis of the meaning of a particular construction, tense and aspect have to be considered together. Example (22), for example, could not be analysed without reference both to its tense (Present) and aspect (Progressive) because the interaction

of tense and aspect in present or past time may afford for different meaning contrasts within the system.

3.2 Tense

Comrie (1985) details two distinct tense types: absolute tense and relative tense. Absolute tenses are those that hold the present as their deictic centre or reference point for location. The absolute tenses are Present Simple, Past Simple and Future Simple and these hold as part of their meaning an event located either before (Past), after (Future) or contemporaneous with (Present) the present moment. Relative tenses, such as the Past Perfect and Future Perfect, however, do not have the present as their deictic centre; instead, there is a reference point for location of the event which is either given contextually or as part of the semantics of the tense itself (Comrie 1985:56). The contrast between absolute and relative tenses with regards to reference time is best illustrated using Richenbach's framework (Richenbach 1947).

Richenbach's framework makes use of three points in time. The speech time (S), the event time (E) and the reference time (R). The speech time refers to the point at which the tense verb is spoken or written, reference time applies to an abstract point from which the denoted event is viewed, and the event time refers to the timing of the denoted event itself. In the case of absolute tenses such as the Present Simple, Past Simple and Future Simple, E and R are simultaneous and occur posterior to (past), anterior to (future) or at the same time (present) as S.

For example, in 24 below the event time (E) and (R) are simultaneous and take place before speech time (S).

24) *I saw John* (E,R-S) (Hackmack 2012:4)

In example 24, the Past Simple *saw* is thus deictic as it places the act of *see John* (E) before the speech time (S) which is in the present. However, with regards to the relative tenses, E and R are not simultaneous as reference time and event time are separate. Consider example 5 using the English Past Perfect.

5) *I had seen John before I left.* (E-R-S)

Here, as indicated above, S is preceded by R (when I left) which is preceded by E. Thus, the Past Perfect is a relative tense, as it has as part of its meaning R, which allows for the location of E in time. In this case, the event *see John* happened at some point before the past reference point *I leave*.

3.3 Aspect

As mentioned above, grammatical aspect is used to show how the internal structure of a situation is conceived (Neimeier 2013:11). This may relate to whether an action is conceived as ongoing or bounded at the time of the event, or whether an action is repeated in time or pertinent to a past, present or future reference time, as in perfect aspect, explored below. Tenses such as the Present Perfect hold perfect aspect (defined below) which entails strong implicatures of a connection of the denoted action with another point in time (R) (Bohnmeyer 2003:2), therefore, involving the separation of event (E) and reference time (R)³. However, the principal aspectual distinction is

³ A distinction should be made between relative tense on the one hand, and perfect aspect on the other. According to Reichenbach (1947) a relative tense provides for the temporal separation of E and R. Perfect aspect, however, implies that the effects of E persist at R. Relative tenses such as the

between perfective and imperfective situations (Comrie 1985:16). Consider the following examples 26 and 27.

26) *That day I ate pasta with vegetables.* (perfective)

27) *At 2pm I was eating pasta with vegetables.* (imperfective)

Perfective situations such as 26 are viewed as a single whole; Comrie (1985:21) describes the perfective aspect as “the action pure and simple, without any additional overtones”. In 26, the action is viewed as temporally complete with no further relevance or effects.

Imperfective aspect, in contrast, allows for expression of the internal structure of a situation (Comrie 1985:24) and in contrast to the perfective aspect, does not allow for the visualisation of the end point (Bertinetto 1991:25). Indeed, in example 27 *was eating* is employed to focus on one moment (2pm) at which *I was eating*. The situation of *eating* is true both before and after that point, but we have no idea when the situation started or finished.

The perfective and imperfective aspects may also be subdivided into further aspectual subsets which may or may not be expressed cross-linguistically (Comrie 1985:25). Within the perfective aspect for example, perfect and aorist aspects may be defined. These terms are used to distinguish past events which either do (perfect) or do not (aorist) entail results with relevance at the temporal reference point (R) (Comrie 1985:12). Consider example 28.

Past Perfect may be ambiguous with regard to their holding perfect aspect. This is discussed with reference to the Past Perfect in 3.6.2.

28) *Ho mangiato tutta la torta. /I have eaten all the cake.* (The cake is now all gone). (perfect/resultative)

In example 28 the Passato Prossimo/Present Perfect *Ho mangiato/I have eaten* has perfect aspect in that the result of the action is still relevant in the present. The perfect aspect differs from other aspectual distinctions in that it does not tell us anything about the internal structure of the event. Instead, perfect aspect normally indicates a state brought about by the situation, usually an event, denoted by the verb, and relevant at the reference time (R) which may be the present denoted by the Present Perfect (28) or sometime in the past denoted by the Past Perfect (29) (Payne 1997:239; Comrie 1985:52).

29) *I had made the cake by then.* (perfect/resultative – the cake existed at that past reference time)

Aorist aspect, in contrast, refers to an event which is viewed as completed, of which the end point is evident and has no relevance at R. (30)

30) *I ran 3 miles yesterday.*

According to Comrie (1985:25), imperfect aspect can be said to include the following subdivisions: habitual, continuous and progressive. Habitual aspect (31) describes a situation which defines or is characteristic of a determined period of time (Comrie 1985:28).

31) *I used to be able to study more before I had the baby.*

In 31 the period before *having the baby* was characterised by the *ability to study more*. Continuous aspect refers to the continuity (32) or the repetition (33) (iterativity) of a determined situation in time. (Bertinetto 1991:49).

32) *For the whole time, he was looking for Sandra.*

33) *Throughout the entire meeting, she was knocking on the door.*

In 32 the *looking* has certain continuity in time (for the whole time) with the idea that the action is incomplete at the reference time, and in (33) *knocking* refers to repeated punctual event over a limited period.

Finally, progressive aspect focuses on a single instant or part of an ongoing process, whereas continuity describes an ongoing incomplete situation. Bertinetto (1991:41) defines progressive aspect as follows:

L'aspetto progressivo viene attivato ogniqualvolta il verbo indica un processo colto in un singolo istante del suo svolgimento. / *The progressive aspect is used each time the verb indicates a process viewed from the perspective of a single instant during its progression.*

Comrie (1985:40) also defines the progressive in this way; referring to the progressive as a way of expressing the 'middle' of a situation such as in (34).

(34) *Jane was crossing the road when she saw John.*

Here the progressive aspect is used to emphasise that Jane was in the middle of the activity of *crossing the road* when she saw John. In this situation *to cross the road*, which is inherently perfective, the use of progressive aspect allows us to zoom in on the situation and defocus its boundaries (Neimeier 2013:10). However, when used with an inherently imperfective situation such as *to live* (35), the use of the progressive denotes temporariness, and therefore imposes boundaries (Brisard 2013:228; Neimeier 2013:10).

35) *She is living in London at the moment.*

Comrie (1985:33) maintains that progressivity is similar to continuousness and sees progressiveness as a subset of imperfectivity as does Bertinetto (1991:41). However, neither English nor Italian encode the progressive/continuous distinction morphologically, and Bybee *et al* (1994:139) negate the idea of a clear distinction of continuousness from progressivity due to lack of indicative morphology in their data of world languages.

This chapter looks at the way that the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian are used by speakers of these languages to create the perspective that they have on a given situation. In Cognitive Linguistic terms, this ‘perspective’ is described as a *viewing arrangement* (Langacker 2008:73) and refers to the view or perspective taken on real world occurrences by the speaker, which is then decoded by the hearer. The speaker’s view is subjective (Brisard 2013:213) and expressed grammatically; while it cannot be supposed that the speaker and hearer conceptualise the situation in exactly

the same way, the speaker, by using the grammatical means available to him/her does provide significant clues to their conceptualisation of it (Niemeier 2013:6).

A complete description of each construction available in the English and Italian tense and aspect systems, drawing out the prototypical features and thus establishing the core meanings of each construction, as described above, is detailed below. This is used in the development of semantic maps which reveal how tense and aspectual means are used differently in each language to represent real world occurrences or situations, highlighting areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference (Brisard 2013:210). The analysis draws upon a cognitive linguistic framework, and in particular Radical Construction Grammar, as discussed in Chapter 2, as well as established works of reference for details regarding usage in each language.

The semantic maps have been designed according to the semantic map connectivity hypothesis as detailed above. This means that the etic concepts represented and their arrangement on the maps are consistent across the two languages analysed here, namely, English and Italian. For example in Semantic Maps 1 and 2, which show present time in English and Italian respectively, the Performative concept (illustrated in English as ***I accept your terms***) is found between the Instantaneous concept (***And he scores***) and Eternal Truth concept (***Hydrogen is the lightest element***) on both maps.

The language-specific constructions which cover the concepts are shown using different coloured boxes. Where concepts may be covered by more than one construction and therefore enter more than one category, a dashed line is drawn. Concepts which hold the prototypical features of the category, such as performative concept (Semantic Map 1 and 2) for the Present Simple, are shown nearer to the centre and highlighted, whereas less prototypical uses such as habitual concept (Semantic Maps 1 and 2) are found towards the category boundary. The boundaries are important

as they show where there is likely to be overlap in category membership cross-linguistically, and therefore where semantic and conceptual content may differ.

Concepts for investigation are highlighted in yellow on semantic maps 3 and 6. The maps show how these concepts fall into different conceptual categories cross-linguistically, so highlighting the potential for conceptual difference. As would be expected, these categories are on the respective category boundaries for each language. The knowledge of cross-linguistic conceptual difference generated through and depicted on the semantic maps was central to the analysis of the *think aloud* reports (Chapter 5) and the identification of instances of concept and conceptualisation transfer (Chapter 6).

The numbering of examples in this chapter is consecutive, and they are placed in circular brackets like this: (6), the numbers in square brackets such as: [6] where indicated, show the concept that the examples correspond to on the semantic maps. For example, example number 36 below corresponds with concept 1, performative use of the Present Simple on semantic map 1.

36) *I accept your terms.* [1]

3.4 Representation of present time temporal concepts in English and Italian

Section 3 discusses the constructions used to express present time concepts in both English and Italian. The uses of each construction are discussed and the core semantics which are drawn from them are specified. The uses and core semantics are represented on semantic maps 1 and 2. The tenses detailed in this section are: The English Present Simple and Present Progressive and the Italian Presente Semplice.

3.4.1 English Present Simple

In terms of its temporal semantics, the Reichenbach framework describes the Present Simple as $E=R=S$, this means that the event, reference and speech times are simultaneous. In fact, according to Leech (1998:5), the meaning of the English Present Simple is that the event or state described has a basic connection with the present speech time. Indeed, he expresses this as “the state or event has psychological being at the present moment”, and does not exclude the possibility of the event or state temporally spanning the past and on in to the future (Leech 1998:5). In this sense, the Present Simple tense could be said to hold an imperfective meaning (Comrie 1976:72). However, an imperfective reading does not fit well with uses such as (36) and (37) for performative situations and instantaneous use. In fact, the Present Simple Tense can be used to express events which are simultaneous with the present moment (Leech 1998:6) and viewed as a complete whole (Williams 2002:1326) The instantaneous use of the Present Simple is seen in its performative use (36) and sports commentaries (37).

36) *I accept your terms.* [1]

37) *And he scores!* [2]

Example 37 denotes an event which is more or less simultaneous with the present; it is likely that at the moment of speaking, the event has just concluded and as such is seen as completed. In contrast, example 36 expresses a formal acceptance; this indicates the speaker’s state of being and intention.

As a result, the Present Simple has been associated with completive meaning (Hewson 1991:515); Hewson and Bubenik (1997:12) refer to the Present Simple as a Performative tense which is by implication completive. This proposition has at its base the use of the English Present Simple in its performative and instantaneous function (36) and (37). In expressing a performance, the Present Simple refers to the “complete performance of all phases of an event.” (Hewson 1991:516). The event is completed within the time frame of the exact moment of speaking. In example 36, this means that the act of accepting is concluded contemporaneously to the utterance. Langacker (2002:89) claims that the true present indicates “that a full instantiation of the profiled process occurs and precisely coincides with the time of speaking.” He also maintains that the use of the Present Simple for unbounded situations such as examples (38) and (39), its unrestrictive use (Leech 1998:5), represents an extension of its true meaning. The notion of the Present Simple as holding a completive meaning also allows for the extension of this tense to cover state (38) (Hewson 1991:516) and habit (39) (Hirtle 2007:94) meanings. This is possible by virtue of the fact that in Hirtle (2007:89) states are monophasal, this means that in contrast to an activity a state “involves no change, cannot have different phases, cannot be seen as incomplete”(Hirtle 2007:94), a view shared by Langacker (2002:89). Consequently, states are phasally complete from their first instant and the Present Simple as a performative tense functions to single out and describe that complete phase which occurs at the moment of speaking (Langacker 2002:89). While they are phasally complete, such states as (38) are temporally incomplete and it is for this reason that they may not be referred to as perfective according to Hewson (1997:12) as perfective aspect refers to a situation that is temporally complete.

38) *I like pasta.* [3]

As an example, the fact that *I like pasta* was true in the past, is true now, and will be true also five minutes from now; however, the choice of Present Simple to describe this situation acts to focus on the phase of the state which is true at the moment of speaking and therefore pertinent at the present moment.

The possibility of using the Present Simple to refer to states extends itself logically to the use of the present to express eternal truths such as those found in scientific discussions. Consider example 39:

39) *Hydrogen is the lightest element.* [4]

Here again the use of the present is temporally unrestricted. The fact that hydrogen is the lightest element is universally acknowledged to be true not only now, but prior to the present moment and, unless the unlikely event of a lighter element being discovered occurs, it will remain true in the future.

This use of the present to express states true over time may also be seen in the habitual use of the Present Simple. Habitual activities are those that repeat over time and characterise the period being discussed. In example 40 the period includes the past, present and future.

40) *She walks to work.* [5]

As mentioned above, Hirtle (2007:94) explains the use of the Present Simple for habits in terms of its performative meaning. He maintains that the habit *per se* is “not the

activity, but the set of conditions required for the activity to happen; the subject's tendency or propensity to realise it" (Hirtle 2007:94). The habit, therefore, is monophasal and stative. The Present Simple represents the phasally complete *state* at the moment of speaking.

Similarly, Michaelis proposes that the English Present Simple is aspectually sensitive⁴ to states and that generic sentences like (40) are in fact state sentences as a result of coercion mechanisms. Coercion refers to the semantic requirements of the tense overriding the lexical semantics of the verb with which it is united, causing a shift in meaning (Michaelis 2006:3). In the case of (40) the present tense as a state selector has to find a state within the tenseless and aspectually dynamic proposition of *walk to work*. As an activity *walk to work* is metaphasal (Hirtle 2007:87) and contains different phases or subevents (Michaelis 2006:14) and according to Michaelis (2006:14) the present tense selects the period of stasis or REST between these subevents, which corresponds with the present moment. Therefore, when denoting a habit, the Present Simple selects the period of stasis which exists between the subevents which make up cycling to work and corresponds with the moment of speaking.

Thus, it seems that the English Present Simple as a stativising construction is very specific in requiring that the denoted present event temporally coincide exactly with the speech time. This is not the case in Italian, where the Presente Semplice is temporally imperfective, used as it is to cover functions which span past, present and future time from the deictic centre (See section 3.4.3 below).

While the views of Michaelis and Hirtle diverge regarding the way in which the Present Simple coerces a stative reading of the proposition in (40), with Hirtle

⁴ Aspectual sensitivity, which means that a tense selects for a specific aspectual class, is most readily evident in Romance languages such as Italian where past tenses contrast perfective and imperfective aspect. (Michaelis 2006:3). Indeed, in Italian the Imperfetto (section 4.4 below) describes past states and habits, while the Perfetto Composto (section 5.5 below) is used for completed past events.

interpreting the habit as monophasal and stative *per se* and Michaelis claiming that it is the Present Simple which coerces this meaning, they both agree on the Present Simple representing a state, which in this case holds at the moment of speaking.

The English Present Simple, while functioning to describe some temporally imperfective concepts such as permanent states, truths and habits, does not cover dynamic situations which are temporally extended. For these functions the Present Progressive is needed. Moreover, as described above, states, truths and habits may be considered monophasal (Hirtle 2007:88; Langacker 2002:89), and therefore phasally complete from the first instant even if they are temporally extended.

In terms of their representation on the semantic maps, the performative concept (36) is found in the centre of the category as it represents a monophasal event which concludes with the exact moment of speaking: it is prototypical of the category; similarly, the instantaneous use (37) is found above it. The features of these two etic situations are those which correspond most with the meaning of the Present Simple as described above. As a stativising construction, the English Present Simple is also used to describe the permanent state concept (38) *I like pasta*. States are monophasal and as such the English Present Simple refers to the fact that *liking pasta* is true also at the moment of speaking. This is also true of the eternal truths concept (39). Along with the habitual use concept (40) these occur towards the edge of the category as the semantics of these situations have to be coerced into a stative reading by the use of the Present Simple. Although *to walk* is dynamic, it is either ascribed a state meaning by virtue of its habitual use (Hirtle 1991:151) which then fits the completive nature of the Present Simple or coerced into a stative meaning through the use of the Present Simple in this context (Michaelis 2006:14). In the final analysis, both interpretations lead to the same conclusion; that the English Present Simple refers to a complete instantiation

of an event at the moment of speaking, and when that is not evident, it coerces a stative reading of the situation, finding a complete phase of the described process at the moment of speaking.

Based on the literature with regard to the meaning and use of the English Present Simple, the core semantics of the English Present Simple are defined as:

present – has psychological being at the present moment (Leech 1998:5)

completive – refers to the complete performance of all phases of an event within the moment of speaking. (Hewson 1991:515).

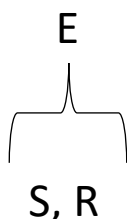
stativising – coerces a monophasal state meaning and finds the subpart of the state which holds at the exact moment of speaking (Michaelis 2006:14)

The English Present Simple may be used to express historic past events and also sure future events (Leech 1998:10). However, for the purposes of this study the uses of the present tense with reference to present time (which may include within its span past and future) only have been described. The historic present and present for future are not treated as they are outside the scope of the study. A full representation of the English Present Simple as used to refer to present time is given on semantic map 1.

3.4.2 The English Present Progressive

The progressive nature of temporally extended dynamic situations in the present, such as 6- 16 on Semantic Map 1, must be signalled in English through the use of the Present Progressive form. In English, progressive aspect is indicated by the *-ing* form of the verb, in combination with the verb *to be*. The verb *to be* is inflected for location in

time. Reichenbach (1947:290) describes tenses with progressive aspect as extended tenses in reference to their use to denote an ongoing event or situation. The Present Progressive is represented as:



so that the event (E) covers a stretch of time which includes S and R.

According to Leech (1998:19) the progressive aspect indicates that an action is *ongoing*, that this *duration is limited* and therefore *temporary* and that the happening might not *be complete* at reference time. Therefore, the Present Progressive tolerates incompleteness at speech time, where the Present Simple does not, as discussed above. It is this dichotomy of completeness vs. incompleteness which provides for the obligatory use of the Present Progressive for temporally extended dynamic situations in the present.

This is consistent with the view of Langacker (2008) who interprets the progressive aspect as an immediate viewing frame, which focusses on the action in progress, excluding endpoints. Consistently, according to Michaelis (2006:17), the progressive while denoting dynamic events, is a stativiser which allows the speaker to focus in on a particular instant of the dynamic event contemporaneous to reference time. This may be, for example, the period between two swallows of wine as in 41. Michaelis describes the progressive as an ‘intermediate state’ selector which picks out the period of stasis between two instantiations of the ongoing activity.

41) *She was drinking wine, when I walked in.*

The concepts covered by the English Present Progressive may be roughly divided into two sets. There are those uses in which the event is more or less simultaneous with the moment of speaking (42 -45),

42) *I'm tasting the soup.* [6]

43) *I'm thinking about emigrating.* [7]

44) *She's knocking on the door.* [8]

45) *Giulio is sleeping.* [9]

and those in which the present progressive provides more of a temporal frame describing a situation which, while relevant at the present moment, holds also in the recent past and possibly close future (46 -52)

46) *He's feeling unwell.* [10]

47) *At the moment the builders are working hard because they want to finish the flats before summer.* [11]

48) *I'm taking Spanish lessons at the moment.* [12]

49) *At 1.30pm he's usually eating lunch.* [13]

50) *She's always dropping things.* [14]

51) *House prices are going up.* [15]

52) *The weather is changing.* [16]

The close relation of the events in examples 42 – 45 with the moment of speaking and their ongoing, incomplete and temporary nature make them prototypical of the

category and as such, they are placed together and towards the centre of the right hand column on semantic map 1.

Examples 42 and 43 give the use of the Present Progressive as it refers to active perception (42) and active cognition (43); whereas, example 44 describes the iteration of a single punctual event in the present moment. This is a function of the combination of progressive aspect with verbs of a semelfactive nature (Leech 1998:23). These situations are punctual and as such the progressive aspect cannot increase their duration, only coerce the perception of a series of events. In 45 a situation which is temporary and true at the time of speaking is described. The fact that the baby is sleeping has duration in time, but is temporary in that he is expected to wake up shortly. In contrast, as mentioned above, examples 46 – 52 denote situations of a longer duration than 42-45. Perhaps it could be said that they indicate a state of affairs that is true at the moment, with varying degrees of duration flowing back into the past and forward into the future. In contrast to 45, which denotes an activity of a relatively short duration, example 46 denotes a temporary state, which while true at the moment of speaking was most likely true before and will be true for a few days after. The use of the progressive aspect coerces the temporary nature of the situation and our expectations for a speedy recovery.

In example 47, a persistent or continuous activity is described, which could be said to characterise the current period. Currently, the builders are working hard, because they have a deadline. This is even more so for example 48, which denotes a temporary habit. Here the idea of limited duration/temporariness is applied not to the individual iterations of the event, but to the entire series (Leech 1998:32). The temporariness of the situation is indicated not only by the use of the progressive, but also by the

adverbial expression *at the moment*. In contrast, the use of the Present Tense here *I take Spanish lessons* would suggest a more permanent state of affairs.

The notion of a repetition of an event over time is also evident in example 49 (repetition of events of limited duration); however, here in contrast to example 48 (temporary habit over a limited period) the idea of limited duration refers to the event and not to the series as a whole (Leech 1998:32). In 50 (sporadic repetition over time), however, the progressive is used to indicate the repetition of an event over time which is sporadic. Unlike examples 48 and 49 this situation does not have an implication of occurrence at predetermined times (Palmer 1974:69).

Finally, examples 51 and 52, while indicating situations which hold over the past, present and future, also denote the approach to a change in state. Number 51 (change in state/situation) describes the transition period as house prices become more expensive. It does not include the actual change itself (Leech 1998:23). Number 52 (ongoing process) in contrast, is an example of an ongoing process which will eventually lead to a change. In this case also the change in state is not included.

In general, the English Present Progressive is used to express temporally extended dynamic situations of limited duration which are incomplete at the moment of speaking. Through its action as a stativisor, it allows for the speaker to encode the focus upon a particular instance of the ongoing activity in the present (Michaelis 2006:17). This is compatible with the CG view that the progressive serves to zoom in on the middle phase of a process, defocusing its boundaries (Neimeier 2013:14).

Those concepts in which the event described overlaps exactly with the moment of speaking, are core and found close to the centre of the category, as detailed above. Where the incomplete and stativising nature of the Present Progressive allow for the

expression of concepts with a wider temporal scope (15/16), such concepts are found closer to the category boundaries.

The review of the literature has revealed the following core semantics of the English Present Progressive.

present – has psychological being at the present moment (Leech 1998:5)

incomplete – the process may not be complete at reference time (Leech 1998:19)

stativizing – the progressive acts as an intermediate state selector allowing for the focus on a particular instance of the event at speech time. (Michaelis 2006:17)

limited duration – the process has duration in time, but that is limited and therefore temporary (Leech 1998:19)

A full representation of the Present Continuous as it refers to the expression of present time in English is found on semantic map 1.

3.4.3 Italian Presente Semplice

According to Bertinetto (1991: 62-68) the Italian Presente Semplice holds three meanings which allow for its use in the large number of situations in connection with the present moment. Firstly, it reflects the temporal proximity of the speech time and event time; secondly, it allows for the possible overlap of the speech and event time

and thirdly, it has a non-specific (generic) meaning in terms of an extended present. (Bertinetto 1991 62 – 68). According to the Reichenbach framework, for the *Presente Semplice*, the event, reference and speech time coincide: $E=R=S$ (Bonomi 2014), much like the English Present Simple.

However, it is the extended present meaning of the *Presente Semplice*, encompassing time frames that flow back into the past and on into the future from speech time that leads Bertinetto to describe it as essentially imperfective (Bertinetto 1991:50).

In its ability to reflect the temporal proximity of the event and speech time in the present and their possible overlap, the *Presente Semplice*, like the English Present Simple is used to for instantaneous uses (52) and in a performative function (53). However, unlike its English counterpart, the Italian *Presente Semplice*, because of its imperfective aspect allowing for focus in the internal structure of an ongoing situation, may be used for dynamic events which are ongoing at the moment of speaking (54)⁵. It may also be used for active perception (55), active cognition (56) temporary states (57) and for a persistent or continuous activity (58) with reference at the present time. These uses of the *Presente Semplice* would seem prototypical as they fit most readily the core meaning of the construction, that the speech time and event time overlap, and as such they are found near to the centre of the category *Presente Semplice* category on semantic map 2.

52) *Inzaghi dribbla sulla destra, crossa al centro...e segna! / Inzaghi dribbles down the right, crosses to the centreand scores! [2]*

53) *Accetto / I accept. [1]*

54) *In questo momento studio/sto studiando / I am studying at the moment. [9]*

⁵ In English the Present Progressive would be necessary here, as described above.

55) *Odoro/sto odorando le rose/ I am smelling the roses.* [6]

56) *Penso/sto pensando a mia cognata/ I am thinking about my sister-in-law.*

[7]

57) *Mi fa male la schiena. / My back is aching/ My back aches.* [10]

58) *In questo momento lavorano/ stanno lavorando sodo in modo di finire il lavoro. / At the moment, they are working hard to finish the job.* [11]

The Italian Presente Semplice, like the English Present Simple, also has a number of temporally unrestricted uses. These are explained by Bertinetto (1991:63) in terms of an extended present:

In molti casi il presente è usato in accezione temporale più o meno generica. Si può avere ad es. una sorta di presente <esteso> che include anche il momento dell'enunciazione./In many cases the present is used with a more or less generic meaning. One can find, for example a type of 'extended' present which includes the speech time (Bertinetto (1991:63).

These extended present concepts fall towards the Presente Semplice category boundaries as the event and speech time do not necessarily co-occur (Semantic Map 2). These include, not only eternal truths (59), but also permanent states (60) and habits with focus either on the series of events (61) or the habitual repetition of a single durative (62) or punctual (63) event or its sporadic repetition (64), not only with generic meanings, but also with past-present meanings for states (65) and events (66).

59) *L' acqua bolle a 100 gradi. / Water boils at 100 degrees.* [4]

- 60) *Mi piace la pizza./I like pizza.* [3]
- 61) *Prendo il treno ogni giorno. /I take the train everyday.*[5]
- 62) *Alle 1400 al solito il bimbo dorme. /The baby is usually sleeping at 1400.*
[13]
- 63) *Bussa alla porta. / She's knocking on the door.* [8]
- 64) *Rompe sempre tutto. / She is always breaking things.* [14]
- 65) *Lo conosco da anni. / I have known him for years.* [17]
- 66) *Ti osservo da ore. / I have watched you for hours.* [18]
- 67) *Le donne di qui portano delle gonne lungissime da sempre/ The women from around here have always worn long skirts.*[19]
- 68) *Arrivo proprio ora; mi vuoi speigare cosa è successo?/ I have just arrived; do you want to tell me what has happened?* [20]

As a result of the extended meaning of the Presente Semplice as described above, it may be used to express states and events which occur both before (past - present meanings), and after the speech time (future meanings). (65) (66) (67) and (68) exemplify the former; however, the latter such as, *Partiamo domani/We are leaving tomorrow* will not be treated as they fall outside the scope of this study. As regards the use of the Presente Semplice to express past-present time, it may be used for a habit leading up to the present (67) and for the transformative recent past (68).

It may also be used for temporary situations (69), habits (70) and activities (71) which continue up to the time of speech and in addition for an ongoing activity, incomplete at the speech time (72) and current, but temporary habit (73).

69) *Dormo dalla zia da un po' / I have been sleeping at my Aunt's for a while.*

[23]

70) *Sono un paio di settimane che mangio male. / I've been eating badly for a couple of weeks.* [24]

71) *Buttano giù i palazzi di questa zona da quando hanno fatto le verifiche di agibilità. / They have been pulling down the blocks of flats in this area since they did the safety checks.* [25]

72) *Chi mi mangia la colazione. / Who has been eating my breakfast?* [26]

73) *Per ora faccio lezioni di spagnolo. / I am taking Spanish lessons at the moment.* [12]

As is evident above, the *Presente Semplice* is used for functions which are temporally extended including the past, present and future, and may also be used for events which are ongoing at the moment of speaking (54). Indeed, Bertinetto (1991:72) notes that the imperfective uses of the *Presente Semplice* are by far the most frequent. It is for this reason that he describes it as intrinsically imperfective.

The review of the literature has revealed the core semantics of the Italian *Presente Semplice* as:

present - temporal proximity of event time and speech time (Bertinetto 1991 62 – 68).

imperfective –may be used for temporally imperfective situations. (Bertinetto 1991 62 – 68)

close to but not necessarily simultaneous with speech time - allows for overlap with speech time, though this is not essential (Bertinetto 1991 62 – 68).

A full representation of the Presente Semplice as it refers to present time in Italian is found on semantic map 2.

3.4.4 Perifrasi Progressiva

On the semantic map showing the organisation of temporal concepts according to the Italian Tense and Aspect system, it is interesting to note the concepts to the right of the map in the red dashed box. These concepts may be covered using the Perifrasi Progressiva in Italian. Unlike the English Progressive form, which is obligatory for certain functions, the Italian Perifrasi Progressiva is used as a possible and marked alternative when a speaker wishes to emphasise progressive aspect within an imperfective situation, this is possible both in the present and past.

The perifrasi progressiva is chosen in Italian when a speaker wishes to focus on a specific part of an ongoing imperfective situation. Therefore, it is a possible substitute for the Presente Semplice or Imperfetto. The Italian perifrasi progressiva has two principal characteristics: i) the existence of a “momento di focalizzazione”/ instant of focus, in the middle of the process or a brief point at which we can focus on the action; and ii) that the situation may continue after this “momento di focalizzazione” (Bertinetto 1991:42). The perifrasi progressiva is not compatible with state verbs (Liffredo 2012: 255; Bertinetto 1991:132). However, it is compatible with verbs that are inherently dynamic or which acquire dynamism through alternative uses such as *pensare* (opinion – to think, believe) as a cognitive mental process versus *pensare* (active perception – to think, ponder) as a behavioural process (Halliday 1994: 112-119, 139) or with the use of temporal adverbs which induce progression or gradual

change of state such as *sempre di più/increasingly or more and more* (Liffredo 2012:256) (74).

(74) *Vivere su quest'isola mi sta piacendo sempre di più/ I like living on this Island more and more.*

The perifrasi progressiva is often used for a background situation/ongoing activity which is interrupted by a main event (75). This is because the progressive aspect allows for a 'point of observation' inside the process (Bertinetto 1991:42), this is the point at which the process is interrupted.

75) *Giuseppe stava dormendo bello tranquillo nel suo letto, quando scoppiò un tuono formidabile./ Giuseppe was sleeping comfortably in his bed, when there was a huge clap of thunder.*

The choice of the perifrasi progressiva over the Presente or the Imperfetto is to emphasise this "momento di focalizzazione" and possibly change the reading of the proposition. Compare (76) and (77):

76) *Ci vai alla festa di Anto? Penso di andarci./ Are you going to Anto's party? I think so.*

77) *Ci vai alla festa di Anto? Sto pensando di andarci. Are you going to Anto's party? I'm thinking about it.*

In 76 the speaker has decided to go to the party and, in her opinion, she will be able to attend. In 77, the speaker is still considering going, has not made up his/her mind. In 77, we catch the speaker in the middle of their reflections about attending the party. The distinction once again is made between a mental process and behavioural process, where the behavioural process (77) accepts the *perifrasi progressiva*.

However, this substitution is not always possible, when the focus is not on a specific moment of the dynamic process for example (78).

78) *Mentre sua moglie partoriva, Gigi fumava nervosamente. /While his wife gave birth, Gigi smoked nervously.*

In 78 the Imperfetto is used as the focus is on the internal structure of the event of *Gigi smoking* which took place at the same time as his *wife was giving birth*. The focus is on the simultaneousness of these two events (Bertinetto 1991:50) not on a single instant of the former.

The use of the *perifrasi progressiva* is becoming more and more widespread according to Cortelazzo (2012:1). This is reflected in the fact that: i) the number of forms of *stare* that are used in the *perifrasi* have increased; ii) the type of verbs which accept the *perifrasi progressiva* are more numerous; and iii) there is a growing preference for use of the *perifrasi progressiva* compared to the simple forms.

Points ii) and iii) are perhaps exemplified in the increase in use of the *perifrasi progressiva* for transformations (concepts 79 ongoing process and 80 change in

state/situation) (See semantic map 2). Cortelazzo (2012:4) sees this increase in usage as a distinct change which has taken place since the Second World War.

79) *Il tempo sta cambiando. /The weather is changing.* [16]

80) *I prezzi immobiliari stanno aumentando/ House prices are going up.* [15]

As noted above, the *perifrasi progressiva* is a marked alternative to the *Presente Semplice* when particular semantic conditions are fulfilled and a speaker wishes to focus upon a particular part of an ongoing imperfective situation. The range of the *perifrasi progressiva* in its use as regards present time is shown in a red dashed box on semantic map 2 and for past time in a red dashed box on semantic map 5.

3.4.5 Points of Comparison in the representation of present time in English and Italian

The core semantics of the English Present Simple are described as: *present, with reference at the present time, completive, stativising*, whereas the core semantics of the Italian *Presente Semplice* are described as: *present, close to not necessarily simultaneous with speech time, imperfective*.

Perhaps the most important contrast is that of the temporally completive meaning of the English Present compared to the temporally imperfective meaning of the Italian *Presente Semplice*. Indeed, while the English Present as a performative tense with completive aspect (Hewson and Bubenik 1997:12) does not allow for the expression of dynamic events which reach away from the speech time back into the past and

forward in to the future, the Italian Presente Semplice does. The Italian Presente Semplice may also be used to cover functions which start in the past and continue on into the present time, functions which are not included in those covered by the English Present Simple. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the English Present Simple is unusual in requiring a high level of simultaneity between speech and situation time compared to other languages (Brisard 2013:220; Langacker 1991:250; Cooper 1986:30) such as Italian. In fact, in order to represent imperfective situations and events which have past and present relevance, whether dynamic or stative, an English speaker has available constructions which hold progressive and perfect aspect such as the Present Progressive, Present Perfect and Present Perfect Progressive. This is evident in semantic maps 1 and 2 which show the conceptual categories for present time representation in English and Italian. A comparison of the two maps immediately reveals the vast extension of the Italian Presente Semplice compared to the English Present Simple. What an Italian speaker may accomplish with one tense, the Presente Semplice, an English speaker can only manage with four: Present Simple, Present Progressive, Present Perfect and Present Perfect Progressive.

It is these differences, and particularly those which occur at construction category boundaries, which are drawn upon in the identification of target areas of conceptual difference in this study. Consider for example the concept state up to the present *I have known him for years*. Where in Italian the Presente Semplice is used, the English system uses the Present Perfect, as the core semantics of these two constructions are different, they allow for different extensions of usage and competing conceptualisations of the same event. This is, therefore, a concept which may be susceptible to L1 conceptual transfer, in particular, its subset conceptualisation transfer.

3.5 Representation of past time in English and Italian Tense Systems – absolute tenses

Section 3 details the English Past Simple, English Past Progressive, Italian Passato Semplice and Italian Imperfetto as well as their points of comparison.

3.5.1 English Past Simple Tense

The English Past Simple describes situations which are seen as single, complete happenings with a definite temporal anchor in the past (Leech 1998:43). With regard to its temporal semantics, according to the Reichenbach framework, event (E) and reference (R) time are simultaneous and occur prior to speech time (S): E, R – S. Hewson (2012:5) maintains that the Past Simple is an unmarked performative tense, like the Present Simple; however, unlike the Present Simple the Past Simple makes no distinction between event and state meanings (Michaelis 2006:13, Leech 1998:13). Examples 81 and 82 below contrast state (81) and event (82) meanings which are expressed using the Past Simple which like the Present Simple is a performative tense with completive meaning. In each case, the Past Simple coerces a phasally complete reading of the activity or state as a single instance at the past reference time. Example 82 *I went to school last week*, might be considered primary and a prototypical use of the Past Simple, for events which are seen as complete and linked to a specific moment in the past, as such it is found towards the centre of the Past Simple category in semantic map 4. In contrast, for 81 the temporally imperfective nature of the concept means that a perfective reading is coerced through the Past Simple construction used to cover it.

81) *I believed him.* [31]

82) *I went to school last week.* [28]

The Past Simple may also be used to describe simultaneous past events (83) and also sequential events (84).

83) *As she walked, she thought about her lover.* [34]

84) *She addressed and sealed the envelope.* [30]

Example 83 describes two events which are durative and simultaneous, but complete and with no current relevance. In contrast, example 84 refers to two telic events, and as a consequence, naturally seem to indicate that one follows the other (Leech 1998:14). In terms of the lexical aspect of the verbs in examples (83) and (84), it is evident that the English Past Simple neutralises the durative/punctual distinction between *think about* for example in (83) and *seal* in (84).

Finally, the Past Simple may be used to describe a past habit as in *sleep* in example (85) and a situation which had some duration and was repeated in the past as in *teach at the University* in (86).

85) *As a baby he slept from 3 – 4pm every day.* [32]

86) *When I lived in Malta, I occasionally taught at the University.* [33]

Both sentences describe iterative, past, durative events. In contrast to example 86, however, example 85 describes a situation which characterised the entire period of being a baby and as such is habitual where 86 is not, as is evident through the use of the adverb *occasionally*. Both situations are temporally “imperfect” in terms of their durativity, iterativity and time spanning nature; however, the Past Simple coerces a perfective reading through its semantics denoting past and complete actions or events which characterise a period of time in the past which is now complete. These concepts, for which the Past Simple has to coerce a perfective reading, are found towards the

category boundary, at the bottom close to other imperfective concepts, which are (as detailed below) covered by the English Past Progressive.

There are four further functions covered by the English Past Simple (87 - 90) below. All four are temporally distant to speech time, three have narrative functions (88 – 90) and one refers to the remote past (87). The English tense and aspect system does not distinguish past and remote past meanings, unlike other European languages such as Italian and French. Neither does it distinguish the different narrative functions detailed below (88 – 90). 88 is an example of an impersonal narrative where the speaker is not part of the story; in contrast, in 89 the speaker is a protagonist in the narrative. 90, denotes the freeze frame effect, an impossible distinction in English, where imperfective aspect is used in languages such as Italian to slow the action (See section 3.5.4). In English, narrative and remote past meanings are covered by the past and no present relevance meanings of the Past Simple.

87) *The Second World War started in 1989.* (Remote Past) [29]

88) *That day, Ivan left at 5pm.* (Narrative 1. Impersonal narrative) [37]

89) *In 1985 it snowed and I went skiing.* (Narrative 2. Story with personal relevance) [36]

90) *One day he decided to avenge himself and so at a certain point he went down into the underground.* (Narrative 3. Imperfective actions, in Italian the use of the Imperfetto functions to slow down action.) [35]

These concepts, while temporally remote, are prototypical in featuring a past and finished event; as such they are found nearer to the prototypical concept, but closer to

the category boundary than other concepts such as past state for example which is temporally ‘imperfect’. (Semantic Map 4).

The English Past Simple, a performative tense, neutralises event/state meanings and perfective/imperfective aspect. This seems to result in some tension between the core semantics of the Past Simple tense as described by Leech: *single, complete happenings with a definite temporal anchor in the past* (Leech 1998:43) and its pragmatic use. The core semantics of the Past Simple fit more comfortably with perfective aspect (Comrie 1976:72) and are evident in its prototypical use in (82) found in the centre of the category; nevertheless, in English the Past Simple is used to cover functions which are temporally imperfective such as examples 81, 85 and 86. However, this may be explained in terms of the Past Simple as a performative tense with completive aspect (Hewson 1991:513). As such, when used to describe past states, the Past Simple selects for description the state as complete at the reference time.

The core semantics of the Past Simple are therefore described as:

past - temporal anchor in the past (Leech 1998:43)

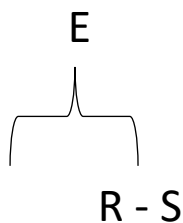
completive - invokes a reading of a state/process as phasally complete at the past reference time (Hewson 1991:513).

no present relevance - denoted event has no relevance at speech time. (Leech 1998:43)

A full representation of the English Past Simple as it is used to express past time is found on semantic map 4.

3.5.2 English Past Progressive

As detailed above, the English tense and aspect system does not distinguish event/state meanings or perfective/imperfective aspect in the past. However, it does have a means of expressing a situation which is perceived as ongoing and incomplete at a past reference time. This is possible through the English Past Progressive. The temporal semantic representation of this tense according to the Reichenbach framework is:



where (E) is extended at the past reference time (R). (Reichenbach 1947)

In terms of its semantics, the Past Progressive tense combines the aspectual meanings of the progressive, as detailed above, with a **past** time location of the event. Consequently, the Past Progressive is used when a situation is perceived as *ongoing* and *incomplete* in the past. Consider example 91 below:

91) *The baby was crying at 2am, I heard him.* [38]

Here the Past Progressive describes the durative and incomplete nature of the *crying*. The event has duration because we imply that the crying started before 2am and continued after, but we do not know for how long, so the action is, therefore, incomplete. The time adverbial 2am specifies the reference time and this allows the speaker to focus on that particular moment in the ongoing situation (Michaelis 2006:17).

In fact, as stativising constructions, the Progressive forms, and particularly the Past Progressive, are often used narratively to provide background information regarding simultaneous events surrounding a main event. They allow for the setting of a temporal frame against which the main action is set (Leech 1998:22). In example 92, the Past Progressive is used to describe those actions in progress when the gunshot was heard:

92) *The birds were singing, people were out walking in the park when a gunshot ripped through the air.* [40]

By extension, the Past Progressive may be used to describe two simultaneous and ongoing past situations such as in example 93:

93) *Mark was working in the garden while his wife Pam was cooking the dinner.* [39]

The use of a progressive form allows for the ongoing and simultaneous nature of these two situations. Nothing is known about when each situation started or finished and as such they are seen as incomplete.

On the semantic maps, concepts covered by the Past Progressive are found in a box under the Past Simple category. They occur near to the category boundary where the temporally imperfective concepts covered by the Past Simple are found (semantic map 4). Concept 38 (example 91 above), the incomplete, ongoing dynamic situation in the past might be considered prototypical of this category as it most closely fits the semantics of the Past Progressive construction.

The following core semantics have emerged from the literature on the Past Progressive:

past – the action takes place in the past (Leech 1998: 51)

incomplete – the process may not be complete at reference time (Leech 1998:19)

stativizing – the progressive acts as an intermediate state selector allowing for the focus on a particular instance of the event at speech time. (Michaelis 2006:17)

limited duration – the process has duration in time, but that is limited and therefore temporary (Leech 1998:19)

3.5.3 Italian Perfetto Semplice

The Perfetto Semplice denotes events which occur prior to the speech time and these events do not need to be temporally distant from the present moment; what is important is that this tense is used to denote situations which are perceived as having no relevance at speech time. For these reasons it is a construction which is ideally suited to narrative and remote past events as seen above. Using the Reichenbach framework, the Perfetto Semplice is represented in the same way as the English Past Simple E, R – S. Event and reference time are simultaneous and occur prior to speech time (S) (Bonomi 2014). The Perfetto Semplice is essentially perfective in that it describes an event which is seen as finished, has no duration in time, and importantly, focus is placed on its end point. Bertinetto (1991:96/97):

La somma dei due tratti di *perfettività* (da intendersi in senso <aoristico>) e di deitticità propri del perfetto semplice, produce come conseguenza un'implicazione pragmatica di conclusione, cioè di non-prosecuzione del processo./*The combination of aoristic perfectivity and deicticity in the Perfetto Semplice produces a pragmatic implication of conclusion, that being a non-ongoing nature of the process.*

The Perfetto Semplice, therefore, is often used for events which took place in the remote past (Bertinetto and Squartrini (1996:416) (94). For this reason it is sometimes referred to as the Passato Remoto/Remote Past.

94) *La seconda guerra mondiale scoppiò nel 1939/ The Second World War broke out in 1939. [29]*

Given its underlying idea of remoteness from speech time, thus distancing the speaker from the event being described, the Perfetto Semplice is also used for impersonal narrative as in 95:

95) *Ivan partì alle 5 quel giorno. / Ivan left at 5 that day. [37]*

The Perfetto Semplice is also available to an Italian speaker for the following functions: past and completed action (96); narrative 2 (story telling with personal relevance) (97); and sequence of past events (98). The uses detailed in 96, 97 and 98 may also be covered by the Perfetto Composto, the meaning of which is undergoing a

change in modern Italian. This will be addressed in the section pertaining to the Perfetto Composto and is also indicated on semantic map 2.

96) *Uscii alle 8 ieri / I went out at 8 last night.* [28]

97) *Nel 1985 nevicò molto ed io sono andato a sciare./In 1985 it snowed a lot and I went skiing.* [36]

98) *Quando caddi, Marco fece le scale insieme a lui. /After I fell, Marco helped me up the stairs.* [30]

The Perfetto Semplice may be used here as the events described are anterior to speech time and complete. The core semantics which have been derived from the literature are:

past - denotes an event which took place in the past. (Bertinetto1991:96/97)

complete - the action is over (Bertinetto1991:96/97)

non-durative – the process denoted is not temporally ongoing (Bertinetto1991:96/97)

no present relevance - denotes remoteness from speech time. (Bertinetto and Squartrini (1996:416)

The concepts covered by the Perfetto Semplice are found inside the purple box on semantic map 5. The prototypical member of the category is the past and completed event (28), and is found towards the centre of the category. Importantly, as can be seen on the map, the Passato Semplice, being semantically non-durative, does not extend to cover state, habit or temporally extended situations in the past. These concepts are expressed using the Italian Imperfetto (Green box, Semantic Map 4).

A full representation of the Passato Semplice as it is applied to past time in Italian is found on semantic map 4.

3.5.4 Italian Imperfetto

In terms of its temporal semantics, the Italian Imperfetto represents events which took place in the past, the reference point for which is simultaneous to the event itself. The Reichenbach framework does not provide for a differentiation between Romance language Perfective and Imperfective past tenses, as such the representation is: E, R – S (Dessi-Schmid 2010).

The Imperfetto represents many of the past functions that the Presente covers for present time. It is, by implication, imperfective. As such, it lends itself most comfortably to the description of past events with duration; that occur simultaneously to each other; or that have an imprecise number of repetitions (Bazzanella 1990:439). Therefore, the uses of the Imperfetto are characterised by a sense of indefiniteness in terms of: i) the length of the action; ii) the number of iterations of the action (Bertinetto 1991:84).

Thus, as a result of its semantics, the Imperfetto denotes incomplete situations and ongoing events, and this is evident in its covering the functions of past state (99) and ongoing past action (100) in Italian.

99) *L'uomo a cui referisci si chiamava Paolo/ The man you are referring to was called Paolo.* [31]

100) *Ho sentito il bimbo che piangeva. /I heard the baby crying.* [38]

Given the temporally imperfective nature of these two concepts and the indefiniteness which surrounds their duration, they might be considered prototypical of the Imperfetto category and as such are found close to the category centre. Close to these, the concept simultaneous and ongoing past action is found as it represents two ongoing dynamic situations at the past reference time (101).

101) *Io studiavo e Giulio giocava nel giardino. / I was studying and Giulio was playing in the garden.* [39]

The Imperfetto is also used for ongoing repeated past events (102) and past habits (103) as the number of repetitions is not specified.

102) *Da giovani giocavamo spesso a calcio. / When we were young we often played football.* [33]

103) *Giulio dormiva ogni giorno dalle 3 alle 4. Giulio slept every day from 3 to 4.* [32]

The Imperfetto also expresses situations which start in the past and lead up to another point in the past. This is possible due to its indefinite/unlimited and durative meaning. This is evident in the following uses: state up to a point in the past (104), situation up to a point in the past (105), habit up to a point in the past (106).

104) *Lo sapevo da anni. / I had known for years.* [41]

105) *Studiavo all' università da due anni quando ho incontrato Massimo. / I had been studying for years when I met Massimo.* [42]

106) *Cantava nel coro da 50 anni quando.../She had been singing in the choir for 50 years when.....[43]*

These concepts include a past reference time, up to which the event or situation denoted by the verb obtains. As such they may be termed not ‘absolutely’ indefinite, even though the possibility that the event or situation continues is not excluded. For this reason, they are found towards the category boundary and in fact require a perfect tense in English, the Past Perfect.

The Imperfetto, according to Bertinetto (1991:73), is the tense of *simultaneity* in the past. In its function of providing background information it can be used to represent two or more events happening at the same time (Asnaghi et al 1999:116-117; Bazzanella 1990:439) as detailed above. These may be interrupted (107) or not (108) by a Perfetto Composto/Passato Semplice main event, depending on the context. This use is often found in narrative contexts:

107) *Era una bella giornata, gli uccelli cantavano e la gente camminava felici: all'improvviso si é sentito un colpo di fucile./ It was a beautiful day, the birds were singing and the people were out walking happily. All of a sudden, there was the sound of a gun being fired. [40]*

108) *Mentre camminava, pensava al suo amante./ As she walked, she thought about her lover. [34]*

The events here described using the Imperfetto are characterised by their non-specification in terms of length, they have duration/are ongoing in the past, but there

is no indication as to when they started or when they will finish. They serve in (107) to frame the main event of the gun being fired and in (108) to set the scene. It is worth noting at this point, that the Italian system provides for an imperfective reading of (108), focussing on the event as it unfolds, where the English system does not. In contrast, a completive reading is coerced through the use of the Past Simple.

The Imperfetto also has a narrative use (*Imperfetto narrativo*) which provides for an aspectually perfective reading. This is most often seen in narrative contexts (i.e. journalism, storytelling 109) where a perfective tense would usually be used. (Asnaghi *et al* 1999:117; Bertinetto 1991:85). The use of this tense is also known as the *Freeze Frame* effect. It has the effect of slowing down the action, so that the reader seems to perceive each and every instant of the unfolding story.

109) *Un giorno lui decideva di farsi giustizia da sé e a un certo punto andava nella metropolitana./ One day he decided to avenge himself and at a certain point he went down into the underground. [35]*

The core semantics of the Imperfetto have been derived as:

past – temporally located in the past (Bertinetto 1991:73)

incomplete – situations described are ongoing. (Bertinetto 1991:74)

durative – implies a certain duration in time (Bertinetto 1991:74)

indefinite - uses are characterised by a sense of indefiniteness in terms of i) the length of the action, ii) the number of iterations of the action. (Bertinetto 1991:84).

The full representation of the Imperfetto as applied to past time in Italian is found on semantic map 4.

3.5.5. Points of comparison in the representation of past time – absolute tenses

It is interesting to note the similarity between the English Past Simple and the Italian Passato Semplice in terms of the core semantics. Both tenses denote past actions with no relevance at speech time. However, there seems to be a difference in terms of whether or not the event described need be temporally complete. The Italian Passato Semplice requires that the event described be temporally complete at the event time. This means that it is used for events which are complete in the past. Past habit and state uses are therefore excluded. These are instead covered by the Imperfetto, a temporally imperfective tense.

However, the English Past Simple does not distinguish between event, state and habitual uses, as a performative tense (Hewson 1991:513), it selects the complete phase of the event for expression. It would appear that the English system of tense and aspect neutralises the temporally ongoing nature of these state and habitual uses.

The two systems also work differently with regard to the expression of progressivity in the past. The Italian Imperfetto, as well as covering state and habit meanings in the past, may also be used with a progressive reading for dynamic situations (Bertinetto 1991:74). However, in English, the Past Progressive is compulsory for dynamic ongoing past situations.

Consequently, it seems that the cross-linguistic conceptualisation of past time here between English and Italian is qualitatively different. A perfective/imperfective aspectual distinction is grammaticalised in Italian in the form of the contrast between the Imperfetto (imperfective) and Passato Semplice (perfective), where no such distinction in terms of temporal completion is made in English. Instead, the English system distinguishes between progressive and non-progressive events. However, this

distinction is neutralised for states and habits: monophasal states and habits may be considered phasally complete at the event time, whereas events may be complete at reference time (Past Simple) or temporally extended and ongoing through use of the progressive form.

3.6 Representation of past and past-to-present time temporal concepts in English and Italian - Relative Tenses

Section 3 describes the English Present Perfect, Past Perfect, Present Perfect Progressive, Past Perfect Progressive and Italian Perfetto Composto and Piuccheperfetto. They are seen on semantic maps 4 and 5.

3.6.1 English Present Perfect

The temporal semantics of the English Present Perfect are similar to those of the English Past Simple as the initiation of the situation being described is prior to the time of speech (Comrie 1985:78). However, it is fundamentally different to the Past Simple as it does not combine with any past time adverbial (de Swart 2007:2274; Michaelis 2004: 42). This means that the use of this tense implies no definite past time reference (Leech 1998:42). In terms of the Reichenbach framework, for both tenses the event time (E) obtains before speech time (S); however, reference time (the time (R) at which the state invoked by the event (E) applied) is different. For the Past Simple, (R) is simultaneous with (E): $E, R - S$, whereas for the Present Perfect (R) is simultaneous with (S): $E - R, S$, so that reference time for the Present Perfect is speech time.

The Present Perfect is also often described in terms of its *current relevance* meaning (Michaelis 2004:42), which is derived from the fact that the results of the past event

denoted by the past participle are still relevant at the present time (Leech 1998:35). In fact, Depraetere (1998: 610) even goes so far as to argue that a *resultative* feature of the Present Perfect should form part of its core semantics, rather than be explained as a function of usage. However, Michaelis (2004:42) who identifies the three main usages of the Present Perfect as resultative (110), existential (112) and continuative (113, 114, 115), claims that the latter two usages (existential and continuative) lack the result state entailment and explains current relevance in terms of the Present Perfect as a stativising construction. As a stativising construction, the Present Perfect selects the *state of aftermath* (Michaelis 2004:4) which follows the completion of the event represented by the past participle.

110 is an example of the resultative use of the Present Perfect. This usage emphasises the resultant state which holds as a function of the postman having called. This use is often seen with the transition of one state to another (Croft 2012:162), in this case the absence of the postman in the past, leading to the possible presence of letters which have been delivered. Given that this stativising construction selects a result state which holds at the present, events described by Present Perfect in its resultative usage will also tend to be recent events (Klein 1992:539). This use is often seen in combination with adverbs such as *already*, *yet* and *just*, which make the closeness of the situation to the present even more evident (111).

110) *The postman has called.* [20]

111) *I have just arrived.* [21]

These two readings, (110) and (111) which imply a result state and perhaps even the presence of letters, providing for a physical manifestation of the current relevance of

the past event (the postman calling), are found at the centre of the Present Perfect category.

The existential reading (experiential use) of the Present Perfect is shown in 112. The existential reading of the Present Perfect denotes an event which has happened at least once in the past (Croft 2012:163), the reoccurrence of which is not ruled out in the future (Michaelis 2004:45). The Present Perfect selects the state which exists between these two occurrences of the same event (the state of having been to South Africa which obtains continually). It is also important to note that the Present Perfect has an indefinite quality (Leech 1998:37): there is no requirement for the number of iterations of the event to be specified (although it may be) and the exact location in time of the event is always unknown⁶. Indeed, here in example 112, there is no indication as to how many times I have been to South Africa nor when I went. The only information that is available is that I have been to South Africa at least once in the period before the moment of speaking:

112) *I have been to South Africa.* [22]

The continuative reading (continuative use) of the Present Perfect includes the following uses: state up to the present (113), event up to the present (114) and habit up to the present (115).

113) *I have known him since he was a boy.* [17]

114) *I have observed the class for hours.* [18]

115) *Kat has sung in the choir for years.* [19]

⁶ Through change in use the Present Perfect may now occasionally accept a time marker in post-match interviews. For example “And so, he’s put the ball out of play mid-match and he’s thinking about what to do next”. The function of this use of the Present Perfect is that of narrative (Walker 2008), and use of the Present Perfect in this function increases idea of immediacy of the action.

In each of the examples 113, 114 and 115, the situation described started in the past and continues up to the present moment (Croft 2012:164), there is also the unspecified possibility of it continuing into the future (Leech 1998:36). As with the resultative and existential readings of the Present Perfect, here the Present Perfect construction acts as a state selector, denoting the state of aftermath following the event. For example, in (114), I am in the state of *having observed the class for hours*, according to Michaelis (2005:46) this state is monophasal, as the Present Perfect coerces a stative reading so the event is seen as not involving any change, or different phases, and cannot be perceived as incomplete (Hirtle 2007:94). So that the selected state, which holds at speech time, is the initial and final transition of the episode itself. By implication, the continuative reading of the Present Perfect also requires that the situation persists up to the present reference time. This is known as the ***persistence entailment*** (Michaelis 2004:46).

The persistence entailment is important as regards the semantics of the Present Perfect as it provides for the continuation of the denoted event into the present. For this reason, these functions are found at the category border closest to other present temporal concepts covered by the Present Simple (Semantic Map 1).

The English Present Perfect holds perfect aspect which indicates that a state brought about by the past situation (E) holds in the present. Consistently, the semantics of the English Past Simple and Present Perfect constructions diverge significantly, and this has come about through their differing use conditions over time, whereby pragmatic extensions of usage in the Present Perfect category have become part of its core semantics (Michaelis 2004:4). The Present Perfect is used to refer to situations that start in the past and continue up to the present moment and possibly beyond. It holds

as part of its meaning the notion of current relevance (Depraetere 1998:602) and is aspectually sensitive to states.

The core semantics of the Present Perfect derived from the literature are:

indefinite past time – no specification of when event described occurred.
(Leech 1998:42).

past time related to present time – refers to situations which link past and present, persistence entailment (Michalis 2004:46).

current relevance - results of the past event are relevant at speech time
(Michaelis 2004:42),

stativising - denotes a state which holds in the present in relation to the past event (Michaelis 2004:46)

A full representation of the Present Perfect as it is used in the English tense system is found on semantic map 4.

3.6.2 Past Perfect

By choosing the Past Perfect, an English speaker indicates that the denoted situation took place before another point in the past. Temporally, using Reichenbach's framework, the Past Perfect may be represented as: E-R-S. The event takes place before a reference time anterior to speech time.

The Past Perfect, like the Present Perfect, holds perfect aspect and as such implies that a result state held at the past reference time which had been brought about by the denoted event (de Swart 2007:2277; Michaelis 2006:17). However, unlike the Present Perfect, the Past Perfect may accept a temporal adverbial such as in 119 (Comrie

1985:79), and so does not have the indefinite temporal anchor quality of the Present Perfect. Consequently, it has been suggested by Kamp and Reyle (1993:598) that the Past Perfect is equivocal between a perfect-in-past and a past-in-past because it may represent events which occur before another past action, which may or may not entail a result state at the reference time.

The result state entailment is evident in the uses of the Past Perfect which follow. Certain uses parallel those of the Present Perfect: state up to then (116), existential past-in-past (117) and result at past reference time (118).

116) *Up to then he had always believed that he was Mary's son.* [41]

117) *I had never seen anything like it before.* [47]

118) *She had got a day pass and intended to make good use of it that day.* [45]

Other uses show no such parallel, however; in example 119, for instance, no corresponding Present Perfect sentence is possible: **I have seen Ed the week before/last week* is incompatible with the current relevance meaning of the Present Perfect.

119) *I had seen Ed the week before.* [46]

Example 119 is evidence of the ambiguousness of the Past Perfect as regards a relevance at reference time forming part of its core semantics. Taken in isolation, without contextual cues, 119 could be interpreted as not entailing a result state. However, given the reasoning of Michaelis (2004:4) as regards the Present Perfect, that speaker choice of Present Perfect entails current relevance, we could hypothesise

the same for the Past Perfect. In 119, seeing Ed most probably has pertinence at the past reference time, such that perhaps at the reference time he was involved in a car accident and the speaker had seen him the week before. In contrast, the use of the Past Simple: *I saw Ed the week before I went*, does not imply any connection between my going and seeing Ed. It would seem to be a description of sequential events in the past. In terms of the prototypical concept for this category, once again, given the importance of relevance at reference time, the result at past reference time (118) concept is found at the centre of the category. The state up to past reference time (116) concept is found at the category boundary closer to other temporally extended concepts covered by the Past Progressive.

The core semantics of the Past Perfect are derived as:

past-in-past - situation took place before a past reference point. (Leech 1998:47)

relevance at reference time - denoted event is pertinent at past reference time. (de Swart 2007:2277; Michaelis 2006:17)

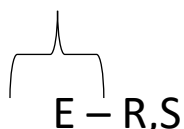
stativising – result state holds at past reference time. (Michaelis 2006:17)

A full representation of the Past Perfect as it applies to past time is found on semantic map 4.

3.6.3 Present Perfect Progressive

The concepts covered by the Present Perfect Progressive feature a combination of the meanings of the perfect and progressive aspects in relation to the speech time (present). The *progressive* aspect may express the temporary and incomplete nature of the denoted situation, whereas the perfect aspect allows a speaker to emphasise the fact that an action started in the past and continues up to the present time and entails a result

at the present reference time. In terms of its temporal semantics, the Present Perfect Progressive shares the same pattern as the Present Perfect. Event time (E) occurs prior to speech time (S) which coincides with reference time (R); however, (E) is temporally extended, so is represented in the following way:



Aspectually, given its progressive aspect, The Present Perfect Progressive is typically used with activity verbs and as such describe situations, rather than states. This is true also of the Past Perfect Progressive detailed below. State up to the present and state up to past reference point meanings are covered by the simple forms of Present Perfect and Past Perfect (Leech 1998:49). Indeed, in terms of usage, Michaelis (2004:46) also reports that the more dynamic the verb, the more likely speakers were to employ the Present Perfect Progressive form rather than the Present Perfect.

For example in 120 a temporary situation is described which continues up to the present moment (R). The progressive activity of *living in Cardiff* is time limited; however, it is also indefinite in that there is no indication of when the situation will end.

120) *I have been living in Cardiff for 3 years.* [23]

This is also true for examples 121 and 122 which express a temporary activity and a temporary habit, respectively, which continue up to the present.

121) *They have been widening the road.* [25]

122) *I have been eating a lot of chocolate lately.* [24]

Where the Present Perfect Progressive places emphasis on a situation that holds up to the present moment through perfect aspect, the Past Progressive *I was eating a lot of chocolate when he walked in* places the situation entirely in the past, and zooms in on the part of the process which obtained at past the reference time.

The Present Perfect Progressive may be seen in contrast to the Present Perfect as regards the expression of temporariness. Semantically, concepts 123 event/situation up to the present and 124 share many elements such as: duration, past with relevance in the present, possible continuation of situation. However, the progressive aspect in 124 denotes a situation which the speaker considers temporary (Leech 1998:49):

123) *I have lived in Cardiff for 3 years.*

124) *I have been living in Cardiff for 3 years.*

As discussed above, the use of progressive aspect has the potential for imposing boundaries upon an activity such as *to live in Cardiff*, in the above example. Consider the contrast between: (i) *I live in Cardiff* and (ii) *I am living in Cardiff*. The former implies that the situation is permanent, the latter that it is likely to change i.e. I am likely to move soon.

The Present Perfect Progressive also contrasts with the Present Perfect where the lexical aspect of the verb involved is telic. Here the incomplete aspectual meaning of the progressive comes into play. For concept 125, resultative past, the breakfast is finished, in example 126 the breakfast is still unfinished, the eating is still in progress.

The Present Perfect Progressive is used here to denote an incomplete activity with present relevance.

125) Who has eaten my breakfast?

126) Who has been eating my breakfast? [26]

Finally, the result meaning of the perfect aspect is evident in example 127:

127) I am tired because I have been running. [27]

Here the Present Perfect Progressive describes an activity which, while completed in the recent past, has effects which are still relevant and closely connected to the activity itself (Leech 1998:51).

The Present Perfect Progressive may also be used to place emphasis on the dynamic nature of the activity. If we compare 127 with *I'm tired because I have just finished work*, it is evident that the Present Perfect Progressive allows for the focus on the dynamic nature of the activity of running, and as such is used more frequently with activity verbs.

A further contrast of 127 with the Past Simple: *I'm tired because I ran here*, emphasises the *persistence entailment* meaning of the Present Perfect Progressive; that the denoted situation must hold from past to present (Michaelis 2004:46). In contrast, the Past Simple example above denotes an activity which is past and complete.

Examples 120, 121, 122 and 126 all feature the core semantic properties of the Present Perfect Continuous with regard to their being temporary, continuing, activities with relevance in the present. Consistently, they are grouped together on semantic map 1 in

the green box. The most dynamic of these etic situations, concept 121 temporary activity up to the present, is found in the centre as the core meaning, because it corresponds the most with the dynamic feature of the progressive form (Michaelis 2004:46). Concept 127, activity up to the present with result, is found slightly apart, and closer to the lower boundary of the category, precisely because it entails an evident result in the present, and not a result state.

The core semantics of the Present Perfect Progressive which have been drawn from the literature are given as:

continues up to present or recent past – denoted situation holds from past to present (Michaelis 2004:46).

incomplete - the process may not be complete at reference time (Leech 1998:19)

limited duration - the process has duration in time, but that is limited and therefore temporary (Leech 1998:19)

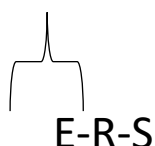
current relevance - results of the past event are relevant at speech time (Michaelis 2004:42),

stativising - the progressive acts as an intermediate state selector allowing for the focus on a particular instance of the event at speech time. (Michaelis 2006:17)

A full representation of the Present Perfect Progressive as it is used in the English tense and aspect system is found on semantic map 1.

3.6.4 Past Perfect Progressive

The Past Perfect Progressive combines the semantic properties of perfect and progressive aspect in the past. In terms of its temporal semantics, its pattern reflects that of the Past Perfect, but the event is extended as described below:



Consequently, the three concepts covered by the Past Perfect Progressive hold elements denoted by perfect and progressive aspect, with the added notion of the event represented occurring anterior to a past reference time (past-in-past).

As a result of its perfect and past-in-past meaning, the Past Perfect Progressive is used to describe a situation which starts in the past and continues up to another past located reference point. This can be seen in example 128. Additionally, it may also be used to refer to a past habit continuing up to the reference time as in 129. Similarly to the Present Perfect Progressive, the Past Perfect Progressive may also be used to indicate a past event with results evident at the reference time (130).

128) *I had been studying at University for 2 years when I met Mark.* [42]

129) *He had been singing in the choir for 50 years before he became a choir master.* [43]

130) *I was tired because I had been running.* [44]

With reference to the organisation of these concepts on the semantic map, it is evident that while all three concepts entail an activity which persists in the past up to a past

reference point, the result aspect of (130) places it slightly apart from the other two, closer to the category boundary with the Past Perfect. (128) and (129) in contrast fall closer to concepts covered by the English Past Progressive. The emphasis in (130) is on the result, whereas in (128) and (129) the emphasis is upon the process. Similarly to the Present Perfect Progressive, the core concepts in this category (128) and (129) reflect most the dynamic nature of the category combined with result state meaning. The core semantics of the Past Perfect Progressive, drawn from usage, are described as:

past event which continues up to past reference time— denoted situation holds from past to past reference point (Leech 1998:47)

relevance at past reference time- results of the past event are relevant at reference time (Michaelis 2004:42)

limited duration - the process has duration in time, but that is limited and therefore temporary (Leech 1998:19)

incomplete - the process may not be complete at reference time (Leech 1998:19)

stativising - the progressive acts as an intermediate state selector allowing for the focus on a particular instance of the event at speech time. (Michaelis 2006:17)

A full representation of the Past Perfect Progressive as it is applied to past in English is found on semantic map 4.

3.6.5 Italian Perfetto Composto

The Perfetto Composto is a relative tense, and as such, holds a reference point which in this case is the present (the speech time) (Bertinetto and Squartrini (1996:387). According to Bertinetto (1991:88), the Perfetto Composto (also known as Passato Prossimo) expresses the past in connection with the present, as it holds as part of its semantics, two specific meanings: that of *inclusion* (*accezione inclusiva*) and/or *result* (*compiutezza*). The inclusive meaning indicates that the event described may continue up to the time of speech, while the result meaning denotes the effects of a past action that are still relevant at the speech time. The Perfetto Composto does not imply that the event occurred close to the speech time: what counts is the relation of the event to the moment of speaking. However, in terms of aspect, the Perfetto Composto is perfective and can even have aorist meaning:

Dal punto di vista aspettuale, il perfetto composto ha prevalente valore perfettivo fino ad acquistare valore aoristico./ *As regards aspect, the prevailing value of the Perfetto Composto is perfective, to the point that it may assume an aorist meaning.* (Bertinetto 1991:89)

With regard to its temporal semantics, the Perfetto Composto may be described in two different ways. Where it is used to describe a past event with a present result the following pattern is assumed: E – R, S. However, as discussed below, it may be used with an aoristic meaning and as such follows the pattern E,R – S much like the Passato Semplice.

In fact, there has been a gradual encroachment of the Perfetto Composto into the territory of the Passato Semplice (Bertinetto and Squartrini 1996:388). This is the case for three functions which are detailed in semantic map 5. The three functions are: past and completed action (131), narrative 2 story telling with personal relevance (132), and sequence of past events (133). Semantically, these functions clearly fit most appropriately into the category of Passato Semplice; however, currently, for these functions, the two constructions Perfetto Composto and Passato Semplice may be used interchangeably. This is represented using a blue dashed box on semantic map 5.

131) *Sono uscito alle otto ieri/ Uscii alle 8 ieri. / I went out at 8 yesterday.* [28]

132) *Nel 1985 ha nevicato/ nevicò molto ed io sono andato a sciare./In 1985 it snowed a lot and I went skiing.* [36]

133) *Quando sono caduto, Marco ha fatto le scale insieme a lui./ Quando caddi, Marco fece le scale insieme a lui./ When I fell, Marco helped me up the stairs.* [30]

Bertinetto and Squartrini (1996:388) hypothesise that this is an extended function of the result or present relevance meaning of the Passato Prossimo, because a link with the present could be hypothesised. However, as they discuss below, this is very difficult to prove:

In questi casi, per distinguere tra funzioni del PC e del PS, si potrebbe tentare di dire che la situazione denotata rientra nell'ambito semantico della 'compiutezza' perché ha una particolare 'rilevanza attuale', ma è proprio qui che la nozione di 'rilevanza attuale' finisce per diventare poco significativa, in

quanto infalsificabile / In these cases, in order to distinguish between the functions of the PC and PS, one could tentatively say that the situation described falls within the semantic realms of 'result' because it has a particular 'current relevance', but it is actually this notion of 'current relevance' which in the end is not very significant and could even be termed unfalsifiable.

Instead, Bertinetto and Squartrini conclude that this is most likely a result of a diachronic process where the Perfetto Composto is developing an aoristic meaning. At present, this is most notable in the North of Italy, but extending also in the South (Bertinetto and Squartrini 1996:410). As regards narrative functions, the most frequent use of the Perfetto Composto is for personal narrative which could be considered as having relevance at speech time. This may be a result of the stage of this change in the grammaticalisation process. At present the Perfetto Composto may still hold some of its original meanings for this function, such as current relevance, but this can be expected to disappear in time (Croft 2001:109).

As mentioned above, the semantics of the Perfetto Composto allow for the duration of the effects of an event (Bertinetto 1991:89), and as such, it is used to cover the following meanings in Italian. Firstly, past action with present result as in example 134. Here, there is no difference as to whether the event takes place in the recent or distant past.

134) *Ho fatto la salsa. / I have made the tomato sauce.* [20]

Secondly, it is used when a recent event causes a transformation/change in state which is evident at the moment of speech (135).

135) *Sono arrivato proprio ora; mi vuoi speigare cosa è successo?/I have only just arrived; do you want to tell me what has happened?* [21]

In example 135, the Presente Semplice may also be used in place of the Perfetto Composto, presumably providing for an emphasis on the present result state of the change in state/transformation (See blue dashed box on semantic map 3). Indeed, here the temporary state of *having arrived* could render the situation present. *Arrivo proprio ora; mi vuoi speigare cosa è successo?* In English, the present result state meaning is included in the semantics of the Present Perfect as detailed above, the English Present Simple as a completive tense requiring that the event described corresponds exactly with speech time cannot extend to cover this function. This is, therefore, an area of potential conceptual difference between the two languages.

Likewise, the imperfectivity of the Italian Presente means that it may extend to substitute the Perfetto Composto for the following past to present function: habit leading up to the present (136):

136) *Le donne di qui hanno portato (portano) delle gonne lungissime da sempre. /The women who live here have always worn very long skirts.* [19]

Interestingly, however, for a temporary activity up to the present with result (137), this substitution is not possible (Bertinetto and Squartrini 1996:388). In this case, the Perfetto Composto is obligatory for two reasons: i) because the denoted event entails

a result at speech time, in this case, *I am tired/Sono stanca*; and ii) because the event *ho corso* ends before the moment of speaking and does not include the present moment as (136) does. These two semantic features are core to the category for the Perfetto Composto. As such this concept (137) is found near to the centre of the Perfetto Composto category together with the resultative past concept (134).

137) *Sono stanca perché ho corso. / I am tired because I have been running*
[27].

Finally, the Perfetto Composto is also used to express general past experience in its *existential past* reading. (138)

138) *Sono stata in Francia. / I have been to France.* [22]

The semantics of the Perfetto Composto allow for it to function with two extremes of meaning: it can hold an aorist meaning (i) and (ii), encroaching on the territory of the Passato Semplice; and also invade the space of the Presente Semplice, because of the notion of inclusion of the present moment (iii). This is not possible, however, when the past event concluded in the recent past and has a determined present (often physical) evidence/relevance (137):

i) *Quel giorno sono andata da mia zia./ That day I went to my Aunt's house.*
(aorist)

ii) *Dov' è Maria? È andata al bar/ Where is Maria? She has gone to the bar.*
(*perfect*)

iii) *I maltesi hanno sempre parlato più lingue. /The Maltese have always spoken many languages.* (perfect - past event continues to the present)

According to Bertinetto (1991:89) the Perfetto Composto is essentially perfective and for this reason can assume an aorist meaning. Nevertheless, its result aspect means that it may be used in situations where there is a present result. However, it seems that when a result state is implied such as in (135) rather than a physical result (137), the Presente Semplice may be substituted for the Perfetto Composto. This is due to the intrinsic imperfectivity of the Presente which allows it to cover past to present situations. The core semantics of the Perfetto Composto represent a dichotomy between *perfective* meaning on the one hand and *past time related to present time* on the other. In fact, current usage and the explanation of the semantics of the Perfetto Composto by Bertinetto and Squartrini (1996:388) bear testimony to the diminishing relevance of the *past time related to present time* meaning of this tense. However, while uses such as 134 require the Perfetto Composto the *past to present time* meaning may not be neglected, but perhaps considered less salient and currently undergoing diachronic change.

The core semantics of the Perfetto Composto are presented as:

perfective - aspectually, the Perfetto Composto is *perfective* even to the point of assuming *aorist* meaning (Bertinetto 1991:89)

result. – the denoted event has a result at speech time (Bertinetto and Squartrini (1996:387).

past time related to present time, - past event temporally connected to speech time. (accezione inclusiva) (Bertinetto and Squartrini (1996:387).

A full representation of the Italian Perfetto Composto as it is used to describe temporal concepts in Italian is found on semantic map 5.

3.6.6 Il Piuccheperfetto

The Piuccheperfetto is a relative tense and presupposes a reference point in the past (Bertinetto 1991:106), before which the denoted event occurred. In terms of the Reichenbach framework, the Piuccheperfetto is represented as: E– R – S. The use of the Piuccheperfetto may also indicate that the result of the event is relevant at the past reference point (Bertinetto 1991:101) and that the event is perfective:

Il piuccheperfetto visualizza il processo nella sua globalità, come un evento giunto al suo termine./ *The Piuccheperfetto sees the process as a whole, as an event which has reached its end* (Bertinetto 1991:107)

As such the Piuccheperfetto is often used for sequencing such as the following function: action before another past action (past-in-past). This is most often seen in narrative contexts (139).

In 139 it may also be seen that the past event *aveva lasciato/ had left*, was relevant at the past reference time, there were possibly signs in her behaviour which bore testimony to the fact she had only just left college:

139) *Anna aveva lasciato proprio allora il collegio, lo si capiva benissimo. / Anna had only just left college, it was easy to tell. [46]*

The further uses of the Piuccheperfetto mirror those of the Perfetto Composto as the semantics are identical, apart from relevance at past reference time meaning against present relevance meaning which is key, as we have seen above. Consistently, the functions covered by the Piuccheperfetto include: existential past-in-past (140), result at past reference time (141), activity with effects evident at past reference time (142). With regards to the arrangement of these concepts on the semantic map, the result and past-in-past features of the construction are most evident for concept (141) resultative past, and as such this appears towards the centre of the category. Concept (142), which features an ongoing past activity with effects evident at the past reference time, is found closer to the category boundary at the bottom of the box. Its semantics are similar to those of (105) and (106) which entail ongoing past situations and habits up to the past reference time (Semantic Map 5).

140) *Non aveva mai visto niente di simile prima di allora/ I had never seen anything similar before then. [47]*

141) *Aveva ottenuto il permesso di uscire a intendeva farne uso. /She had got a day pass and intended to use it. [45]*

142) *Ero stanco, perché avevo corso. /I was tired because I had been running. [44]*

The core semantics of the Piuccheperfetto, derived from the literature review are given as:

perfective - event is seen as complete (Bertinetto 1991:107)

past-in past – event occurs before another past reference time (Bertinetto 1991:106)

relevance at reference time - denoted event is relevant at past reference time (Bertinetto 1991:101)

A full representation of the *Perfetto Composto* as it is used to represent past temporal concepts in Italian is found on semantic map5.

3.6.7 Points of comparison English and Italian relative tenses

There is an interesting contrast in the core semantics of the English Present Perfect and the Italian *Perfetto Composto*, which is also borne out in usage. The core semantics of the English Present Perfect are described as: *past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising*. In particular, the stativising function of the Present Perfect, which allows for the focus on a result state or state of aftermath after the culmination of the event denoted by the participle component, provides for its use for functions that hold present result states, such as state up to the present (143).

(143) *I have known him for years.*

However, the *Perfetto Composto*, the semantics of which are: *perfective, past time related to present time, result*, does not cover this function in Italian and as discussed the past related to present time meaning is declining in relevance. In Italian the *Presente Semplice* is required for state up to the present concepts: *Lo **consoco** da anni./I have known him for years.*

In fact, the semantics of the Perfetto Composto do not allow for an event to continue up to the reference time (the continuity reading of the Present Perfect); the Perfetto Composto is essentially *perfective*, and can even take on an *aorist* meaning, as discussed. Therefore, the function state up to the present is covered by the Italian Presente Semplice as above.

Michaelis (2006:15) attributes this difference to an idiosyncrasy of the English Present Simple. The English Present Simple, unlike the Italian Presente Semplice, is not a general-purpose stativiser. This means that while the English Present Simple only selects the state or period of stasis at the moment of speaking, the Italian Presente Semplice is able to select states both before, during and after speech time. Therefore, the functions that the English Present is unable to perform, requiring the selection of a state which obtains, for example, just prior to speech time or is ongoing at speech time, are performed by perfect and progressive constructions. Thus, there is an important difference in the grammaticalisation of the concept state up to the present between these two tense systems and as such, it is one of the features which is targeted in this study.

Another interesting difference regarding the semantics of the two tenses English Present Perfect and Italian Perfetto Composto is the notion of *current relevance* for the Present Perfect and *result* for the Perfetto Composto. As described above, the notion of current relevance for the Present Perfect is described as **state** which holds after the culmination of the event denoted by the participle component. Indeed, de Swart (2007:2277) maintains that there is a perfect aspect which operates across all the perfect tenses in English: the meaning of this aspect being that there is a state

related to the event described, which is located in time according to the tense operator (past, present or future).

However, this does not appear to be the case in Italian, as the result state feature does not appear to form part of the semantics of the Perfetto Composto. In contrast, the Italian Perfetto Composto would appear to hold as part of its semantics the idea of a result or effect of the event denoted by the participle component. This is evident where for past to present situations which entail a result state the Italian system permits the use of both the Presente Semplice and the Perfetto Composto (144), but when a physical result is denoted, the Perfetto Composto is obligatory (145).

144) *Arrivo/ sono arrivato proprio ora; mi vuoi spiegare cosa é successo? / I have just arrived, can you tell me what has happened?*

145) *Sono stanca perché ho corso. / I am tired because I have been running.*

This leads to the supposition that the use of the Present Perfect for events which entail a result such as *I have broken my arm. / Mi sono rotto il braccio* are a result of continued use of the construction in the physical result context, but that the semantics of the Present Perfect indicate the state of aftermath following the break, not the act of breaking itself. In contrast, in Italian, it is the effect of the event (the broken arm) along with the past action of breaking the arm which are salient and form part of the semantics of the Perfetto Composto.

This seems to suggest that *perfect aspect* has a qualitatively different meaning in English compared to Italian.

3.7 Conclusions

The cognitive analysis (semantic maps) and description detailed above have highlighted two particular areas of divergence in the grammaticalisation of particular concepts, and therefore potential conceptual difference between the English and Italian tense and aspect systems. It seems that the systems diverge conceptually in the expression of temporally imperfective concepts that span either present to past, or past to present time, such as past to present states, events or habits, whether temporary or permanent. There is also some reason to believe that the conceptual nature of perfect aspect differs between the two languages, in other words, the nature of the relevance at reference time that perfect aspect denotes. The analysis suggests that in English current relevance applies to a *state*, whereas in Italian the nature of current relevance is more orientated to the effects of an action or its *physical* result.

The temporal concepts that include past to present time and current relevance are principally covered by the Present Perfect in English. Indeed, the acquisition of this tense is known to be problematic for Italian (L1) learners of English (L2) (Lott 1983: 259) and classroom errors commonly take the following form:

- a) Present Simple for Present Perfect in *state up to the present*: *I know him for 10 years* instead of *I have known him for 10 years*.
- b) Present Simple for Present Perfect Progressive in *temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present*: *I wait for ages* instead of *I have been waiting for ages*.
- c) Past Simple for Present Perfect in *resultative past*: *Have you seen my coat?*
Yes, I saw your coat instead of *Yes, I have seen your coat*.

d) Past Simple for Present Perfect in existential past: *I went to America twice* instead of *I have been to America twice*.

This chapter has provided an analysis upon which to base the hypothetical areas of conceptual divergence that underlie the errors detailed above. Table 2 details the nature of the conceptual divergence related to the concepts expressed in (a) to (d) above and the resulting errors. This is based on the differing core semantics of the constructions that cover these concepts in English compared to Italian.

The core semantics of a construction represent the prevailing meaning of the category, which extends to cover functions which hold similar features to the category meaning. Clearly, some category members are more prototypical than others, and as such, correspond easily with the core semantics of the category. In contrast, for less prototypical members, the features of which put them nearer to the category boundary and concepts covered by other categories, the prevailing meaning of the category is nevertheless imposed upon them, which coerces a particular meaning. Cross-linguistically, contrasting constructions with differing meanings extend to cover these concepts providing for differing construals of the same etic situation cross-linguistically and consequently, potential conceptual difference.

Table 2 shows the etic concepts that are investigated in this study, together with the constructions that cover them in English and Italian. The core semantics of each of those constructions is also given, derived from the cognitive analysis above. The final column holds the hypothesised conceptualisation of the temporal concept drawn from the core semantics of the construction, as this is a result of the interplay between stored semantic knowledge, construal operations influenced by this stored knowledge and exposure to L1 in context. The information contained in this table has been

fundamental in the analysis of the *think aloud* reports (Chapter 5) and identification of instances of concept and conceptualisation transfer. The *think aloud* reports have been analysed with the proposed conceptualisations and meanings associated with target constructions in mind, together with a consideration of the implications for the verification of concept and conceptualisation transfer which their manifestation in the *think aloud* reports entails.

Table 2. Etic concepts investigated, their core semantics and conceptualisation.

Etic Temporal Concept	Construction	Core Semantics	Conceptualisation
1. <i>state up to the present. E.g. I have known him for years.</i>	English Present Perfect	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath
	Italian Presente Semplice	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	present orientated, imperfective,
2. <i>Temporary activity up to the present. E.g. I have been watching TV for ages.</i>	English Present Perfect Progressive	past event which continues up to present or recent past, limited duration, current relevance, incomplete, stativising	past to present time span, state of aftermath
	Italian Presente Semplice	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	present orientated, imperfective,
3. <i>Resultative past E.g. I have lost my iPhone.</i>	English Present Perfect	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past to present time span, with current relevance, result state.
	Italian Perfetto Composto	perfective, past time related to present time, result	perfective, past

4. <i>Existential past</i> . E.g. <i>I have never seen one like this before</i> .	English Present Perfect	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past to present time span, with current relevance, intermediate state.
	Italian Perfetto Composto	perfective, past time related to present time, result	perfective past

In table 2, concept 1 shows the contrast in conceptual structure hypothesised to exist in the expression of state up to the present – *I have known him for years*, and as such is an area which could be vulnerable to conceptual transfer in general, and conceptualisation transfer in particular as explained below. Whereas the core semantics of the construction used to cover the function in English denote a past to present time span with state selected at the present moment, the core semantics of the Italian construction indicate a present and imperfective situation.

The diverging conceptualisations of state up to the present are represented on a timeline in Figure (3). The highlighted yellow area represents the state up to the present, its etic or culturally neutral representation. The pink arrow denotes the English L1 concept where the features of past to present time and current relevance are emphasised, whereas the blue dashed circle shows the features of imperfectivity and current relevance selected by the Italian Presente Semplice.

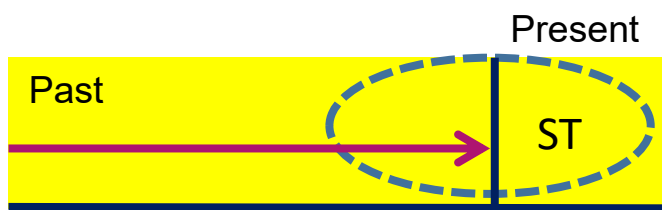


Figure 3. Timeline representation of conceptual divergence in concept: state up to the present. ST = Speech Time

It is hypothesised that an Italian (L1) speaker's error as in (a) may occur due to a present orientated view of the event which contrasts with the past to present perspective denoted by the English tense and aspect system in this case. Perspective taking is a construal operation involved in conceptualisation, such that an error like this could be termed conceptualisation transfer (as defined in Chapter 2), if evidence might also be found for a consistent conceptualisation.

Table 2 also presents three further concepts which may cause problems for Italian (L1) learners of English (L2) as a result of distinct differences in the core semantics of the structures that cover them.

The first is concept 2 which represents a temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present – *I have been watching TV for ages*. Similarly to concept 1 above, the principal conceptual difference is with regard to the perception of the temporal anchoring of the situation. The English system, in its use of the Present Perfect Progressive, emphasises once again, the past to present time span of the situation denoted by the dashed pink arrow. The use of progressive aspect indicates also the idea of an ongoing activity with limited duration, with a result state which holds at the speech time. In contrast, the Italian system, by allowing for this function to be covered by the Presente Semplice, focuses on the here and now, the present feature of the situation, exemplified using the blue circle in figure 4.

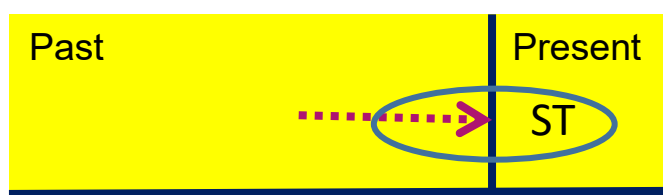


Figure 4. Timeline representation of conceptual divergence in the concept: temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present. ST = Speech Time.

In this case also, differences seem to occur in perspective taking, so that conceptualisation transfer may be hypothesised if evidence of a conceptualisation consistent with the L1 influenced error could be revealed in this context.

For concept 3 resultative past, the use of the erroneous form (Past Simple) may be a consequence of the perfective nature and result requirement of the tense which covers this function (Perfetto Composto) in Italian. This has at its base the fact that the resultative past concept may effectively be divided into two further concepts: one in which the result or effect of the event denoted by the past participle is evident (146); and one in which a result state holds (147):

146) A: *You look good today.* B) *Yes, I have had my hair cut.*

147) A: *Where is my coat?* B) *I don't know, I have seen it though.*

When the concept to be represented holds a result state, the Past Simple is often used erroneously (148).

148) A: *Where is my coat?* B) *I don't know, I saw it though.*

This could be because where there is no evident result, an Italian (L1) speaker perceives the perfective event aspect of the concept as salient and therefore applies the

English past tense with no present relevance: The Past Simple. Figures 5 and 6 show the diverging conceptualisations placed on a timeline. Figure 5 is the representation of the Italian system, where the past and finished event is salient, marked with a cross in the past. Figure 6 shows the representation of the English system with the past event with result state relevance at the present moment as indicated by the arrow leading up to the present:

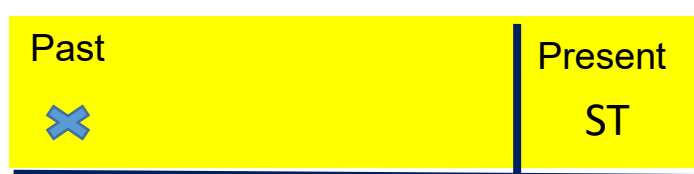


Figure 5. Timeline representation of conceptual structure (Italian): resultative past. ST = Speech Time.



Figure 6: Timeline representation of conceptual structure (English): resultative past. ST = Speech Time.

This analysis may also apply to concept (4) and error (d) (Page 118) as regards the existential past reading of the Present Perfect. As there is no evident result, the Italian (L1) speaker, conceptualising the event as perfective erroneously uses the Past Simple to cover this function (d):

(d) *I went to America twice* instead of *I have been to America twice*.

Indeed, where the English Present Perfect is a stativiser, selecting a state which exists between two occurrences of the same event (going to America is not ruled out in the future), the Italian Perfetto Composto is perfective and denotes the event as finished

in the past. This is also evident where temporal adverbials may be used with the Italian Passato Composto for this function (149), such temporal adverbials are not permissible in combination with the Present Perfect (Leech 1998:37).

*149) Sono stata in America **nel 2010**/ I went to America in 2010.*

For concepts 3 and 4, the cross-linguistic grammaticalisation differences involve a difference in category content for constructions which have the same grammatical form cross-linguistically: the Present Perfect *I have been* and Perfetto Composto *Sono stata*. Both tenses are formed taking the present tense of *have* (or *be/essere* in Italian for intransitive verbs) as the auxilliary plus the past participle. The differences in core semantics for these categories is given in table 2. This difference may lead to conceptualisation differences though the activation of contrasting construal operations, where a perfective perspective is generated in contrast to the perception of a result state, leading to the erroneous use of the Past Simple in English by Italian L1 speakers. Or there may also be the possibility of revealing concept transfer, if L1 category content (the meaning of the structures under investigation in the mind of the speaker) can be shown to impact upon L2 production as detailed in Chapter 2.

To sum up, this analysis of the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian has revealed four (1-4 below) possible areas of conceptual difference in the minds of speakers of these two languages with regards to the concepts detailed above. Conceptual difference is hypothesised to occur where the grammaticalisation of specific concepts differs cross-linguistically, leading to the possibility that learners may fall back on L1 concepts and derived conceptualisations when speaking L2, leading to the possibility of production errors in the form detailed above (a-d). This is

manifest in the extension of differing constructions holding different core semantics covering the same concept cross-linguistically. Conceptual difference, therefore, derives from differing usage cross-linguistically.

1) **state up to the present.** I have known him for years/ *Lo conosco da anni.*

2) **temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present.** *I have been watching TV for ages. / Guardo la TV da un sacco di tempo.*

3) **resultative past.** I have had my hair cut. / *Mi sono fatto tagliare i capelli.*

4) **existential past.** I have been to South Africa. / *Sono stata in Sud Africa.*

These concepts are highlighted in yellow on semantic maps 3 and 6. As is evident, they all fall towards their category boundary.

A cloze test has been specifically designed to elicit these errors in Italian L1 speakers of English L2 and *think aloud* reports have been gathered to gain insight into the thought processes of L2 learners while they make decisions regarding the correct form for these concepts in L2. This means that quantitative data has been obtained to assess the likelihood of error with regards to these concepts compared to others where no conceptual difference is evident, and qualitative data in the form of *think aloud* reports has been obtained with the aim of revealing conceptual transfer as an influence in L2 interlanguage in this area. The full description detailed here is fundamental to the analysis of the generated *think aloud* reports, as L1 influence manifesting in the *think aloud* reports could potentially reflect the core semantics of the construction used to represent the function in L1 and offer insights into whether reasoning, even where

responses are correct, reflects L1 conceptual content organisation and conceptualisation as described.

The following chapter provides a detailed description, elaboration and justification for the mixed methodology used in this study and how it draws upon the analysis presented here to reveal evidence for conceptual transfer in general in the expression of the target temporal concepts in the L2 English of Italian L1 learners.

Chapter 4

Materials and Methods

4.0 Overview

The literature review in Chapter 2 generated the following primary research questions:

- 1) Do the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian diverge in their grammaticalisation of temporal concepts, pointing to conceptual difference?
- 2) Italian learners of English L2 predictably make production errors when expressing distinct aspects of temporality related to use of the Present Perfect. Can this be shown to be the result of transfer at a conceptual level?
- 3) Can evidence be obtained to distinguish between conceptual and conceptualisation transfer?

The cognitive and functional description of the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian in chapter 3 revealed potential areas of conceptual difference based on cross-linguistic differences in the grammaticalisation of distinct concepts expressed using the Present Perfect in English. These relate to the features of the core semantics of the Present Perfect which pertain to the expression of a result state and past to present temporal relevance, as detailed in Chapter 3. This has resulted in the further development of two sub-research questions in relation to research question 2:

- 2a) Do Italian L1 speakers of English L2 rely on L1 concepts when English requires the expression of a present result state? (Concept Transfer – ref. chapter 3)

2b) Do Italian L1 speakers of English L2 rely on L1 conceptualisations when L2 requires past to present temporal reference? (Conceptualisation transfer – ref. chapter 3)

Chapter 4 will firstly provide an overview of methodologies previously employed in the investigation of transfer in bilingualism and second language acquisition, and then go on to outline and justify the combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques that have been employed for this study.

4.1 Transfer research in bilingualism and second language acquisition to date

As mentioned above, L1 transfer is investigated particularly within the areas of bilingualism and second language acquisition. In this section, the various methodologies employed for research in this area will be considered and evaluated in the context of this study. Within bilingualism, transfer research centres around L1 attrition, the affect that an L2 may have on L1, and has been investigated with regard to its impact upon event construal (Bylund and Jarvis 2011) with regard to the grammaticalisation of aspect (Bylund and Jarvis 2011; Flecken 2011) and encoding of event motion construal (Daller *et al* 2011).

In L1 attrition research, the effect of L2 upon event construal has been investigated using a number of different elicitation devices, all of which, however, involve a visual context creating stimulus. Bylund and Jarvis (2011) used video clips with different degrees of end point orientation to investigate the impact of L2 Swedish on L1 Spanish speakers' event conceptualisations. Their research is cognitively orientated and framed within the Grammatical Aspect Hypothesis which predicts that cross-linguistic difference in the grammaticalisation of aspect may result in transfer at a conceptual

level. Swedish does not encode grammatical aspect, where Spanish does. Numerical data were produced by counting the number of endpoints encoded in the experimental and monolingual control groups. Further data was elicited through a grammatical judgement task which assessed participants' sensitivity to aspectual contrasts, gender agreement and verbal clitics. The results showed that bilingual Spanish/Swedish speakers encoded more endpoints in Spanish than Spanish monolinguals, and this correlated significantly with lower scores on the part of the grammatical judgement task testing aspectual distinctions. This indicated that exposure to Swedish had affected both L1 Spanish speakers' verbal production, and judgements of that which is grammatically acceptable in terms of aspectual distinctions in Spanish.

Like Bylund and Jarvis (2011), Flecken (2011) also used video clips as stimuli to investigate aspectual marking in Dutch/German bilinguals. Linguistic analysis entailed coding according to the use of an aspectual device: specifically, progressive aspect, and produced numerical data for statistical analysis. However, Flecken also included eye-tracking data which revealed patterns that were consistent with the differences in the use of progressive marking between the bilinguals and monolingual controls. Here, the use of co-verbal data (eye-tracking data – indicative of online processing) supports the hypothesis of an interplay between L1 grammaticalisation and conceptualisation manifesting in performance difference between the bilinguals and monolingual controls in the study.

The inclusion of co-verbal data such as eye-tracking and Speech Onset Time (SOT) data (Schmiedtová *et al* 2011), which measure a behavioural manifestation of online processing, provides strong evidence for conceptual differences being at the base of cases of L1 attrition and error in L2 interlanguage. This type of data reveals the interplay between grammaticalisation and conceptualisation through cross-linguistic

differences in online processing, and as such leaves room for the interpretation that L1 constrained concepts can be transferred to L2.

Transfer in motion event construal has also been investigated using video clips (Hohenstein *et al* 2006) in English/Spanish bilinguals. English is an S-Framed language whereas Spanish is a V-Framed language (Talmy 1985). Videos were used to elicit narratives which were then coded according to the principle verbs used to describe motion events. The propensity to use manner or path verbs was evaluated numerically between groups (within-groups comparison of English/Spanish responses, bilinguals compared with monolingual controls and early vs. late bilinguals). The results indicated bidirectional lexical transfer, but only L1 to L2 grammatical transfer. These results present strong evidence for the effect that L1 may have on L2 and vice versa in bilingualism pointing to bilingual specific conceptualisations (Czechowska and Ewert 2011:292), and the use of structures that reflect L1 motion event construal in L2 suggests L1 conceptualisation constraints. However, this study was conceived to assess cross-linguistic influence effects for lexical and grammatical features in early and late bilinguals and did not include measures of online processing as above.

Cartoons have also been used as elicitation devices to produce narratives where different conceptualisations of path and motion have been found to have bi-directional influence (L1 – L2 and L2 – L1). Working in line with the Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis and comparing data from bilingual speakers of S-Framed and V-Framed languages, Daller *et al.* (2011), and Brown and Gullberg (2011) used cartoon stories to elicit narratives which were encoded for path, manner and motion expressions. Once again, numerical data was produced and compared with monolingual control groups. Factors such as dominant language environment were also considered. Bi-directional influence was found in both cases.

To sum up, in research on attrition in the field of bilingualism, elicitation devices in transfer research primarily involve visual stimuli such as films or cartoons. The oral or written narratives produced are coded according to the area under investigation, thereby generating numerical data for analysis. Statistical evidence for a link between grammaticalisation in the dominant language environment and its effect on L1 and L2 production, combined with corresponding co-verbal data provides an excellent means of supporting the conceptual transfer hypothesis. However, this thesis seeks to delineate how conceptual differences impact upon cognitive processing in learner interlanguage, the effects that they may have on learner language production and rule out transfer at a formal level. So while importantly these studies do reveal that the bilingual conceptual system is affected by grammaticalisation in L1 and L2, they do not include a means of shedding light on how this occurs in terms of the interplay between context and stored semantic and conceptual structure. Such information would inform L2 acquisition research with regard to the type of information heeded by learners as they make decisions regarding the representation of concepts encoded differently in L1 and L2 and should also reveal more convincing instances of L1 conceptual constraint.

The following section of this chapter details the methods used in transfer research in second language acquisition as opposed to bilingualism, where linguistic competence will necessarily be at a lower level.

The investigation of L1 transfer as a factor in second language acquisition is characterised by similar procedures and data collection techniques as in bilingualism, especially where participants are advanced learners. Schmiedtová *et al* (2011) for example used short video clips showing goal-orientated motion events to elicit data from L1 and L2 speakers of aspect (Spanish, English, MS Arabic, Czech, Russian) and

non-aspect (German, Norwegian) languages to assess, first, crosslinguistic differences in event construal and, second, the impact of such differences upon L2. In these studies, the L2 speakers were professionals living and working or studying in the L2 environment. They collected not only verbal production data, but also eye tracking and speech onset time data. They established that the viewing of goal orientated events, revealed through differences in SOT and eye tracking data, is affected by cross-linguistic difference regarding the grammaticalisation of aspect.

Negueruela *et al* (2004) investigated motion event construal in advanced L2 speakers of English (S-Framed language) and Spanish (V-Framed language), all the L2 speakers had spent at least a year in the L2 speaking environment. Negueruela *et al.* used a textless cartoon presented on transparencies as an elicitation device and included data on frequency of path and manner gestures made by the participants. Spanish speakers express path on the verb and their path gestures typically co-occur with the verb, English speakers, in contrast express path with the satellite and consequently their path gestures tend to occur with the satellite. Data from the experimental group was compared with monolingual English and Spanish controls. Gestures and verbs used were encoded for path and manner and were found to reflect L1 patterns.

Larranaga *et al* (2011) also looked at the lexicalisation of path, manner and motion in L1 English learners of Spanish L2 at three different levels. Proficiency was assessed not only through institutional placement, but also using a C-test. A C-test is a test of linguistic competence in which authentic texts are adapted so that the second part of every second word has been deleted. Participants complete the missing part of the word. The C-test results were consistent with the proficiency levels 1, 2 and 3. The level 3 participants had all spent 6 months living in Spain. In this case, a cartoon was also used as an elicitation device to produce oral narratives. As the researchers had no

access to monolingual Spanish controls, a comparative analysis of Spanish corpora was used to assess monolingual patterns. Realisations of path and manner were coded to generate numerical data. The data produced show support for the influence of L1 transfer in interlanguage.

Cross-linguistic transfer effects have also been investigated with regards to lexical choice (Huiping and Yongbing 2014; Negueruela *et al* 2004; Jarvis 2000) In a seminal paper published in 2000, Jarvis used three tasks, including a written narrative based upon a silent film (Jarvis 2000) and revealed not only evidence for L1 influence in referential lexical choice, but also outlined a detailed methodological framework for transfer studies to follow to ensure robust empirical research on cross-linguistic influence (Jarvis 2000).

Jarvis proposes that in order for L1 transfer to be verified, statistical evidence should be sought with regard to the three following criteria.

- i) intra-L1-group homogeneity in learners' IL performance
- ii) inter-L1-group heterogeneity in learners' IL performance
- iii) intra-L1-group congruity between features of the learners' L1 and their IL performance. Jarvis (2000:253)

The first, intra-L1-group homogeneity in learners' IL performance refers to the fact that L1 transfer should result in speakers of the same L1 performing in a statistically significant similar way when using L2. Inter-L1-group heterogeneity in learners' IL means that speakers of different L1s should show diverging patterns in use of the L2. Finally, intra-L1-group congruity between learners' L1 and their IL performance means that a clear link should be demonstrated between use of the target structures in

L1 and IL. This means that cross-linguistically equivalent structures should be used in IL and L1 for the same function and that the congruence between L1 performance and L2 performance for the same task should be statistically significant. In a subsequent article in 2010, Jarvis introduces a further related criterion which he refers to as intra-lingual contrasts. This means that performance in the target language should be assessed where the source language and the target language show internal contrasts which do not correspond cross-linguistically. This may be seen in the current study, where the Italian and English tense systems have been revealed, through the tense and aspect system analysis, to diverge conceptually in terms of distinguishing result states and past to present time spans.

Jarvis (2000, 2010) stresses the importance of multiple evidence for L1 influence in transfer research. In his 2000 article, he sought evidence for the first three of the above effects (i – iii) by comparing the English lexical reference of Finnish-speaking and Swedish-speaking Finns, using three elicitation tasks. The first, a written narrative based upon a silent film, the second, a lexical listing task where the participants were required to name 27 objects and events previously seen in the film, and the third a receptive task, where participants were shown the same 27 items, but this time with a preselected list of English vocabulary items to choose from. Jarvis' statistical evidence revealed support for effect (i), but was equivocal with regard to (ii) (inter-L1-group heterogeneity in learners' IL performance) and (iii) (Intra-L1-group congruity between learners' L1 and IL performance). With regard to (ii) Jarvis was unable to show a statistically significant difference in the referential lexical choices between the Finns, Swedes and the native English speakers. Jarvis suggests that this may be a result of the history of cultural contact that exists between the Swedes and Finns living in Finland and as such they share some common lexical concepts for referring to their experience

(Jarvis 2000). Moreover, Jarvis is also only able to supply partial support for (iii). In fact, the levels of IL-L1 congruence found by Jarvis are not statistically significant. Despite these results, Jarvis does claim to have found evidence of L1 transfer in lexical reference in this population sample. He points to high levels of intra-L1-group homogeneity in responses, and also to levels of L1-IL congruence being higher than the congruence between the experimental groups and native speaker controls. He concludes, therefore, that his results provide a “subtle, yet, demonstrable presence for L1 influence in this area of interlanguage performance” (Jarvis 2000).

In order to establish congruence in lexical reference between the two language groups, Jarvis (Jarvis 2000:275) uses lexis elicited in a pilot study, his own knowledge ("the words I felt were appropriate to refer to the denotata"), together with synonyms and translations based again on his own knowledge of Finnish and Swedish, and from this he says he can report "semantic and conceptual" congruence. However, the importance of defining conceptual equivalence and difference for conceptual transfer research may not be underestimated, and as such the current study bases its claims for congruence on the detailed cognitive description of the constructions under investigation (Chapter 3) with full semantics and conceptual content for each construction described to establish conceptual difference and congruence cross-linguistically. This has had the added effect of revealing areas of intra-lingual contrast which differ cross-linguistically and point to cross-linguistic conceptual difference for investigation. In this study, tests which produce quantitative data have been designed to target these distinct areas, compared to areas where concepts and semantics are more similar cross-linguistically, and this has the potential for providing statistical evidence for conceptual transfer specifically. Moreover, these fully motivated areas of conceptual difference are investigated in this study not only in regard to L1 group homogenous

performance in the target language (Jarvis criterion *i*), but also in comparison with a third language group (Jarvis criterion *ii*), and the functional cognitive description of tense and aspect in chapter 3 is also used in the establishment of congruence between L1 and IL (Jarvis criterion *iii*).

In his 2000 article, Jarvis presses for statistical evidence and methodological rigour in L1 transfer research, and his suggested approach and criteria do achieve this aim. Achieving statistical significance for all three criteria suggested by Jarvis, would be strong evidence of the effects of L1 on L2. However, this study moves the field forward in two important ways: i) tests have been developed based on a cognitive comparison of the two languages under investigation, suggesting therefore, that errors made where conceptual difference exist could result from it, and ii) a further technique has been included, the *think aloud* report, which helps to **reveal the cognitive mechanisms underlying the effect and to distinguish conceptual transfer from formal transfer and further reveal incidences of conceptual transfer which may be masked**. L1 transfer effects may be masked by a number of factors, such as: correct use of target form in one context, but not extended to others, the choice of a prototypical or general term which while not erroneous is not devoid of L1 influence (Jarvis 2000:258), universal factors (Treffers-Daller 2012); and avoidance (Schacter 1974).

As is evident here, current research work looking at conceptual transfer in bilinguals and SLA seems to favour the use of free production techniques using either silent film (Schmiedtová *et al* 2012; Bylund and Jarvis 2011; Carroll and von Stutterheim 2003; von Stutterheim and Nuse 2003) or picture stories (Daller *et al* 2011; Slobin 1996) to elicit verbal or written production. These techniques are particularly apt when it comes to looking at differences in information organisation (von Stutterheim and Nuse 2003),

the expression of motion events in verb-framed and satellite- framed languages (Brown and Gullberg 2011; Daller *et al* 2010; Slobin 1996) and viewing frames (Bylund and Jarvis 2011). Retell tasks such as these hold a significant number of advantages as the sequence and type of events may be controlled by the researcher and comparable samples may be produced across participants (Bardovi-Harlig 2000:199). Indeed, for research in bilingualism and L1 attrition, where participants are at a near native level in both languages and avoidance (Schacter1974) is not an issue, free production techniques may be favoured for the naturalness of the data that they produce.

While sharing much common ground regarding the necessity to create a context which stimulates the production of specific forms, the studies detailed above differ from the present study in two important ways. Firstly, the concepts under investigation here involve a past to present time frame, targeting specific temporal constructions, where previous research has focused on descriptions of what is happening now to elicit language relative to the expression of bounded vs. unbounded events (Schmiedtová *et al* 2012; Bylund and Jarvis 2011; von Stutterheim and Nuse 2003) and of path, manner and motion (Brown and Gullberg 2011; Daller *et al* 2010). Secondly, this study is interested in learner language production; in particular the interlanguage of learners who have not reached a particularly high level of proficiency (upper-intermediate) and not bilinguals, making avoidance a possible confounding factor.

In consideration of these factors and the results of the first set of pilots (see below), for this study a cartoon has been developed which includes a cloze test in the speech bubbles to elicit the target forms (Appendices 2 and 3). Thus, context is cued through the cartoon drawings, eliciting the forms which are necessary to complete the cloze test. The cloze test has been chosen in order to create a context that is framed in the

past (Bardovi-Harlig 2000:201; Bardovi-Harlig 1992: 257) and which eliminates avoidance (Bardovi-Harlig 1992: 258).

In L1 transfer research a cloze test was used by Ehala (2012) to investigate object marking in Russian L1 speakers of Estonian L2. The cloze test was specifically designed to control for factors in L1 such as the declension, animacy and gender of critical words as well as different declensions in Estonian which could have affected the results (Ehala 2012:166). Quantitative data was produced supporting the influence for L1 on L2 in the object marking of Russian speakers in Estonian. A cloze test would seem to be particularly suitable when the use of specific structures is targeted for investigation. In fact, in the current study the cloze test was specifically created with the aim of controlling not only linguistic cues, but also temporal context (Appendix 4).

Cloze tests have also been used widely in research concerning the Aspect Hypothesis (AH) (Collins 2002; Bardovi-Harlig and Reynolds 1995; Bardovi-Harlig 1992) where researchers have identified a pattern in the acquisition and use of past tense morphology in learner language according to verb class as defined by Vendler (1957). Indeed AH research necessitates the control of number and type of predicates (Bardovi-Harlig 2000:232) as well as the comparison of item responses across learners (Bardovi-Harlig 1992: 258). This is also the case in the current study where very specific areas of conceptual difference were identified for testing and participant responses were compared across items. Cloze tests also provide for the possibility of testing a larger sample size compared to free production techniques (Bardovi-Harlig 2000:202).

While the cloze test was created to elicit learners' representations of the target concepts and, therefore, also instances of conceptual transfer, a further technique, the *think*

aloud report, was included to reveal the types of information heeded with regards to the situation represented and the information drawn from long-term memory during task performance. *Think aloud* reports have been widely used in second language research to investigate the cognitive processes that underlie reading and writing in a second language (Bowles 2010b:8, 9; Bowles 2008:360). They allow access to the cognitive processing that occurs in short term memory during a particular task (Ericsson and Simon 1993:221), and could help to elucidate the interplay between the prevailing context, and semantic and conceptual structures available to learners while they make decisions regarding temporal and aspectual marking in L2.

This study offers a mixed methods approach to the investigation of L1 conceptual transfer in interlanguage, with the joint aims of establishing statistical evidence for conceptual transfer with regards to erroneous use of distinct constructions in L2 English and revealing its influence in online processing through the collection of qualitative data in the form of the *think aloud* report.

The advantages of this mixed methods approach are twofold: i) that it allows for the establishment of statistical significance with regard to error in target concepts, ii) that it offers the opportunity to further expose L1 influence in on-line processing where decisions regarding form and choice are made, taking into account the etic features of the situation judged to be salient by the speaker and the conceptual content accessed and its influence on construction choice, as well as accounting for factors which may obscure transfer such as use of the correct, or prototypical, form. (Section 4.2).

The following two sections detail the procedures with regards to the collection of both data types, first the quantitative and then the qualitative.

4.2 Quantitative Data

Experimental Design and Participants

The 20 item cloze test (Appendix 2 and Laminar for reference) (see full description in section 4.7) was used to obtain numerical data regarding choice of structure in the specific temporal contexts under investigation across four groups. The cloze test included 10 conceptual difference items (CD) and ten non-conceptual difference items (NCD) developed with reference to the analysis in Chapter 3 and detailed in section 4.7. Following the methodological framework provided by Jarvis (2000:253), L1 transfer was investigated with regard to his three proposed criteria:

- i) intra-L1-group homogeneity in learners' IL performance
- ii) inter-L1-group heterogeneity in learners' IL performance
- iii) intra-L1-group congruity between learners' L1 and IL performance.

This meant an experimental design with the inclusion of 4 distinct language groups (Table 3). Group 1 (the experimental group - ExG) Italian L1 speakers of English L2; Group 2 English L1 speakers (English native speaker control - ENS); Group 3 Italian L1 speakers (Italian native speaker control - INS); and Group 4 Maltese L1 speakers (Maltese native speakers, third language control - MNS). Participants in groups 1 and 3 were drawn from the Università di Palermo. They were at level B2 according to the European Framework, as classified by their institution of study (Università di Palermo). They were Health Science students studying English as a second language as part of their degree programme. Participants in groups 2 (ENS) and 4 (MNS) were

drawn from the University of Malta. All were undergraduates. Participants in group 2 were Medical Students who had been in Malta for no longer than a year and were all native speakers of English from the UK. These year 1 Medical Students had chosen to study in Malta for financial reasons. The University of Malta does not charge tuition fees to European Union residents. Group 4 participants were also undergraduate students at the University of Malta taking extra English courses in order to help them cope with the English speaking university environment. All had a Grade C⁷ or below in their English A' Level, and used only Maltese at home. Maltese L1 speakers were chosen as the third language control because the expression of temporal meanings in Maltese differs significantly from Italian so as to give rise to a potential diverse range of errors, as detailed below. All participants were controlled for knowledge of a third language. They all signed an informed consent document (Appendix 5) before completing the test.

The cloze tests were administered to all groups in a lecture theatre at their respective institutions (Malta University/ Università di Palermo) and the investigator was present at all times.

⁷ In consultation with the linguistics department at the University of Malta, I have been advised that a score of Grade C or below in the Maltese A 'level matches an Intermediate level as regards knowledge of grammar and lexis.

Table 3 The experimental groups included in the study, the tests that they participated in, the language in which it was performed, and the number of participants in each group.

Group	Native Language	20 item Cloze Test 10 CD items 10 NCD items	Temporal perspective Task	Think aloud	Number of participants
1: Experimental Group	Italian	English	English	6	54 + 6 <i>Think aloud.</i>
2: English L1 Control	English	English	English	X	50
3: Italian L1 Control.	Italian	Italian	Italian	X	50
4: Third Language Control.	Maltese	English	English	X	40

Although English is one of Malta's official languages, in 2004 an opinion survey showed that 86% of the population prefer to speak Maltese (Badia i Capdevila 2004). The remaining 14% are primarily made up of British ex-patriates and their families now resident in Malta.

Maltese is a semitic language. While it has been influenced by the romance languages, particularly Italian, and also by English, this influence is primarily found in its vocabulary. The grammar of Maltese has been influenced by those languages to a much lesser extent (Fabri 1995:325).

Indeed, the tense and aspect system of Maltese is sufficiently different to that of Italian as to suggest that Maltese speakers of English as an L2 should make qualitatively different errors in the expression of the temporal concepts under investigation. Briefly, in Maltese there is a basic binary split between past and non-past temporal representation. The default readings of the two unmarked aspectual forms, the perfective and the imperfective, are past and present respectively. Temporal information is conveyed using one of two verbs: *kien* (was) to indicate past and *ikun*

(is) to indicate future. *Kien* added to the perfective, for example would give the equivalent of the English Past Perfect (Fabri 1995:334).

There is no equivalent of the Present Perfect in Maltese and as such Maltese speakers of English L2 experience significant difficulties with it (R. Fabri, personal communication July 22nd 2013). Anecdotally, however, errors appear different to those of the Italian speaker, where Past Perfect is often used in place of Present Perfect and Past Simple for example (1) (R. Fabri, personal communication July 22nd 2013)

- 1) I *had gone* to the supermarket yesterday.

Cloze test responses from the four groups were analysed statistically, with regards to Jarvis' (2000) three criteria. The cloze test itself is described and discussed in section 4.6. The statistical analysis of the responses to the cloze test in relation to Jarvis' three criteria is detailed below.

4.2.1. Statistical Analysis

Each participant's responses were scored according to total number of errors, total error score on conceptual difference (CD items) and total error score on non-conceptual difference (NCD items). The scores on CD items were further broken down into error scores on conceptual difference items relating to time (Concepts 1 and 2. Table 2 - Chapter 3); those where the difference pertained to temporal orientation, past to present vs. present (CDT), and those relating to result (Concepts 3 and 4. Table 2 – Chapter 3), where the difference involved the perception of a result state (CDR) (Appendix 14 for raw data)

1) Intra-L1-group homogeneity

The intra-L1-group homogeneity criteria requires performance in L2 to be consistent across the L1 group.

From this Hypothesis 1, detailed below, was developed for this study.

Hypothesis 1: the experimental group 1 will err more consistently on conceptual difference (CD) items compared to non- conceptual difference (NCD) items. Scores were compared for CD items and NCD items within group 1. The statistical test used was Wilcoxon Signed-Rank non-parametric test. Statistical significance was set at $P < 0.05$. This test was chosen as it is able to assess the significance of difference in performance of one group on two different item types (CD vs. NCD). Results in section 5.1.1

2) Inter-L1-group heterogeneity

The inter-L1-group heterogeneity criterion requires that performance in L2 differ significantly between two diverging L1 groups, this case, Italian and Maltese. This criterion resulted in the development of Hypotheses 2 and 3.

Hypothesis 2: the performances of group 1 (ExG) and group 4 (MNS) differ significantly, especially with regard to CD items. Scores were compared between groups 1 (ExG) and 4 (MNS) for i) their total score, ii) CD items score and iii) NCD items score. The Statistical test used was: Students t-test (paired, 2 tailed) for a between group comparison. Statistical significance was set at $P < 0.05$. This test was chosen as it establishes the difference in performance of two different groups for the same items. This test may also incorporate measures of intra-L1-group homogeneity as a significant effect may be seen where between group differences (inter-L1-group) are greater than within group differences (intra-L1-group). A two tailed test was used to test for difference in either direction from the mean. The null hypothesis assumes no difference in either direction.

Hypothesis 3: group 4 shows no significant difference in error rate for CD and NCD items.

Scores were compared scores for CD items and NCD items within group 4. The statistical test used was Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test as described above. Statistical significance was set at $P < 0.05$.

Results are given in section 5.1.2

3) Intra-L1-group congruity

The intra-L1-group congruity criterion holds that equivalent forms should be used in L1 and L2 by speakers of the same L1, in this case Italian L1 learners of English L2. Hypothesis 4 reflects this criterion in the current study.

Hypothesis 4: groups 1 (ExG) and 3 (INS) will use equivalent forms in English (Group1) and Italian (Group 3) for CD items.

The responses for each CD item were categorised according to the grammatical form used in English (Experimental group 1) and Italian (Italian L1 control). They were entered into an excel spreadsheet, percentages were calculated and results are given in section 5.1.3.

Jarvis' framework detailed above was chosen as it is methodologically robust, offering the possibility of uncovering statistical evidence for the existence of L1 transfer in the predicted areas. However, his experimental design does not allow for the uncovering of the type of cognitive processing which reveals the interplay between context, semantics, conceptual structure and lexis and therefore, may not distinguish between formal and conceptual transfer. In fact, because meaning making in interlanguage is multifactorial conceptual transfer effects may be easily obscured unless a technique which captures cognitive processing is applied. In his study, Jarvis does uncover partial evidence for effects (i), (ii) and (iii), but is unable to account for some effects such as:

- L1s coinciding to produce the same L2 performance,
- learners' use of prototypical terms,
- two L2 options being available to learners to express the required concept
- and individual variation.

Jarvis (2000: 256 - 259) acknowledges that these factors may obscure transfer even after variables such as age, L2 proficiency, social and educational background have been controlled for.

In order to verify conceptual transfer in line with the Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis (CTH) (Jarvis 2007: 58), it is essential to provide evidence for the L1 transfer originating at a conceptual level. The current study seeks evidence of conceptual transfer in Italian L1 speakers' expression of certain temporal concepts in their L2 English. In order to obtain such evidence, the quantitative analysis detailed above was supported by a qualitative approach, the *think aloud* report, which combined with the statistical support of Jarvis' proposed methodology was used to verify the existence of L1 transfer in the areas under investigation.

4.3. Qualitative Data

As stated in Hypothesis 1, the aim of this piece of research is to ascertain whether errors occurring in the expression of distinct aspects of temporality related to use of the Present Perfect are a result of transfer at a conceptual or formal level. Previous transfer research has obtained statistical evidence to suggest that patterns of L1 conceptualisations and concepts may be transferred into L2 through encoding of responses which seem to fit L1 patterns (Bylund and Jarvis (2011), also with the support of co-verbal data such as eye-tracking tasks (Flecken (2011)). However, in this study qualitative *think aloud* reports were included with the aim of revealing the links which are made between the context, and the semantic and conceptual structures available to the speaker providing for them to be explained more specifically and not as an interpretation of statistically significant data. This can provide a window on the

nature of L1 transfer which is more indicative and explanatory than statistical probability alone. Some responses can be ambiguous with regards to conceptual and formal transfer (Item 1 Figure 7 below) and evidence of real time processing during task performance can help to clear up these ambiguities.

Evidence for conceptual transfer can be obtained from the statistical analysis of cloze test responses themselves. However, in response to Item 1 below in Figure 7, how may the cognitive processes leading to the different erroneous responses *I wait* or *I am waiting* be elaborated? The response *I am waiting* could potentially be interpreted as the transfer of the core semantic imperfective aspect of the Italian Presente Semplice, coupled with a present orientation to the event resulting in the use of the Present Progressive, so much can be surmised from the formal response alone. However, in order to understand fully the response *I wait*, which could be an example of formal transfer (see discussion of Jarvis on methodological rigor above), evidence of the cognitive processes underlying this choice is necessary.



Figure 7. Figure 7 shows the cartoon context for item 1.

To this end *think aloud* reports were chosen as a primary data collection technique in the hope of further understanding the underlying cognitive processes that led to these types of error and thereby contributing significantly to the body of evidence of a role for concept and conceptualisation transfer in second language acquisition.

The *think aloud* report (Ericsson and Crutcher 1991:66) is the act of “verbalising new thoughts as they enter attention as part of the normal sequential thought processes of performing a task”. They provide access to the contents of short-term memory (STM) (Ericsson and Simon 1993:221), and also to the information that may be retrieved from long-term memory through recognition processes (Ericsson and Simon 1993:188). Ericsson and Simon (1993:188) maintain that accessing LTM is only a question of providing the correct cues which trigger recognition processes in STM. In this case, the correct cues are those which pertain to the concept to be represented and this means representing as far as possible within the test the real-life situation including the correct temporal and aspectual features.

Given that this thesis aims to uncover evidence for conceptualisation and concept transfer and as such is interested in the result of the processes of conceptualisation driven by construal operations, processes which occur in short-term memory and drive the subsequent accessing of semantic nodes in long-term memory (Croft and Cruse 2004:46 – Chapter 2 this thesis), the *think aloud* report technique was chosen as a suitable data collection technique. It was essential to provide the correct context and temporal cues in the cloze test to trigger recognition and retrieval of the target concepts and conceptualisations (Ericsson and Simon 1993: 115, 123). (**Appendix 4** for semantic representations in the cloze test). Importantly, Ericsson and Simon (1993: 167) caution that “The information that is heeded during the performance of a task is the information that is reported; and the information that is reported is the information

that is heeded". This means that while *think aloud* reports may give us access to that which is attended to and present in short and long term memory, they do not provide information regarding the steps in the processes of recognition or retrieval. This investigation is interested in revealing the nature of short and long-term memory content to provide evidence for conceptualisation or concept transfer, and as such it should not be necessary to access information with regard to the processes of memory retrieval. Evidence for L1 based conceptualisation transfer is found in the contextual information that is attended to and temporal references made as a perspective on the etic situation for expression is formed and brought to STM. Evidence for concept transfer, on the other hand, may be found in information brought from long-term memory regarding, for example, the meaning that a particular construction holds for the speaker and how that is used in order to make decisions regarding suitable forms. The information stored in long-term memory refers to the categories, their boundaries, prototypes and construction semantics which are formed through socialisation into an L1 discourse community as elaborated in Chapters 2 and 3 and represented on the semantic maps. This may mean reference to particular constructions, their meanings and use according to the speaker. (For further elaboration see coding section below)

Evidence for concept transfer may be difficult to distinguish from semantic transfer, as detailed in the footnote on page 52 of this thesis. Concept transfer is evident where the L2 is used to express an L1 specific concept in relation to a specific etic situation. *Think aloud* reports have been widely used in second language research to investigate the cognitive processes that underlie reading and writing in a second language and have also been used as a data elicitation technique looking at the translation process. (Bowles 2008:360; Bowles 2010b:8, 9). However, they are regarded as controversial by some, and over the last 15 years a significant number of studies have been dedicated

to investigating issues regarding the possible veridicality and reactivity of verbal protocols (Sanz *et al* 2009; Bowles 2008; Loew and Morgan-Short 2004).

The issue of veridicality, whether or not the verbal reports are an accurate reflection of cognitive processes, may be important when reports are to be collected retrospectively. If there is a time delay between completion of the task and reporting, then there is the potential for the participant to forget what they were thinking during the task. When reports are collected while the task is being performed there is a minimal threat to veridicality (Bowles 2010a:14).

The issue of reactivity, the idea that the extra effort that is required to report while performing a task could affect the cognitive processes involved and therefore, also task performance (Ellis 2001; Jourdenais 2001), however, deserves further consideration.

Reactivity has been shown for both accuracy (Rossomondo 2007) and latency (time taken on the task) (Bowles and Leow 2005), but only under certain conditions (Bowles 2010b:109). In fact, the issue of reactivity of verbal protocols in SLA has been the object of a comprehensive review (Bowles 2010a) and metaanalysis of 14 studies on reactivity (Bowles 2010b) which has provided pertinent suggestions as to the conditions which are optimum for their validity.

Bowles took into account a number of variables in her meta-analysis, including: type of verbal report (meta-cognitive vs. non meta-cognitive), language of verbal report (L1 vs. L2), language of task (L1 vs. L2), type of task (reading, writing, grammar) and form learning (receptive vs. productive). The principal finding of Bowles' meta-analysis is that thinking aloud may have a small effect, either facilitative or detrimental, on post-test performance, and that thinking aloud does affect latency, with *think aloud* groups taking significantly longer, especially when they are required to

report metacognitively. Non-metacognitive reporting only minimally increases time on task (Bowles 2010b:108).

Bowles reports interesting findings regarding verbalising in L1 or L2. Most studies offer participants a choice of verbalising in either L1 or L2 or a combination of both; however, Bowles (2010b:107) found that verbalising in L2 or having the choice of L1 and/or L2 can increase time on task and affect task performance. Moreover, verbalising entirely in L2 has been shown to be detrimental to productive form learning (Bowles 2010b:98).

So far, most reactivity research has been performed using reading tasks, with only a few involving either writing or grammar (Bowles 2010b:108), and reactivity has been measured through performance on post-tests (Bowles and Leow 2005:415; Leow and Morgan-Short 2004:35). Studies combining think aloud with cloze tests have been used to verify cloze tests construct validity (Storey 1997:1) and to investigate the cognitive processes underlying cloze test completion compared to other test types (Fahim 2012:131). Interestingly, two of the higher order strategies activated in relation to cloze test completion by the participants in Fahim's study was grammar knowledge and choosing the most suitable option from a number of choices (Fahim 2012:135), processes which are targeted in this study. The following chapter details the *think aloud* data analysed with regard to specific choices of tense and aspect in responses to cloze test items.

This study makes use of a 20 item cloze test. Taking into consideration the research work detailed above, participants were required to provide concurrent non meta-cognitive think aloud reports in L1 (Yoshida 2008:203). Consequently, it was expected that they would take slightly more time over the task than the silent groups (Bowles 2010b:107) and that thinking aloud may have a slight facilitative effect upon text

comprehension (Bowles 2010b:108). Bowles also mentions that cognitively demanding tasks may be more likely to be reactive than less demanding ones (Bowles 2010b:61). In order to control for this, the participants level was tightly controlled (All certified at B2 level on the Common European Framework), ensuring both that they were aware of, and could use all target forms and could cope with the level of the reading text.

In sum, there was no reason to suppose that asking the participants to think aloud in this case scenario would affect the cognitive processes under investigation. Indeed, the type of data collected arose naturally in response to the questions and that also helped to ensure that there was no effect upon task performance (Bowles 2010b:64).

In some cases, participants were asked to clarify specific responses retrospectively immediately after the test. In this case also the threat to veridicality was minimal given the very short time that elapsed between the *think aloud* and retrospective response and also the presence of the cloze test as a cue to performance (Bowles 2010a:14).

4.3.1 Think aloud Procedure

Group 1 *think alouds* were conducted at the Università di Palermo. *Think aloud* participants were volunteers who had been isolated from the main group during the administration of the cloze tests. They were given individual appointments with the researcher for the *think aloud* procedure after the administration of the cloze tests to the main group, but while the main group was still in class. This was done to ensure that students did not report back on the content of the test.

Each participant was given an informed consent document (Appendix 5) (Bowles 2010b:114) and instructions for participants and warm up document (Appendix 6). The

former explains the *think aloud* procedure, assures the participants of the anonymity of the data, explains what will happen to the data, and indicates the reason for the research. The latter explains the concept of thinking aloud and introduces the warm-up task.

Once participants had read the consent document, they were asked to watch a short video lasting 1 – 2 minutes of a student performing a grammatical task regarding comparative and superlative adjectives and thinking aloud. Originally, only a warm up task (Appendix 6) (Bowles 2010b:117) had been planned; however, as a result of the pilot testing with Maltese L1 speakers a video had been included before the participant warm-up task (Appendix 6). The aim of the video was to model the type of verbalisations sought as part of the test. The aim of the warm up task was for the participants to familiarise themselves with the *think aloud* process and to check they understood the instructions. Participants were given the opportunity to ask any questions about the procedure also after the warm up.

A verbal warm up had been chosen which should elicit verbalisations regarding lexical meaning and logical order and therefore did not prime the target structures of the cloze task to be completed. However, the warm up was a verbal task and it encouraged the participants to think about language and its meaning to solve a problem. Thus, it provided a good transition to the research task.

For the research task, participants were asked to complete the cartoon cloze test and to think their thoughts aloud while they were doing it. They were referred to the video as an example. They were asked if they had any questions and whether they were happy to continue before the test began.

4.3.2 Think aloud coding

Transcription and Segmenting

The *think aloud* protocols were transcribed and segmented. Segmenting was performed with attention to the verbalisations which occurred in a single burst and were punctuated by pauses and hesitations. According to Ericsson and Simon (1993:225), units of articulation together with pauses and hesitations are very good indicators of shifts of processing cognitive structures. Segments are large enough to include all the contextual information relevant for coding. This is important as regards inter-rater reliability.

To ensure reliability of coding, a second rater was presented with samples of the data for coding. This rater had no knowledge of the hypothesis being tested. The data samples were also presented in random order, as recommended by Ericsson and Simon (1993:293). This helps to prevent the rater making inferences based on information contained in preceding statements, so that as much as possible each statement is analysed in its own terms. Ericsson and Simon claim that inter-rater reliability will be higher when each segment is encoded with regard to its own content only rather than when relations between segments are considered (1993:294). Rater agreement should reach more than 80% of samples coded (Lombard 2010), which was the case in this study (see section 5.2.1).

Codes

The coding scheme developed for this study is available in Appendix 12. The nature of *think aloud* reports allows for the final development of coding categories during

analysis (Bowles 2010b:128) as categories are added or deleted in accordance with their appearance in the generated material. The scheme was developed out of the collected *think aloud* reports and also with reference to the pilot study and previously collected MA data which provided some indication of the coding categories that might be formed.

In August 2013, as detailed above, a first version of the cloze test (Appendix 7) was piloted with two Italian L1 learners of English L2 in Cardiff. Their *think aloud* data included the following elements relevant to the study.

i) Temporal Perspective

The two participants indicated the temporal perspective that they took on the events using a mixture of classroom meta-language and direct statements about the temporal and aspectual elements of the situation that they perceived. Examples are given in Italian with following English translation. Consider the following from participant 1 as an example:

“I’m waiting for per me è un Presente Progressivo c’è un’azione in corso”/
I’m waiting for me it is Present Progressive, there is an action in progress.

Here participant 1 was reasoning out what tense to use for the first item of the cloze test version 1 (Appendix 7), pasted below.

Sophia: Hi, 1) I (wait) for you for ages, why are you late?
How are you?
Carol: Oh, terrible!

It would seem that participant 1 perceives predominantly the present ongoing nature of the action. He shows this by explaining that his use of the Present Progressive is down to there being an action in progress in the present.

Consider also the second participant's reasoning (Example 2) for item 7:

Even though I 7) (know) him for only a week,

“questo non è al passato perché lo conosco da solo una settimana.”/ this is not past because I have known him for only a week.

So, by using the lay-metalanguage *non è al passato/this is not past* participant 2 dismisses the past element of this situation because the state of knowing the person has only been in place for a week. Indeed, his answer to item 7 is *I know*. Here his perception of past would seem to be those situations in place farther back in the past than a week ago. This would fit the idea of vast present in Italian (Hewson and Bubenik 1997:354); the present tense is imperfective and as such may encompass a vast number of events and states which take place close to and/or simultaneously with the present.

ii) Comprehension and decision making strategies

The pilot *think aloud* data also revealed some interesting information regarding the comprehension and decision making strategies employed by the participants; one of note was translation into L1 for example:

“Sto cercando di tradurre la frase in Italiano per dargli un senso e capire come coniugare il verbo.”/ I am trying to translate the sentence into Italian to understand it and understand how to conjugate the verb.

This is a good example of the participants’ reliance on L1 to comprehend the text and make decisions about verb forms. These strategies are important as they may combine with and possibly obscure instances of conceptual transfer, where transfer does not just involve form, but also conceptual information.

The participants also scanned the text for temporal cues such as the tense of verbs in the surrounding text. Consider this example, as verbalised for item 9:

Carol: OK, but we have to get it back. I 9) (think) about him
from the moment we said good-bye and now I can’t text him to say that 10)
..... (arrive)
“Non so se è al presente o al passato, said è al passato, quindi è al passato.”/
I don’t know if it is in the present or the past, said is past, so it is past.

As detailed below, the participant reads ahead and uses the tense of the verb *said* to inform his decision regarding item 9. Once again, there is evidence of the multifactorial reasoning which affects decisions regarding tense and aspect marking in the expression of temporal concepts in L2.

The *think aloud* data was included in the current study as a possible means of further revealing conceptual transfer, but has also proved instrumental in possibly distinguishing between concept and conceptualisation transfer as this analysis of some of my MA data shows. The following data was obtained as part of my MA thesis and

reveals how it can be possible to capture instances of conceptual transfer using qualitative data and further how distinguishing between concept and conceptualisation transfer may prove challenging, but doable through reference to the tense and aspect analysis performed in chapter 3.

Participants in the MA study were shown a picture story where a man ‘Crusoe’ falls off a ship and ends up on a desert island. At this point, he has been on the island for a week and has just written SOS in the sand as a way of attracting attention. The test item under discussion and the participant verbalisation are shown in table 4.

Table 4. The test item and explanation for the test item and the relevant participant verbalisation.

Test item	Participant verbalisation
I.....(write) SOS in the sand. Expected response: <i>I have written SOS</i> etc..	“Questo penso dovevo mettere il <i>Past</i> perché comunque l’SOS già l’ha finita di scrivere.” <i>For this one I think I should have put Past because he has already finished to write the SOS.</i>

In this example, the participant makes overt reference to the English Past Simple tense and gives their reason for choosing it. This reason is based on the fact that Crusoe has written SOS in the sand, and that the act of writing the SOS is over and finished. Here the Simple Past is evoked in line with L1 conceptualisation of the situation: emphasis on the finished action of writing, which would fit with the use of Perfetto Composto here in Italian. Therefore, this verbalisation could be interpreted as evidence for transfer occurring at a conceptual level.

Therefore, while the MA data produced some interesting examples of potential conceptual transfer, it became evident that further analysis was needed to understand whether or not these were potentially examples of concept or conceptualisation transfer. This distinction can potentially be achieved though teasing apart the interplay between stored category content in long-term memory and conceptualisation, through

an analysis of participant online verbalisations informed by the tense and aspect description in Chapter 3.

According to Jarvis (2011:4) concept transfer refers to “cross-linguistic effects arising from differences in the structure or internal make-up of the concepts stored in the minds of speakers of different languages”. Such differences are seen in the conceptual content of the categories of English Present Perfect and its structural equivalent the Perfetto Composto in Italian. As detailed in Chapters 2 and 3 this may be at the root of Italian L1 speakers’ difficulty with English structures, such as the Present Perfect. The use of the Present Perfect for example necessarily entails a state of aftermath (Michaelis 2004:4); however, the corresponding Italian tense, the Perfetto Composto, while including the idea of *compiutezza* or result, holds the finished action as salient. In fact, this would account for the Perfetto Composto encroaching upon the territory of the Italian Passato Semplice, which historically has been used for past and complete actions (Chapter 3).

It is possible to hypothesise then, in relation to the example in table 4 from the MA data, how conceptual transfer may occur as a result of the differing internal make-up of stored concepts or concept transfer. The situation to be described is that of past *finished action, with a present result state and physical result – I have written SOS in the sand*. The action of writing is finished; there is both the physical result of the SOS still being in the sand, and also the fact that writer is in the state of having written the SOS. In Italian the Perfetto Composto would be used *Ho scritto* and in English the Present Perfect *I have written*. However, in example 1 the Past Simple is used erroneously by the participant for this concept. It is hypothesised that this error is due to a difference in the internal make-up of the categories of Perfetto Composto and Present Perfect, and therefore, the meaning that this construction holds for each

speaker in L1. While Perfetto Composto category places emphasis upon the finished nature of a past action, the Present Perfect emphasises its present result state. Therefore, the difference in category features impacts on conceptualisation processes leading the Italian L1 speaker to conceptualise the event as past and finished and to choose the L2 form (Simple Past) which covers this function. Therefore, in this case, differing concepts stored in long-term memory lead to differing conceptualisations, and possible concept and related conceptualisation transfer. Furthermore, convincing evidence for concept transfer may be found where an L2 form is ascribed the conceptual meaning associated with its L1 structural equivalent. This may be evident where, for example, the English Present Perfect is used with a past and finished meaning consistent with the Italian L1 structural equivalent the Perfetto Composto. Participant verbalisations, such as those sought through this study, have the potential to reveal instances of transfer such as this.

Therefore, within the cognitive linguistic framework of this thesis, it is hypothesised that conceptualisation transfer takes place at the level of construal operations, which are in turn driven by the categories available to the speaker in LTM. Evidence for conceptualisation transfer may be found where cross-linguistic grammatical difference and therefore core semantics and conceptual content would seem to indicate differing perceptions of the same event situation to be described. Chapters 2 and 3 outline the case for possible conceptualisation transfer occurring where the English tense system expresses the notion of past to present time such as in *I have known him for years*. While, the same function in Italian is covered by the Presente Semplice *Lo conosco da anni*. The semantics of these two tenses would seem to indicate a difference in terms of temporal perspective, with the English speaker taking a retrospective, past to present

viewpoint and the Italian speaker, a more present orientated perspective. This may be seen in example 3 in table 5:

Table 5. The test item example 3 and relevant participant verbalisation.

Test item	Participant verbalisation
I (know) him for years. Situation: Referring to a friend.	“Non la conosce al passato la conosce ancora.” / <i>He doesn't know him in the past, he still knows him.</i>

In example 3 the participant clearly states that she feels that the past is not relevant to the situation and she perceives the present orientation of the action as salient. The participant's response to the corresponding test item was *I know*. It is argued, therefore, that the participant's error is due to a qualitative difference in the way that they orientate themselves to the situation. The Italian L1 speaker's orientation is present, where the native English speaker focuses on the past to present nature of the situation. In brief, conceptualisation transfer may be hypothesised where stored knowledge serves, through construal operations, to invoke differing perspectives cross-linguistically, which are then transferred into L2. In the case detailed above, different categories are used cross-linguistically in the same etic situation, the *Presente Semplice* in Italian which is present oriented and the *Present Perfect* in English which entails a past to present time span. Concept transfer, in contrast, occurs where category content differs cross-linguistically (e.g. *Present Perfect* vs. *Perfetto Composto*), and where L1 consistent category content is ascribed to the wrong L2 form, which may have a knock on effect on conceptualisation (Chapter 2).

This thesis was primarily conceived to look for evidence that the detailed errors are due to transfer at a conceptual level. Due to the detailed nature of the data that is necessary to distinguish between concept and conceptualisation transfer, it was reasonable to assume that only glimpses of these two could be caught. However, as

detailed previously, the *think aloud* data obtained, and given in the following chapter, allowed for the potential distinction of these two types of transfer.

As a result of the elusiveness of conceptual transfer and the difficulties that revealing it in learner language presents, a temporal perspective task (Appendix 11) was also included as a further way of possibly capturing differences in temporal perception between English and Italian L1 speakers.

4.4 Temporal Perspective Task

As is evident from the above discussion, differing conceptualisations are difficult to capture, and in order to obtain further support of differences in perspective taking between the two language groups (English L1 and Italian L1 speakers), an additional test was included in the form of the temporal perspective task.

The aim of the temporal perspective task was to assess the participants' perspective regarding the flow of time related to the individual. This should help to further support the idea that temporal perspective taking can differ cross-linguistically in English and Italian and impact upon the expression of specific temporal concepts in English by Italian L1 speakers of English L2.

The idea for the test came from the work of Hewson (1991:51) who claims that tense systems may be defined according to whether their unmarked forms fall into the category of *Ascending time* or *Descending time*. The notions of Ascending and Descending time as defined by Hewson (1991:512) are based on the idea that cognitively movement through time may be perceived in relation either to a figure or its background. Descending time, represented through the movement of the background from the present into the past, affords an internal perspective which

accords with imperfective forms. Ascending time, on the other hand, conceives of the passing of time from the perspective of the figure against the background as it moves forward into the future. This view of time is completive, external to the event and consistent with performative tenses which require a high level of temporal correspondence between the event time and reference time (Hewson and Bubnik 1997:358). In English, the unmarked tenses Present Simple and Past Simple are performative, and as such fall into Ascending time. In contrast, the unmarked tenses of the Italian system fall into both categories. For example, the *Presente* and *Imperfetto*, which are imperfective in nature, are in Descending time, while the *Perfetto Semplice*, which is perfective in nature would be in Ascending time. This may result in differing perceptions of the passing of time cross-linguistically as exemplified below.

Consider the etic situation *waiting for the bus*. An English speaker, whose tense system falls into Ascending Time, perceives the time passing as they wait, as ongoing into the future; whereas, an Italian speaker whose *Presente Semplice* tense used for this function falls into Descending Time, perceives time as flowing backwards and away from them.

The distinctions detailed above regarding the flow of time and tense are important as they allow an interpretation of a speaker's perception of the movement of time. Descending time is described as passive (Hewson 1991:512), such that the background is moving against a/the central figure. In this view of time Hewson maintains that "the past is irretrievable and death inevitable" (Hewson 1991:512). Instead, in Ascending time the figure is seen to be moving against the background. Hewson describes this as "The active view of time, where the cognitive faculties employ past experience to understand and explain the present, and to plan the future." (Hewson 1991:512)

These distinctive views of the flow of time may be connected to the differing use of tenses for concept 1 *state up to the present*. E.g. *I have known him for years* cross-linguistically, for example. In Italian the Presente Semplice is used, an imperfective tense, implying a present orientation on the event, with the speaker at the centre firmly situated in the present, with time flowing backwards from the present. Instead, the use of the Present Perfect in English implies an agentive view of time. The speaker has to situate themselves in the past to come forward and explain the present. In this case the speaker situates themselves in the past and perceives themselves as moving forward into the present.

In order to understand better whether Italian L1 speakers perceive time as flowing backwards and away from them, compared to English L1 speakers looking at the passing of time from the perspective of a figure moving forward into the future, the participants in Groups 1 (ExG Italian L1) and 2 (ENS English L1) were presented with a 2 part picture model (Appendix 11) of a figure in the foreground and in the background a series of scenes depicting time passing on a wheel. The figure is shown in the foreground of a neighbourhood scene; over time the neighbourhood changes, houses are built, trees grow or are pulled down etc. To show the passing of time, it is possible either to move the figure or the background (the wheel). Participants in Group 1 (ExG) and Group 2 (ENS) were asked to represent the flow of time by moving either the figure or the background. (Appendix 11)

It was hypothesised that the Italian L1 speakers would be more likely to choose to move the background, where the English L1 speakers would chose to move the figure.

4.5 Pilot Testing

First Version

The first version of the cloze test (Appendix 7) was piloted in Cardiff in August 2013. The participants were two Italian L1 intermediate speakers of English L2. Both were from Palermo in Sicily. They were attending a summer school at Celtic School in Cardiff. Participants were asked to complete the cloze test and *think aloud*. They were asked to verbalise their thoughts as they completed the test. This did not seem to prove difficult for either of the participants. The piloting of the test highlighted the following issues:

Length of the test

The test included 30 items, 15 CD items and 15 NCD items. It became clear that the test was too long as the participants began to tire around the twentieth item. As well as the items themselves requiring concentration, the participants also had to deal with the heavier reading load which comes with a longer text. It was felt that the length of the test might affect scores, particularly at the latter end of the test; consequently, the text length was shortened and the number of items reduced to 20 (10 CD items and 10 NCD items).

Context

Both participants reported being unsure of the temporal context of the text, as was evident not only in their *think aloud* reports, but was also reported to me by both of

them after the test. Participant G, as can be seen in his verbalisation about item 9 below, sought clues in the tenses of the surrounding verbs to help him decide his answer.

Item 9. I (think) about him from the moment we **said** goodbye and now I can't text him to say etc...

*“Non capisco se è al presente o al passato, said è al passato quindi è al passato.” / I don't understand if it is in the present or the past **said** is past so it is past.*

For item 9 participant G used the Past Simple *thought*, where a Present Perfect Continuous *I have been thinking* was needed. Here an error caused by conceptual transfer from L1, as predicted in chapter 3, would result in the use of the Present Simple in English reflecting a present orientation to the event. However, it would appear that the importance given to cues in the text has impacted upon tense choice in this instance, masking any potential transfer effects.

This raised two issues, the first being that in order to test the temporal concepts under investigation the relevant temporal context needed to be highly evident to the test takers. Indeed, both participants indicated that pictures/images would help them to orient themselves to the text. This was achieved in subsequent testing by using a cartoon story to contextualise the test language. The participants therefore saw the principal characters in their present context from which they could infer the temporal orientation of the surrounding events. This served to minimise the use of strategies which were likely to push the participants off course. Secondly, participant G's response drew attention to the type of strategies that may be employed by L2 English speakers as they look for the correct answer to the question, for example, looking for temporal cues in the text, and it was expected that examples of other such strategies

would emerge through the *think aloud* data together with instances of conceptual transfer

Participants' level of English

Both participants had been assigned to an intermediate level class at the language school. However, their responses and also test strategies revealed that the English level of one participant was much lower than the other. Furthermore, this affected the participant's ability to *think aloud* in that he was so involved in trying to understand the text he was not able to verbalise his thoughts efficiently, even in L1. This also manifested itself in frequent requests for clarification from myself. Consequently, only students who were at a high intermediate or lower upper-intermediate level as evaluated by the institution in which they were studying (Università di Palermo, University of Malta) were enrolled in the study.

Second Version

The second and final version of the cloze test was developed in conjunction with a cartoonist (Appendices 2 and 3). See section 4.6 below for the full description of the cloze test item by item. There are two versions of the test: one in Italian, the other in English. The Italian version serves to provide data regarding intra-L1 group congruity as detailed above.

The English version of the test was piloted in November 2013 with seven native speakers of English. The results table is given in Appendix (8). The Italian version was also piloted in November 2013 with five native speakers of Italian (See appendix 9 for results table). The English version of test was also administered to two Italian L1 learners of English L2.

Pilot Testing Native English Speakers

The test was administered in English. All participants were native speakers of English. The aim of the pilot was to check that native speakers do use the predicted target forms for the concepts under investigation, thereby verifying that the cartoons and text do adequately represent the target concepts and do not allow alternative constructions. For the most part the participants' responses were in line those predicted.

With regard to concept 1 (*state up to the present*), represented in items 6, 7 and 11, six out of the seven participants used the predicted Present Perfect form for each item. This would suggest that for the most part the situation was perceived as spanning the past up to the present and holding current relevance in the form of a state.

Concept 2 (*temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present*) is represented in items 1 and 3 of the cloze test. For item 1, five out of the seven participants used a perfect construction, indicating that they perceived a past to present time span for the action. Four out of the seven used a perfect continuous form, Present Perfect Continuous, suggesting an appreciation of the ongoing nature of the activity. Two out of the seven participants chose to represent the concept using the Past Simple. The item refers to the *waiting* in scene 1: *Ann has been waiting for her friend for ages*. It was thought that possibly those participants who used the Past Simple perceived that the waiting was over due to the arrival of Lucy. However, the use of the Past Simple in this situation was unusual as there are clearly cues to current relevance in the text and the cartoon. Despite some variation, the majority of this control group used the predicted Present Perfect Continuous form. (See Chapters 5 and 6 for a discussion of the native speaker responses to items 1 - 5.)

In the case of item 3, the results are similar to those for item 2. Four out of the seven participants used a perfect form (Present Perfect and Present Perfect Continuous), whereas three used the Past Simple. In this case, Lucy is explaining that she *has been looking* for her iPhone all morning. Given that the situation could be interpreted in terms of the morning being over, a clock was inserted showing the time as 10:00 am. This was done in order to cue the idea that the *looking* is ongoing as is the morning.

Concept 3 (*resultative past*) is represented in items 2, 4 and 18. For these items, the participants used either the Past Simple or the Present Perfect. Items 2 and 18 elicited the predicted Present Perfect form in the majority of cases. However, for item 4, the Past Simple was preferred by five out of the seven participants. This may be a function of the verbs used for these items. Items 2 and 18 use the verbs *lose* and *find* respectively. Both of these verbs could be said to hold a more obvious result state in

terms of their semantics than the verb *ask* (item 4), where the result state is a function of the situation itself.

For the final concept, 4 (*experiential past*), results were for the most part consistent with the predicted forms. Concept 4 is represented in items 10 and 15. Five out of seven used the Present Perfect for item 10, and all seven used the Present Perfect for item 15. This suggests that native speakers in this pilot group principally conceptualised these situations as holding an intermediate result state.

As a result of the pilot testing, only one change was made to the test and that was to add a clock to scene 2 as described above.

Pilot Testing Native Italian Speakers

The tests were administered in Italian. The participants were five native speakers of Italian. The results of the pilot testing of the Italian version of the cloze test are given in Appendix 9. The responses of the native speakers of Italian to the Italian version of the test are characterised with a high degree of consistency. As regards the test items, the only point of note is the use of continuous forms by two participants for Concept 2 (*temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present*), items 1 and 3. As described in Chapter 3, the use of the *Presente Progressivo* for this function is becoming increasingly common in Italian. The results of the pilot testing of the Italian version of the test did not indicate the need for any changes. As such, the only change is the addition of the clock to scene 2 as detailed above.

Pilot Testing Italian L1 Speakers of English L2

The test was administered in English. The participants were two Italian L1 speakers of English L2 at intermediate level. The aim of this pilot was to assess any comprehension difficulties that participants at this level might have with the test. Both participants completed the test within the 15 minute timeframe and did not report any comprehension problems. Responses are detailed in Appendix 10.

Pilot testing Maltese L1 speakers (*think aloud*)

The test was also piloted with four Maltese L1 speakers at the University of Malta. These students were at an upper-intermediate level of English and all taking supplementary courses within the university's Centre for English Language Proficiency. The students were asked to complete the test and to *think aloud* while they did. Before the test started, the participants were given a consent form and also asked to complete a verbal warm up task.

The pilot test highlighted two main issues. The first was that for these participants, the instructions and warm up task alone did not seem to provide enough of an indication as to the type of verbalisations required for the *think aloud*. Despite being given the same instructions as their Italian counterparts in the Cardiff pilots (Section 6.1), verbalisations were often limited to reading the text, speaking the answers out loud and observations of their own behaviour such as:

“I seem to be using the *have* word a lot.”

This scarcity of verbalisation may be explained by the fact that the Maltese L1 speakers were performing in L2 English and as such were experiencing an increased cognitive load (Bowles 2010b:98). Nevertheless, in order to further facilitate the Italian L1 speakers with the *think aloud*, and as a result of this difficulty a short (1 – 2 minute) video of a participant performing a task while thinking aloud was added to the pre-think aloud exercises.

4.6 Cloze Test Description

The following section provides a detailed explanation and rationale for each Conceptual Difference (CD) test item of the cloze test (Appendices 2 and 3). The information presented includes the target etic situation depicted and how it is represented in the cloze test, together with the tense which covers it in English and Italian with reference to core semantics and how differences between them may result in conceptual transfer for these items. This information is also summarised in tabular form in appendix 4.



Figure 8. The cartoon context for Item 1.

Item 1 represents concept 2, temporary activity which started in the past and continues up to the recent past with an effect evident in the present. In the cartoon, this concept is depicted by showing a girl (Lucy) waiting for her friend (Ann). The expected construction is *I have been waiting for ages*. The cues given in the cartoon to create this context are that Lucy is impatiently tapping her foot and looking at her watch, she also looks annoyed. Ann is sweating, having run to meet her friend, emphasising her lateness. The core semantics of the structures that are used to cover these functions in the languages under investigation (English and Italian) are significantly different as to suggest a divergent conceptual structure and conceptualisation of the event. English uses the Present Perfect Continuous for this function, whereas Italian favours the Presente Semplice. The differences in the core semantics of these constructions, given

in table 2 (Chapter 3), would indicate that the Italian speakers take a more present orientation to the event, where the English speakers are more likely to see the past to present relevance of it. This should be evident both in responses to the cloze test and *think aloud* verbalisations.

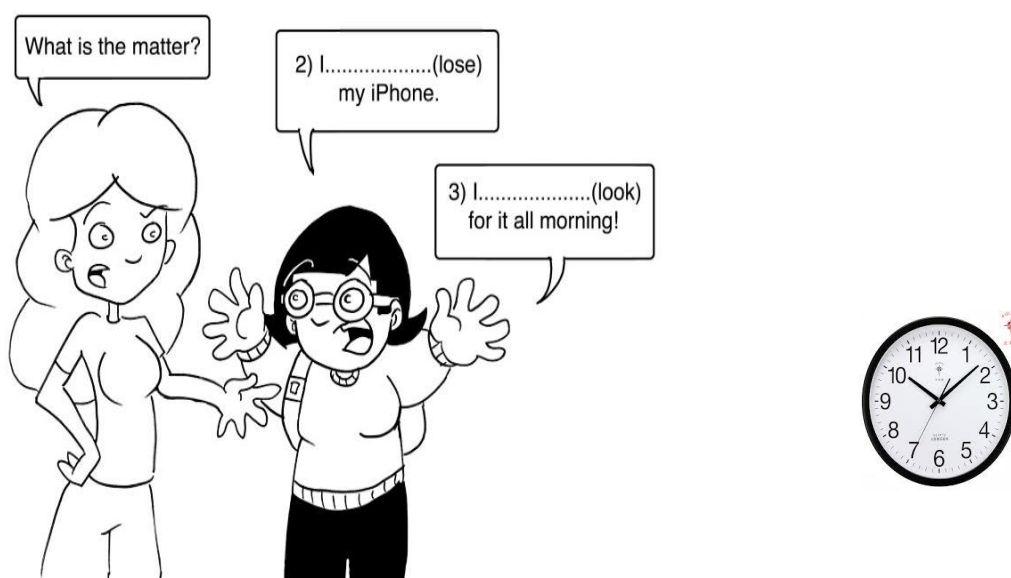


Figure 9. The cartoon context for item 2 and item 3.

Item 2

Item 2 has been designed to represent the temporal concept of resultative past; concept 3. In the cartoon, Ann is clearly upset, she is waving her arms around and looks distressed. She has lost her iPhone. In fact, participants are expected to supply the construction *I have lost* my iPhone. This temporal concept of *resultative past* is represented by formally equivalent structures in English and Italian; the Present Perfect in English and Perfetto Composto in Italian. Both are constructed using the present tense of the verb *to have* plus the past participle of the verb. However, the semantics of these two constructions are qualitatively different. Both can relate past to present; however, the Italian Perfetto Composto is semantically perfective and requires a present result. In contrast, the Present Perfect is stativising; it invokes a present state

related to a past event, in this case that of being without an iPhone. The inclusion of concept 3 and resultative past temporal meanings such as this test the idea that Italian L1 speakers' expected erroneous use of the English Simple Past for these functions is a consequence of them transferring their concept of the event referred to as perfective and past, especially when there is no physical result of the past event evident in the present.

Item 3

This item, like item 1, represents concept 2 temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present. The expected form is *I have been looking*. It is evident from the context that Lucy has not yet found her iPhone, and the clock in the picture clearly shows that morning is not yet over. Lucy is explaining to her friend Ann what she has been doing up until now i.e. *looking for her iPhone*. This is expected to elicit the use of the Present Perfect Continuous to show a past activity which is ongoing in the present as the iPhone has not yet been found. Like item 1, the two forms which are used to cover this function in the two languages under investigation are Present Perfect Continuous in English and Presente Semplice in Italian. The semantics of these two forms imply different conceptualisations of the temporal anchoring of the event. The Present Perfect Continuous has a past to present meaning, where the Presente Semplice is present orientated. An erroneous use of the Present Simple for this concept by the Italian L1 speakers in L2 English may be a consequence of conceptualisation transfer of L1 temporal perspective. This could be revealed in the cloze test responses themselves as well as in the *think aloud* verbal reports.



Figure 10. The cartoon context for item 4 and item 6.

Item 4

Item 4 tests concept 3, resultative past. The expected form is *I have asked*. Lucy is explaining to her friend Ann that she has asked everyone that she can think of if they have seen her iPhone, but has had no success until now. The cartoon shows her shrugging her shoulders and looking as if she doesn't know what to do next. Thus, the cartoon should cue the idea that the act of asking and also looking for the iPhone is ongoing, and that the past action of *asking* is relevant to the present in that it has not yielded any positive results and as such Lucy is frustrated. As detailed above, the inclusion of *resultative past* items such as this, tests the perception of result state arising from the past action denoted by the verb. This is based upon semantic differences evident in the two constructions used to cover this concept cross-linguistically, the Present Perfect in English, which denotes a past to present action with a result state, and the Perfetto Composto in Italian, which is temporally perfective.

It is hypothesised that Italian L1 speakers are more likely to use the Past Simple for this concept, than their L1 English counterparts.

Item 6

Item 6 has been designed to test concept 1, state up to the present. Here Lucy is suggesting to her friend Ann that they ask her friend Danny about her iPhone. She adds that she has known him for years. In fact, the expected form of the state verb *to know* is *I have known him*. The cloze test includes verbs of all four types: state, activity, accomplishment and achievement, according to Vendler (1947) (see Appendix 4). This has been done with the knowledge that grammatical and lexical aspect may interact to give rise to a particular conceptualisation in a given temporal context, and it is for this reason that different process types are tested in similar temporal contexts. This item, for example, could reveal the ways in which perceptions of the state of *to know* differ cross-linguistically and influence L2 performance. In Italian the Presente Semplice is used to denote a state which started in the past, continues into the present and possibly also into the future. Therefore, there would seem to be a present orientation to the state. In contrast, the English tense system favours the use of the Present Perfect, a tense which clearly has a past to present meaning as described in Chapter 3. It is hypothesised that Italian L1 learners of English L2 could err on this item using the Present Simple form *I know*.



Figure 11. The cartoon context for item 7.

Item 7

Like item 6, item 7 also targets concept 1, state up to the present. In this case, the cartoon has been designed to elicit the form *I have been here*. In contrast to item 6, item 7 represents a past to present state with very evident present relevance: the fact that Danny is still under the tree. In fact, the cartoon shows Danny sitting under a tree, sweating and drinking a cool drink. He looks tired and like he is not likely to move. He explains that it is too hot for him to work, and that he has been in the shade all morning. As explained for item 6, here the two tenses used cross-linguistically seem to indicate a difference in perception of the state depicted. The core semantics of the *Presente Semplice* used in Italian would seem to suggest a present orientation to this state, whereas the *Present Perfect*, used in English could be indicative of a past to present orientation. As with item 6, the hypothesis would predict an erroneous use of the *Present Simple* here in this case in the form of *I am* by Italian L1 learners of English L2.



Figure 12. The cartoon context for item 10 and item 11.

Item 10

Item 10 represents concept 4, existential past. In the cartoon, we find the two girls at the cash point and Ann is getting more and more upset. They have looked everywhere and still haven't found the iPhone. Ann exclaims that she has never had anything like this happen to her before. The required form is *has happened*. According to Michaelis (2004:24), the use of this form in English, the Present Perfect, for this situation, invokes an intermediate state. This means that the tense represents a past action the results of which carry over to the present and that there is also the possibility of such an event occurring again in the future. In this case, Ann is referring to the fact that she has never lost her iPhone before, but she has currently, and the possibility of her losing it again is not excluded. However, in Italian, the form used is the Perfetto Composto, which although it has the same formal structure (*present tense of have/ avere + past*

participle) as the Present Perfect, is temporally perfective. This means within the Italian tense and aspect system there is an emphasis upon the past and complete nature of the action. It is hypothesised that it is this perception of perfectivity which may be transferred when Italian L1 speakers of English L2 erroneously use the Past Simple for this function. The *think aloud* reports are particularly useful in cases such as these to reveal instances of conceptual transfer and distinguish between formal and conceptual transfer. In fact, *think aloud* reports may be instrumental in revealing the learner's perception of the event as well as the meaning that they hold for the structure that they use. For example, even the correct use here of the Present Perfect by an Italian L1 learner of English L2 could be accompanied by the L1 structure (Perfetto Composto) meaning and conceptualisation, and this may be revealed through the *think aloud* report.

Item 11

Item 11 has been designed to target concept 1, state up to the present. This time the nature of the state is that of possession. Ann is explaining to Lucy that the iPhone has only been in her possession for a week. The required form is ***I have only had it a week.*** As with items 6 and 7, the different constructions used to cover this function in English and Italian are the Present Perfect and the Presente Semplice respectively. The hypothesised error therefore, would be a transfer of the present orientation to the state and as such the use of the English Present Simple by Italian L1 learners of English L2, as detailed for items 6 and 7 above.

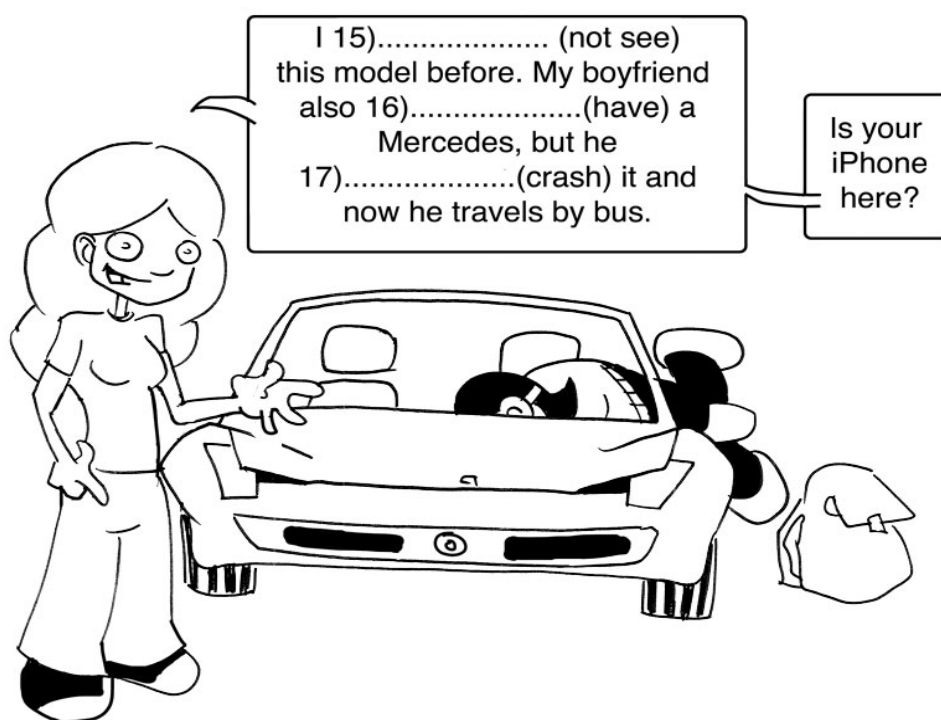


Figure 13. The cartoon context for item 15.

Item 15

Item 15, like item 10, represents concept 4: *existential past*. Lucy is admiring Ann's car and says that she has not seen the model before. The required form is *I have not seen*. Once again, as with item 10, the cross-linguistic conceptual contrast is with regards to the perception of a result state. The English tense and aspect system uses the Present Perfect for this function which denotes an intermediate state, as described above. The Italian system, however, uses the *Perfetto Composto* which, although it encodes the notion of a result (Chapter 3), is temporally perfective, and as such the result aspect of the semantics of the tense could be argued to be less salient or even lost. The emphasis upon the past and complete nature of the action denoted by the verb may result in the erroneous use of the Past Simple for this concept by Italian L1 learners of English L2.



Figure 14. The cartoon context for item 18.

Item 18

Item 18 tests concept 3, resultative past. In the cartoon Lucy is depicted holding her phone. She is suggesting to Ann that they call her iPhone as someone may have found it. The required form is *has found*. As described above, in Italian the form used for this function is the *Perfetto Composto*, while in English the Present Perfect is used. The semantics of these two tenses differ in the extent to which they recognise the present relevance of the result of the past action. While the *Perfetto Composto* is perfective, with an emphasis on the past and complete nature of the past event, the Present Perfect represents past to present relevance and denotes a result state. In English L1 speakers, the Present Perfect should be the most common form used, given the nature of the verb *find* which implies a possible result of someone having found the iPhone. In Italian, the *Perfetto Composto* is used and is hypothesised to indicate a more perfective view of the event. As such, the hypothesised erroneous use of the Past Simple by Italian L1

learners of English L2, may be the transfer of a perfective view of the event denoted by the main verb *find*. Moreover, the use of the Present Perfect here, may not be indicative of fully assimilated L2 concepts, if the L1 Perfetto Composto perfective meaning is transferred. The *think aloud* will help to reveal this.

4.7 Conclusions

As discussed in this chapter, revealing convincing instances of conceptual transfer means taking an approach which a) uncovers well motivated areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference, and b) investigates them empirically with a rigorous methodology which takes into account the cognitive nature of the phenomenon i.e. its manifestation in online processing for spoken production.

To this end, *think aloud* reports were coupled with quantitative data and a temporal perspective task with the aim of collecting the multiple forms of evidence required for the verification of L1 conceptual transfer (Jarvis 2010:179).

The results of this investigation follow in Chapter 5 where analysis of the statistical results is followed by a discussion of the *think aloud* data for each conceptual difference (CD) item, and where evidence for conceptual transfer is revealed, elaborated and discussed.

Chapter 5

RESULTS

5.0 Overview

Chapter 5 details first the quantitative results of the data obtained from the cloze tests given to all four groups. (Section 5.1) The cloze tests were designed to investigate the tense/aspect constructions chosen in English (Groups 1 – 3) and Italian (Group 4) for specific temporal concepts (Chapters 3 and 4). They have been analysed with regards to Jarvis' (2000) criteria for establishing evidence for L1 transfer (Chapter 4). Section 5.2 is a detailed analysis of all the data collected, both quantitative and qualitative, for each conceptual difference (CD) item. Evidence for conceptual transfer is highlighted for each item individually and brought together at the end of the chapter giving rise to a fuller picture with regard to the influence of L1 conceptual transfer on L2 interlanguage for the temporal concepts investigated in the sample population. Following this there is a brief analysis of the data pertaining to the non-conceptual difference (NCD) items, before further evidence in the form of the temporal perspective task and additional quantitative data (timings and number of verbalisations) from the *think aloud* reports are reported. Conclusions regarding the evidence for conceptual transfer which has been obtained through this study are detailed in section 5.5. In brief, the evidence does support a tentative claim for L1 conceptual transfer in the expression of distinct temporal concepts by Italian L1 speakers of English L2. This is particularly with regard to the use of Past Simple and Present Perfect constructions.

Section 5.1 Quantitative Data

Participants in all four groups (see Table 6) completed a 20 item cloze test. The cloze test contained 10 conceptual difference (CD) items and 10 non-conceptual difference (NCD) items. CD items are those items where the cross-linguistic grammaticalisation of a particular concept differs between English and Italian pointing to conceptual difference through the contrasting core semantics of the constructions used to express the concept cross-linguistically, as shown in Chapter 3. This is thought to be indicative of a possible conceptual difference which exists in the minds of the speakers of the two languages.

The cloze test responses for each participant in all of the four groups were categorised according to the tense chosen for each item (1 – 20), these were entered into an excel spreadsheet, the number of required forms and erroneous responses for each item was calculated and subjected to the tests detailed below for statistical significance with regard to the four hypotheses.

Table 6. The four groups included in the study and the tests they performed. (Table 6 is also available on laminate for reference)

Group	Native Language	20 item Cloze Test 10 CD items 10 NCD items	Temporal perspective Task	Think aloud	Number of participants
1: Experimental Group	Italian	English	English	6	54 + 6 <i>Think aloud.</i>
2: English L1 Control	English	English	English	X	50
3: Italian L1 Control.	Italian	Italian	Italian	X	50
4: Third Language Control.	Maltese	English	English	X	40

As detailed in Chapter 4, Jarvis (2000, 2010) argues that multiple forms of evidence are important to verify L1 transfer and that three criteria need to be satisfied in particular in order to verify a transfer hypothesis: intra-L1-group homogeneity, inter-L2-group heterogeneity and intra-L1-group congruity in responses. Jarvis looks at lexical referencing, and as such compares lexical choices made within and between groups. However, while this study does use the same criteria as Jarvis, rather than measuring quantitatively instances of the occurrence of particular target forms in verbal production, it looks specifically at learner ‘error’ rates occurring within and between the groups on cloze test items where conceptual difference is hypothesised and where it is not (CD vs. NCD items), according to the tense and aspect analysis in Chapter 3. This should shed light on whether conceptual difference has a role in interlanguage error in the expression of temporal concepts in this sample. The results as they pertain to each hypothesis 1 – 4, adapted from Jarvis’ criteria and detailed in Chapter 4, are detailed below.

5.1.1 Intra-L1-group homogeneity – (Within group comparison across CD and NCD items for the Italian L1 experimental group)

Hypothesis 1: the experimental group 1 will err more consistently on CD items compared to NCD items.

The participants’ scores on CD items and NCD items (Append 14 for raw data) were compared using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test non-parametric test. The results returned a p-Value of $p < 0.0001$. This indicated that the experimental group participants scored more highly (made fewer errors) on items where there is no

conceptual difference between English and Italian and lower (made more errors) where there is conceptual difference between the tense and aspect systems of the two languages as detailed in Chapter 3.

Interestingly there was also a significant difference in group 1 performance on conceptual difference related to temporal orientation (CDT) and conceptual difference related to result (CDR) items. Participants scored more highly (made fewer errors) on CDT than CDR items ($p < 0.001$; Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test). This means that of the two categories of conceptual difference, participants were more likely to err where the difference pertained to the perception of a result state. This is explored further in the analysis of the qualitative *think aloud* reports.

5.1.2 Inter-L1-group heterogeneity. – (Between group comparison on CD and NCD items for Maltese L1 control and Italian L1 experimental group.)

Hypothesis 2: the performances of the experimental group (Group 1) and the third language control (Group 4) differ significantly, especially with regard to CD items (CD items reflect differences between the Italian and English tense and aspect systems).

Data obtained for the experimental group and the third language control (Maltese L1) were compared with regard to total score, total score on CD items, and total score on NCD items using Students t-test (paired, 2 tailed). Raw data is available in tables 1 and 2 in appendix 14.

There was no significant difference between the groups with regard to any of the scores.

Hypothesis 3: third language control (Group 4 – Maltese L1 speakers) shows no significant difference in error rate for CD and NCD items.

The scores for the third language control group were compared on CD and NCD items and also on CDT and CDR items. The difference in scores on CD and NCD was found to be significant ($p < 0.001$; Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test) with participants making more errors on CD items than NCD items. There was also a significant difference in scores on CDT and CDR items ($p < 0.001$; Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test), participants in this group scored more highly (made fewer errors) on CDT than CDR items.

Despite the similarity in error rates on CD and NCD items between the Maltese L1 control and Italian L1 experimental group, the fact remains that they may not be erring in the same way for the same reasons. With regard to the results for hypothesis 2 and 3, as can be seen later in the chapter, when responses are detailed item by item, and the *think aloud* data is taken into consideration, there is in fact some variation in responses between the Italian L1 and Maltese L1 groups when items are treated individually.

5.1.3 Intra-L1-group congruity - (Comparison of responses from Italian L1 experimental group (Cloze test in English) and Italian L1 control (Cloze test in Italian) looking for congruence.

Hypothesis 4: groups 1 (Experimental Group) and 3 (Italian L1 Control) will use equivalent forms in English and Italian for CD items.

This means, for example, where in Italian a concept is covered using the *Presente Semplice*, the Present Simple would be used in English. The responses are supposedly congruent in that they are formally equivalent, but also functionally similar. Therefore, in this case congruence would imply use of the closest equivalent L2 construction in terms of both form, function and conceptual semantics to the L1 construction which covers the concept. The term ‘closest’ equivalent is used because, as the cognitive analysis of tense and aspect in Chapter 3 has borne out, semantic and conceptual content differ cross-linguistically and even close equivalents have differences between them. This judgement was informed, in this study, by the cognitive analysis in Chapter 3. In the event that this ‘congruence’ is at the root of an error, conceptual transfer may be evident. However, conceptual transfer does not always result in an error, as has been revealed in some of the *think aloud* data further on in this section, and a further benefit of this approach is that it serves to rule out formal transfer: where there is a transfer of a formal equivalent without recourse to other areas of processing e.g. *I have bought* for *Io ho comprato*, *think aloud* data allows the investigator to access upon which basis the chosen form is selected.

The responses for each CD item were categorised according to the grammatical form used in English (Experimental group 1) and Italian (Italian L1 control group 3). They were entered into an excel spreadsheet, percentages were calculated and results are given in Figures 1 – 20 (Appendix 13). Please see Appendix 13 for a full description of difference on an item by item basis and Table 7 below.

Table 7 gives an overview of the results detailed above with regards to the L1 congruence hypothesis. In this table, only the percentage of erroneous responses using the expected form is detailed, along with the tense/tenses in L1 which share its semantic/conceptual features. Additionally, the L2 tenses which are used most

frequently by the sample are also given to provide a full and elaborated picture with regard to congruence for this sample; however, for clarity, anomalous responses are not reported here so percentages do not always add up to 100%. The results are shown in full in the form of bar charts in Appendix 13.

Table 7. Congruence in responses between L1 and L2 for the CD items and the concepts represented on the cloze test.

Item	Concept	Congruence	
1	<i>2: temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present - I have been waiting for ages</i>	L1 Presente Semplice 68% (Expected) Presente Progressivo 30% Perfetto Composto 2%	L2 Present Simple 0% (Expected) Present Progressive 4% Present Perfect 26% Present Perfect Progressive 56%
2	<i>3: Resultative Past - I have lost my iPhone</i>	L1 Perfetto Composto 100% (Expected)	L2 Past Simple 67% (Expected) Present Perfect 31%
3	<i>2: temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present – I have been looking for it all morning</i>	L1 Presente Semplice 98% (Expected) Presente Progressivo 2%	L2 Present Simple 0% (Expected) Present Progressive 7% Present Perfect 28% Present Perfect Progressive 57%
4	<i>3: resultative past – I have asked the security guards.</i>	L1 Perfetto Composto 98% (Expected)	L2 Past Simple 85% (Expected) Present Perfect 15%
6	<i>1: state up to the present – I have known him for years</i>	L1 Presente Semplice 100% (Expected)	L2 Present Simple 9% (Expected) Present Progressive 2% Present Perfect 72%

			Past Simple 9%
7	1: <i>state up to the present – I have been here in the shade all morning.</i>	L1 Presente Semplice 100% (Expected)	L2 Present Simple 0% (Expected) Present Progressive 2% Present Perfect 91% Past Simple 4%
10	4: <i>existential past- nothing like this has happened to me before.</i>	L1 Perfetto Composto 60% (Expected) Piuccheperfetto 40%	L2 Past Simple 48% (Expected) Present Perfect 42% Present Simple 7% Present Continuous 2%
11	1: <i>state up to the present - I have only had it a week</i>	L1 Imperfetto 74% Presente Semplice 26% (Expected)	L2 Present Simple 0% (Expected) Past Simple 64% Present Perfect 22%
15	4: <i>existential past- I have never seen this model before</i>	L1 Perfetto Composto 38% (Expected) Piuccheperfetto 60%	L2 Present Perfect 90% Past Simple 3% (Expected) Past Perfect 5%
18	3: <i>resultative past: maybe someone has already found it.</i>	L1 Perfetto Composto 100% (Expected)	L2 Present Simple 11% Present Progressive 5% Present Perfect 44% Past Simple 24% (Expected)

Congruence analysis for CD items

Item 1

For Item 1, the expected erroneous response was the Present Simple to correspond with the use of Presente Semplice in L1. None of the participants in the sample used

this tense, instead, the majority used the required Present Perfect Progressive. 4% of the sample erroneously used the Present Progressive, which is interesting as it could reflect the extended present (used to denote ongoing present situations not necessarily contemporaneous to speech time) meaning of the Italian Presente Semplice; however, the numbers are very small. The conclusion, therefore, for this item, is that congruence is at best very limited.

Item 2

For Item 2, the expected erroneous response was the Past Simple and 67% of the sample, did in fact use this tense. This corresponds with the prevailing perfective past and complete meaning of the Perfetto Composto. 31% of the sample used the required Present Perfect. There does seem to be evidence of some congruence here, between the L1 construction used for this function (Perfetto Composto) and the L2 erroneous response (Past Simple) in 67% of the sample.

Item 3

The expected erroneous response for item 3 was the English Present Simple, yet no participants actually used this tense in their responses to the cloze test. The L1 data confirm the use of the Presente Semplice in this context (98%) in Italian. 7% of the sample used the Present Progressive in L2, which may represent congruence in terms of the extended present meaning of the Presente Semplice; however once again numbers are very small.

Item 4

The expected erroneous response for Item 4 was the Past Simple, in fact 85% of the sample used this construction in L2. The L1 control group used the expected construction in this context (Perfetto Composto 98%) which corresponds with the perfective past and complete meaning of the English Past Simple construction chosen by the majority in L2. Therefore, in terms of conceptual and semantic congruence, the responses for Item 4 would appear consistent.

Item 6

With regards to item 6, the expected erroneous response was the Present Simple. 9% of the experimental group (group 1) used the Present Simple in L2, and 2% used the Present Progressive; consequently 11% of the sample used a present tense, pointing to temporal congruence with an L1 present oriented conceptualisation, moreover, just under half of the erroneous responses were consistent with L1 temporal representation. The L1 control group performed as expected, with 100% of the sample using the Presente Semplice in this context. However 72% of the experimental group used the required Present Perfect in English for this context. Therefore, there is some limited evidence for congruence in erroneous responses for this item.

Item 7

For Item 7, the expected erroneous response was the English Present Simple. None of the participants chose the English Present Simple, and only 2% chose the Present Progressive. The L1 control group performed as expected with 100% using the Italian Presente Semplice. 91% of the experimental group chose the required Present Perfect. There is no real evidence for congruence for this item.

Item 10

The expected erroneous response for this item was the Past Simple. 48% of the sample used this tense in L2 reflecting the past perfective and complete meaning of the L1 Perfetto Composto which was used by 60% of the sample in L2. This suggests some limited congruence between L1 and L2 usage in this context. The 40% use of the Piuccheperfetto in the L1 sample, does not seem to be reflected in L2 usage in this particular context.

Item 11

For Item 11, the expected erroneous response was the Present Simple, none of the participants in the sample used this tense for this item in L2 English. Therefore, there is no evident congruence in the expected responses between use of L1 and L2 as described. However, interestingly, where participants used the Imperfetto (74%) in L1, 64% used the Past Simple in L2. The Imperfetto has no direct equivalent in English, however, the Past Simple and Imperfetto share a past and finished meaning, suggesting some congruence between L1 and L2 usage.

Item 15

With regard to Item 15, only 3% of the sample used the expected erroneous response (Past Simple), which corresponds semantically and conceptually with features of the expected L1 form, the Perfetto Composto which was used by 38% of the sample in L1. 90% of the experimental group gave the required response (Present Perfect). Interestingly, the Piuccheperfetto was used by 60% of the L1 control group which seems to have been reflected in 5% of the sample using the Past Perfect in L2.

Item 18

The expected erroneous response for this item is the English Past Simple which was used by 24% of the sample in L2. The L1 control group performed exactly as expected for this item, with 100% of the sample using the *Perfetto Composto*. Here, therefore, there would seem to be some limited support for congruence between L1 and L2 with the use of the Past Simple corresponding with the past perfective and complete meaning of the L1 *Perfetto Composto*.

Conclusions

Where congruence is indicated, as for items 2, 4, 10 and 11, semantic and conceptual content equivalence has been evaluated between the construction given in Italian L1 and that given in English L2. In the case of the *Perfetto Composto* and Past Simple for items 2, 4 and 10, the perfective past and complete meaning is shared so that the use of the Past Simple in L2 for items 2, 4 and 10 would seem to reflect, at least to some extent, L1 semantic and conceptual content. With regard to Item 11, the shared meaning of the Italian *Imperfetto* and Past Simple is that of past temporal reference. According to the Reichenbach framework, both tenses are represented as E, R – S, and so are identical in terms of temporal semantics. However, aspectually these tenses diverge as the *Imperfetto* is imperfective whereas the Past Simple is completive. The *think aloud* evidence for this item described in section 5.2.9 bears some testimony to the past and finished orientation of the Italian L1 speakers to this item (Giovanni and Chiara), suggesting that congruence in this case could occur as a result of shared temporal semantics.

Importantly, the analysis of congruence in this study has allowed for a comparison of the semantic and conceptual content of the constructions used by Italian L1 speakers

in the same etic situations working both in L2 English and L1 Italian. It is evident that the notion of congruence extends beyond the expected ‘congruent’ forms, and may be found also in unexpected data such as the use of the Imperfetto for Item 11. This suggests that the notion of congruence should be extended away from what is expected and predicted in L1 and L2 in terms of semantically and conceptually congruent forms, to the meanings and conceptual content that exist in the minds of the L2 speakers and how these interact with the temporal and aspectual context to be conveyed. This is where the *think aloud* reports which provide access to the cognitive processes underlying decisions about tense choice have great value, as will be seen in section 5.2.

5.1.4 Summary

The data reported above does provide support for Hypothesis 1, that Italian L1 speakers of English L2 are more likely to err on a test item where conceptual difference is present cross-linguistically between L1 and L2. Interestingly, participants were significantly more likely to err when the nature of the conceptual difference involved the perception of a result state compared to the expression of a past to present time span. This may be because the temporal past to present meaning is more easily perceived and as such more readily assimilated. However, it is also explicitly taught in Italian schools and universities and as such may increase the salience of the Present Perfect structure for past to present time concepts.

However, the data reveals no support for Hypothesis 2: that the Italian L1 and Maltese L1 groups would differ significantly with regard to their scores on CD and NCD items, and neither does it support Hypothesis 3, that the Maltese L1 group would show no

difference with regards to scores on CD or NCD items. In fact, the within-group analysis performed for the Maltese L1 group revealed that they performed in the same way as the experimental group i.e. they were also more likely to err with regard to CD items. This is true also with regard to performance on the CDR and CDT items, the Maltese L1 group were also more likely to err on CDR items. Nevertheless, when the results are examined in detail, item by item, in section 2, together with the *think aloud* data, it is evident that the Maltese L1 and Italian L1 groups' responses do differ subtly in particular instances, pointing to differing underlying conceptualisations.

Hypothesis 4, which postulates congruence in responses between L1 and L2 also obtains limited support here. Interestingly, there is very little congruence with regard to concept 2, tested on items 1 and 3: *temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present*. Participants were expected to err using the Present Simple to correspond with a present orientated perception of the event for items 1, 3, 6, 7 and 11; however, as detailed above congruence is at best limited. Most congruence is seen with regard to concepts 3 (resultative past) and 4 (existential past), which involve the perception and denotation of a result state in English, and this is consistent with the statistical evidence supporting Hypothesis 1 which shows that of the two types of conceptual difference, participants were more likely to err where the difference involved the perception of a result state.

The findings detailed here are very similar to those detailed by Jarvis (2000). Jarvis also produces evidence to support Hypothesis 1 regarding the intra-L1-group homogeneity of Swedish and Finnish learners' referential lexical choices in English L2, while his results, like those obtained here, do not fully support hypotheses 2 and 3. Jarvis does claim some limited support for inter-L1-group heterogeneity, because in his study he found higher levels of intra-group similarity in responses for the Swedish

and Finnish experimental groups, compared to levels of similarity between these groups themselves and the English speaking controls. In short, the experimental groups were more similar to themselves than to the native English speakers or to each other. With regards to intra-L1-group congruity of responses, Jarvis was unable to show statistically significant results for congruity between L1 and L2 in Swedish and Finnish referential lexical choices, but he does claim that learners' referential lexical choices match more readily L1 tendencies than L2. He claims: i) that in all groups there were comparable levels of internal consistency with regard to referential lexical choice, so in all groups the participants performed in a way similar to other members of that group; ii) both the Swedish and Finnish experimental and control groups had similarly high levels of inter-L1-group similarities and that therefore, the Swedish and Finnish groups performed in a similar way; and iii) that there were higher levels of IL-L1 congruence within the Swedish and Finnish groups compared to levels between these two groups and the controls, and that therefore, the choices made by the Swedish and Finnish participants were more similar to those made by members of their own group than to the control groups.

Jarvis' results and those of the present study highlight the elusiveness of the conceptual transfer phenomenon and the challenge that finding evidence for it in learner language presents. Evidence for Inter-L1-group heterogeneity and IL-L1 congruence may be better obtained by considering evidence on a case by case basis, looking at participants' responses to a particular item (Jarvis 2000:291), as it appears important to consider how the etic situation for each item is perceived by the speaker and how different interpretations of it may impact on the interaction, in the mind of the speaker, of stored semantic and conceptual content giving rise to distinct conceptualisations and therefore form choices in L2. This also allows for a more fine grained analysis,

where qualitative data can reveal that conceptual transfer does occur in distinct contexts despite smaller participant numbers. To this end, the examination of the results will proceed by considering all evidence obtained, both quantitative and qualitative, one CD cloze test item at a time. This will allow for the highlighting of individual instances of inter-L1-heterogeneity and IL-L1 congruence, and for the unmasking of any L1 transfer effects revealed through the *think aloud* reports. This is an advance on previous work, as here *think aloud* reports combined with knowledge of cross-linguistic semantic and conceptual information of target structures reveals how the knowledge which exists in the minds of the participants in this study interacts with contextual cues to prompt the use of particular forms.

Section 5.2

In this section, the quantitative and qualitative results for each item are presented and analysed together. The cartoon representation of each temporal concept is given at the beginning of each section for each item. Table 8, here below, may act as a reminder regarding the concepts, core semantics and conceptualisations targeted.

Table 8. The four concepts targeted in the cloze test together with the construction with covers them in English and Italian respectively, the core semantics of those constructions and the resulting assumed conceptualisations. (Table 8 is also available on laminate for reference)

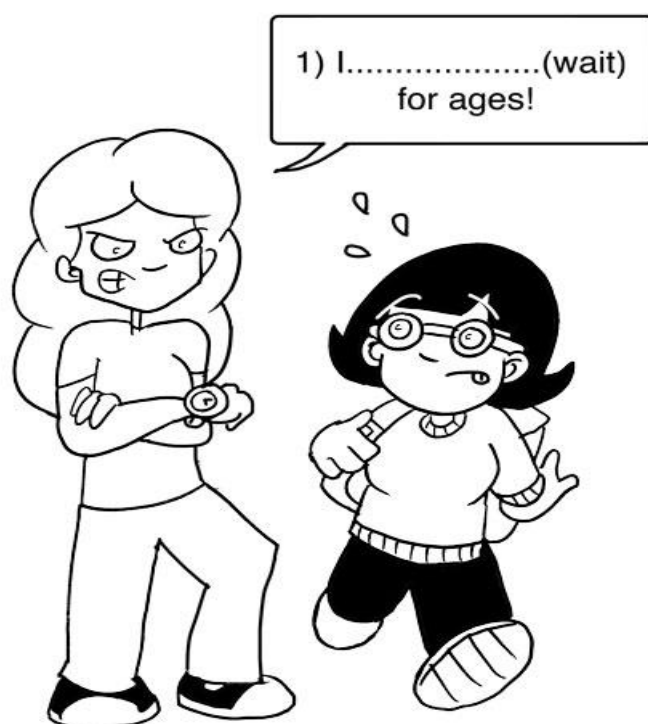
<i>Temporal Concept</i>	Construction	Core Semantics	Conceptualisation
1. <i>state up to the present. E.g. I have known him for years.</i>	English Present Perfect	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath
	Italian Presente Semplice	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	present orientated, imperfective,
2. <i>Temporary activity up to the present. E.g. I have been watching TV for ages.</i>	English Present Perfect Progressive	past event which continues up to present or recent past, limited duration, current relevance, incomplete, stativising	past to present time span, state of aftermath.
	Italian Presente Semplice	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	present orientated, imperfective,
3. <i>Resultative past E.g. I have lost my iPhone.</i>	English Present Perfect	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past to present time span, with current relevance, result state.
	Italian Perfetto Composto	perfective, past time related to present time, result	perfective past
4. <i>Existential past. I have never seen one like this before.</i>	English Present Perfect	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past to present time span, with current relevance, intermediate state.
	Italian Perfetto Composto	perfective, past time related to present time, result	perfective past

The combination of data presented in this chapter gives some significant insight into the phenomenon of conceptual transfer. The data is rich, but at times equivocal, much like the effect under investigation. Interpretation is challenging as L2 interlanguage is subject to multifactorial influences which can serve to mask and/or interfere with conceptual transfer effects. The ideas garnered and conclusions drawn from the *think aloud* data presented here may not be considered definitive, but do shed some light on an elusive phenomenon which affects acquisition in L2, and confirm the areas of cross-linguistic difference identified here worthy of further investigation.

5.2.1. Categorisation and Inter-rater reliability

The *think aloud* reports were transcribed, segmented and categories assigned as described in Chapter 4. The categories emerged from the generated material and were further elaborated and developed as coding progressed. The fully elaborated categories used in the analysis are available in Appendix 12. In order to test inter-rate reliability, 18% of the verbalisations were selected at random and presented to an independent rater for categorisation, as recommended by Bowles (2010b:136). The independent rater holds a doctorate in psychology and has expertise in grounded theory. Inter-rater reliability was 81%, which indicates an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability (Lombard 2010)

5.2.2 Item 1



Item 1

Item 1 represents concept 2: *temporary activity which started in the past and continues up to the recent past with an effect evident in the present*, with the expected response: I have been waiting for ages. Figures 15 and 16 show the responses in English and Italian respectively, given across the four groups for Item 1. The tenses chosen are given along the x axis, while the percentage of participants who chose that tense is given along the y axis.

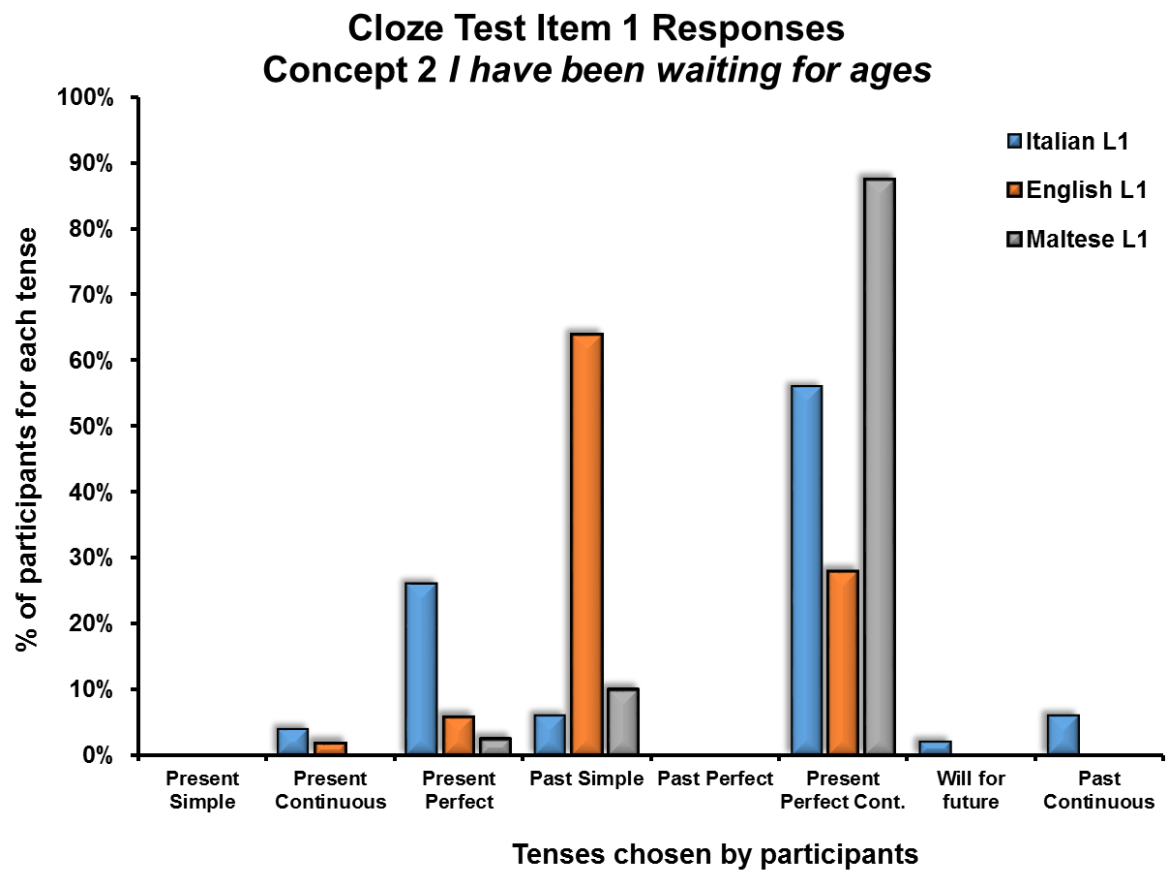


Figure 15. The responses given by the English L1 control, Italian L1 experimental group and Maltese L1 group in English for Item 1.

Cloze Test Item 1 Italian Version
Concept 2 *Ti aspetto da un sacco di tempo*

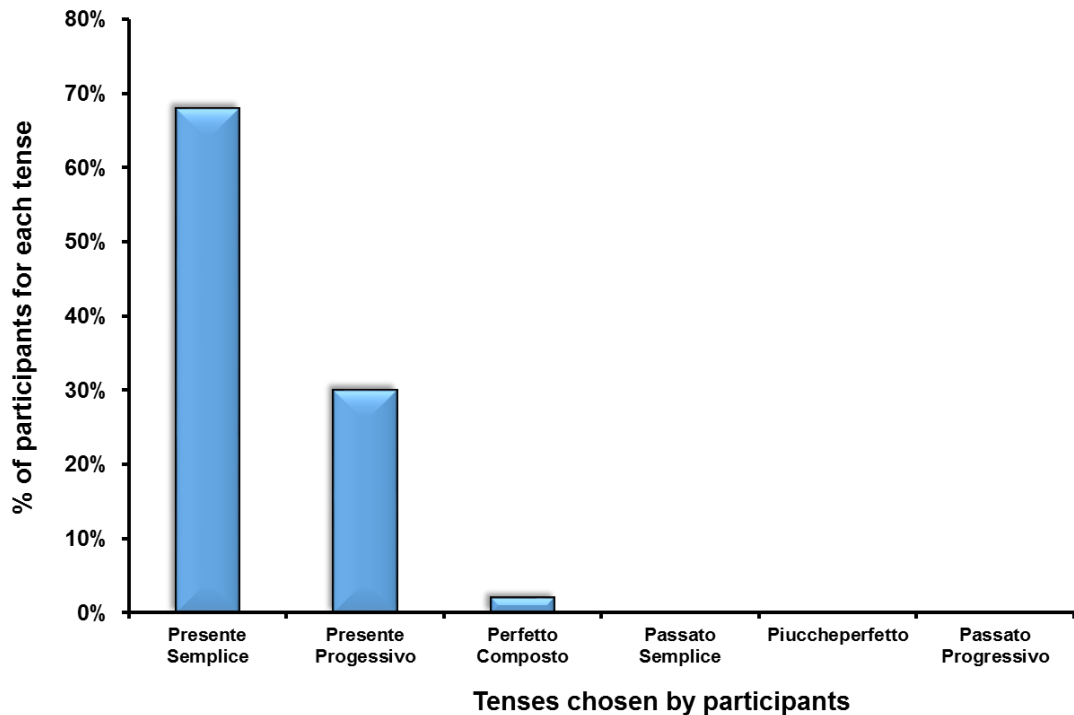


Figure 16. The responses given by the Italian L1 control group in Italian for Item 1.

As can be seen in figure 16, the Italian L1 participants doing the cloze test in L1 Italian performed as predicted with 68% of the participants choosing the *Presente Semplice* for this concept in Italian, and 30% choosing the *Presente Progressivo*. This result seems to reflect an increase in use of the *Presente Progressivo* for functions such as these, as detailed in Chapter 3. However, this trend does not seem to be reflected in the data for the experimental group (Italian L1 working in English L2) as would be predicted by hypothesis 4: that there should be congruence between the responses of the experimental group and the Italian L1 control group working in L1. Only 4% of the Italian L1 respondents erroneously used a present tense, namely, the Present Continuous for this concept in English. The expected erroneous form would have been the Present Simple, used with the L1 conceptualisation of an imperfective present situation. 30% of the Italian L1 control sample used the *Presente Progressivo* in Italian

which does suggest an emphasis on the ongoing nature of the action and perhaps could have been influential in the use of the progressive form in L2 English. Fifty six percent of the experimental group used the correct Present Perfect Continuous, where 26% used the Present Perfect. However, questions may be asked about the meaning of the English Present Perfect for the respondents given the data obtained from the *think alouds* and detailed below. It appears that rather than having a past to present meaning, for this group, this tense entails a past and finished action, moreover, 6% of the experimental group used the Past Simple tense in English L2.

In contrast, for the other groups, interestingly 88% of the Maltese L1 speakers used the Present Perfect Continuous for this concept and 10% chose the Past Simple. The English L1 speakers' results were principally split between the Past Simple (64%), Present Perfect Continuous (28%), and Present Perfect (6%). The use of the Past Simple here by such a large number of the English L1 control group points to a possible difference in interpretation of the situation by the participants compared to the pilot group (Chapter 4). It may be possible to interpret the situation in terms of the *waiting* being over as Ann (dark hair) has just arrived, precipitating the possible use the Past Simple in this context. However, 34% of the English L1 control group used a perfect construction with a past to present time frame. As these results were equivocal with regard to the English native speaker view of the event to be expressed, a further 27 native English speakers were tested post-hoc on this item using an online version of the test (Appendix 15). Interestingly, 24/27 (89%) of this sample chose the Present Perfect Continuous. This suggests that the results for the English L1 control group in this study may have been a function of the students' attitude to the test i.e. students completing the test superficially without paying full attention to the contextual cues,

rather than a past and complete interpretation of the event, which, however, may not be excluded.

Thus, the data collected for this item, do reveal some inter-group differences in tense choice, with the English L1 group favouring the Past Simple (64%), the Maltese L1 the Present Perfect Continuous (88%) and the Italian experimental group also principally using the Present Perfect Continuous (56%) together with a spread of other tenses not seen in the English L1 or Maltese L1 responses.

Considering this data in combination with the data from the *think aloud* reports can help to elucidate the meaning that these tenses hold for Italian L1 speakers and identify potential instances of cross-linguistic conceptual influence. .

Table 9, below details the verbalisations made by all participants who verbalised for this item during the *think aloud*. The table shows the original verbalisation, usually but not always in L1 Italian; its English translation; the categories assigned to it; an analysis of the data based on the categories; and the answer given on the test by each participant. Where the target verb is translated into L1 Italian in the *think aloud* report, the translation of the tense into English is made by giving the infinitive form of the verb in small capitals and the Italian tense in code. This is done because, as is evident in Chapter 3, translation equivalents in English assume a conceptual content and meaning which may not match that which exists in the mind of the L1 Italian speaker. The codes are as follows: PerfCOMP= Perfetto Composto, PRES= Presente Semplice, PRESprog = Presente Perifrasi Progressiva, IMP=Imperfetto, PPerfetto=Piuccheperfetto.

For Item 1, all six participants verbalised. This is not the case for all items, where some participants did not verbalise, but simply wrote down their answer. Participants were not prompted to speak during the tests so as to maintain the integrity of the *think aloud*

procedure. Italics are used in the tables where participants read out parts of the test or refer to tense forms in either English or Italian to be given as possible answers.

Table 9. Verbalisations made by each participant for Item 1 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation	English Translation	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test
1. Giovanni	<p><i>I wait for ages</i> ermmmm</p> <p>dovrebbe quindi allora <i>ages</i> che cosa è? <i>I wait</i>.</p> <p>Errmmmm [wait è aspettare]</p> <p>Ok</p> <p>Quindi ho aspettato tanto tempo</p> <p><i>I have wait</i></p> <p>Io ho messo <i>have wait</i> perché perché c'è mi pare visto che dice al</p>	<p><i>I wait for ages</i> ermmmm</p> <p>It should therefore so <i>ages</i> what is it? <i>I wait</i></p> <p>Errmmmm [wait e` aspettare]</p> <p>Ok</p> <p>So I WAIT (PerfCOMP) a long time.</p> <p><i>I have wait</i></p> <p>I put <i>have wait</i> because there is, it seems to me, because she says in the past that she WAIT (PerfCOMP) a long time, I put <i>have</i> and <i>wait</i>.</p>	<p>Reads text aloud. Inserts bare form of verb</p> <p>Asks for clarification. Verbalises answer structure in L2.</p> <p>Thinking</p> <p>Shows comprehension</p> <p>Translates into L1</p> <p>Verbalises answer structure in L2.</p> <p>Gives reason with temporal reference (PAST).</p>	<p>Issues with vocabulary, does not know the meaning of <i>ages</i> and <i>wait</i> First choice of structure is Present Simple <i>I wait</i>.</p> <p>Approximation of the Present Perfect. (Uses infinitive instead of past participle.)</p> <p>Reason given is that the protagonist is saying that she waited in the past, actually the protagonist does not say this; this is Giovanni's interpretation. Perhaps he sees the waiting as past.</p>	I have wait

	passato che ha aspettato molto tempo io metto <i>have e wait</i> .				
2. Chiara	<p>Cerco di guardare tutto, la frase complete...</p> <p>poi faccio una breve traduzione</p> <p>quindi <i>aspetto</i> un secolo, penso, ho aspettato quindi <i>I waited</i> for ages.</p>	<p>I try to look at everything, the whole sentence...</p> <p>then I do a brief translation</p> <p>so <i>I WAIT (PRES)</i>ages, I think, <i>I WAIT (PerfCOMP)</i>, so <i>I waited</i> for ages.</p>	<p>Describes own strategy</p> <p>Translates into L1 (<i>aspetto</i>). Thinking. Verbalises second choice of structure in L1 (<i>Ho aspettato</i>). Translates this into L2 (<i>I waited</i>).</p>	<p>Chiara highlights her use of translation as a strategy for this type of exercise. At first, she uses the Italian L1 form for this concept <i>aspetto/I wait</i>, the Presente Semplice. Then she thinks about it again. She concludes with the use of the Perfetto Composto in Italian, which she translates into the Past Simple in English, <i>I waited</i>. Chiara's reasoning seems to follow a present or past dichotomy. Her initial thoughts of the present in Italian are changed to the past in English. Her original conceptualisation is most likely present, but then adjusted in the light of L2 knowledge and available constructions.</p>	I waited
3. Elena	<p>Allora qui penso</p> <p><i>I have waited</i> for ages,</p>	<p>So here I think,</p> <p><i>I have waited for ages,</i></p>	<p>Thinking. Verbalises answer structure in L2 in full sentence.</p>	<p>Elena gives a text book response. The use of the Present Perfect is often described as covering the function of an action which starts in the past and continues in Italian text books.</p>	I have waited

	perché l'atto di aspettare inizia nel passato e continua.	because the act of waiting starts in the past and continues.	Gives a temporal and aspectual reference for the action.	Does Elena really view the situation in this way or is this a learned metalanguage?	
4. Silvia	<p><i>I have waited for ages</i></p> <hr/> <p>penso perché comunque è una frase al passato</p> <p>e quindi sta aspettando da tanto tempo quindi penso che...</p>	<p><i>I have waited for ages</i></p> <p>I think because anyway it is a past sentence</p> <p>and therefore she <i>WAIT</i> (PRESprog) for a long time so I think that...</p>	<p>Verbalises answer structure in L2 in full sentence.</p> <p>Gives a temporal reference for the action.</p> <p>Describes action in L1. Choice of structure in L1. (<i>Sta aspettando</i>).</p>	<p>Silvia uses the English Present Perfect here and gives her reasoning that this is a past sentence, implying that she thinks the action took place in the past.</p> <p>In Italian she used the Presente Progressivo to describe the action <i>sta aspettando</i>.</p> <p>Here there is a past/present split between the L1 and L2. Use of English Present Perfect here seems to mirror that of Perfetto Composto for past and completed actions.</p>	I've waited
5. Giacomo	<p>Sto usando il Present Continuous</p> <p>perché non è ancora arrivata.</p>	<p>I am using the Present Continuous</p> <p>because she still hasn't arrived.</p>	<p>Verbalises tense choice.</p> <p>Gives reason based on present truth.</p>	Giacomo sees the ongoing and present nature of the action of waiting and so uses the Present Perfect Continuous in English, though he confuses the name of the tense, mistakenly calling the Present Perfect Continuous, the Present Continuous.	I have been waiting.

6. Rosanna	<p>Vado? Allora, quindi questa ragazza arriva chiaramente in ritardo mentre l'altra l'aspettava</p> <p>e quindi lei dice io ho aspettato per un sacco di tempo</p> <p>e siccome l'azione si è appena, si sta concludendo adesso</p> <p>credo che ci si va il Present Perfect Continuous <i>I have been waiting for ages</i>.</p>	<p>Shall I start? So, so this girl ARRIVE (PRES) late while the other WAIT (IMP) for her</p> <p>and so she says I WAIT (PerfCOMP) for ages</p> <p>and because the action is about to, it is finishing now,</p> <p>I think that the Present Perfect Continuous <i>I have been waiting for ages</i> should go there.</p>	<p>Describes what is happening in the story.</p> <p>Translates into L1. Choice of structure in L1 (<i>Ho aspettato</i>).</p> <p>Gives reason based on present truth.</p> <p>Verbalises L2 tense choice. Verbalises answer structure in L2 in full sentence. (<i>I have been waiting for ages</i>).</p>	<p>Rosanna describes the situation using a combination of present and past tenses in Italian. She describes Lucy as <i>arriving</i> (arriva – Presente Semplice) late in the Present, while Ann <i>was waiting</i> (Imperfetto) for her. Use of Imperfetto indicates viewing waiting as imperfect/ongoing in the past. She is focussing on the action of waiting as it is ending. At first, she intimates that the waiting is already finished (l'azione si è appena) then she changes her mind to see it concluding in the present moment (si sta concludendo adesso). This ending in the present moment is what drives her choice of Present Perfect Continuous.</p>	<p>I have been waiting for ages.</p>
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Three of the participants, Giovanni, Chiara and Silvia seem to perceive the fact that the *waiting* is over as salient and talk about *waiting* in this context as past. Giovanni and Silvia use the English Present Perfect for this concept, but seem to equate it with a past and finished meaning of the action, as for the Italian equivalent Perfetto Composto. Chiara's reasoning instead also involves a perception of the *waiting* as past, but she uses the appropriate L2 tense for her reasoning: the Past Simple form *I waited*. Notably, Chiara and Silvia also use Italian present tenses to describe the situation, when they are trying to understand the context, before making a decision about which L2 tense to choose, at which point they start to think about the past feature of *waiting*. It is as if the L2 triggers consideration of the past features of the situation compared to the present orientated L1.

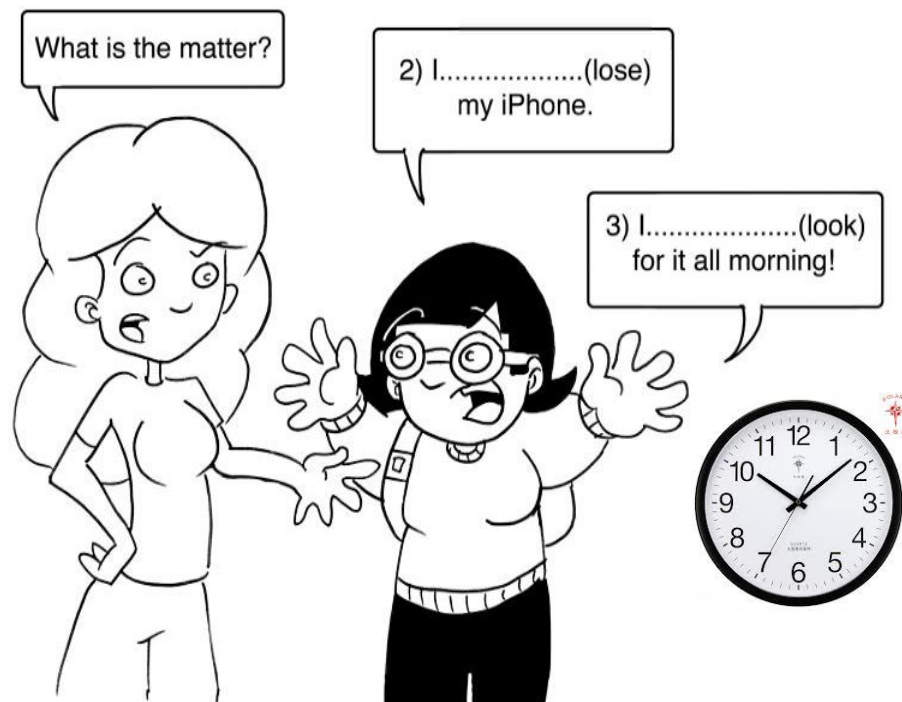
From this evidence it is possible to draw three tentative conclusions: first, that when trying to understand this situation the participants are inclined to use L1; when working in L2, they perceive as most salient the past features of the action of *waiting*; finally, that the meaning of the English Present Perfect, at least for Giovanni and Silvia seems to be bound up with that of the Italian structural equivalent the Perfetto Composto.

Three participants choose perfect tenses and appropriately justify their reasoning for doing so. Elena's verbalisation is interesting in that while factually correct in terms of the use of the Present Perfect, it also closely resembles explanations given in text books and by teachers in Italy for the use of the Present Perfect, and so could reflect the assimilation of classroom metalanguage in relation to this tense choice. Giacomo's answer is also consistent with the continuing nature of the state and he uses the Present Perfect Continuous.

Rosanna's reasoning is that which most approximates the L2 conceptualisation and indeed is reflected in her choice of Present Perfect Continuous for this concept. To describe the situation, Rosanna uses a combination of present (Presente Semplice) and past tenses (Imperfetto) in Italian which suggest that she perceives not only the ongoing and temporary nature of the past waiting, but also focuses on the fact that the waiting is about to end. She sees a past to present continuous action with a present conclusion.

While there is no support here for the hypothesis that Italian L1 speakers will erroneously use the English Present Simple for this concept with a present orientation borrowed from L1 in this context, there is evidence to suggest that the English Present Perfect may be used with a past and finished meaning consistent with the use of its L1 structural equivalent, the Perfetto Composto, and therefore a possible example of conceptual transfer, and more particularly its subset concept transfer as discussed in Chapter 6. Further, formal transfer is excluded as participant reasoning points to a past and complete conceptualisation of the event (Silvia) rather than an unreasoned choice of the formal equivalent. As can be seen from the *think aloud* data, therefore, answers given using the English Present Perfect, may not always be accompanied by the correct L2 reasoning. This demonstrates how the *think aloud* data can be instrumental in highlighting instances of conceptual transfer that would be lost in a purely quantitative approach.

5.2.3 Item 2



Item 2 has been designed to represent the temporal concept of *resultative past*; concept 3 -I have lost my iPhone. Figure 17 shows the responses given by the Italian L1, Maltese L1 and English speaking controls for Item 2. Figure 18 details the responses given by the Italian L1 control working in Italian.

Cloze Test Item 2 Responses Concept 3 *I have lost my iPhone*

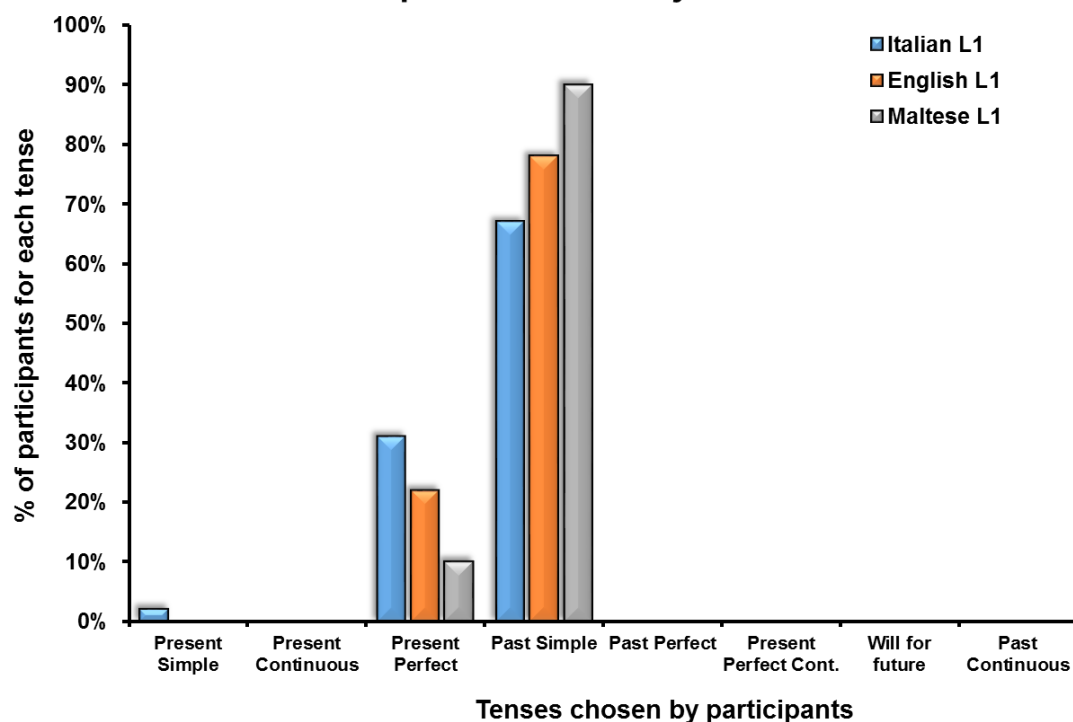


Figure 17. The responses of the Italian L1 experimental group, the English L1 control and Maltese L1 control groups for Item 2.

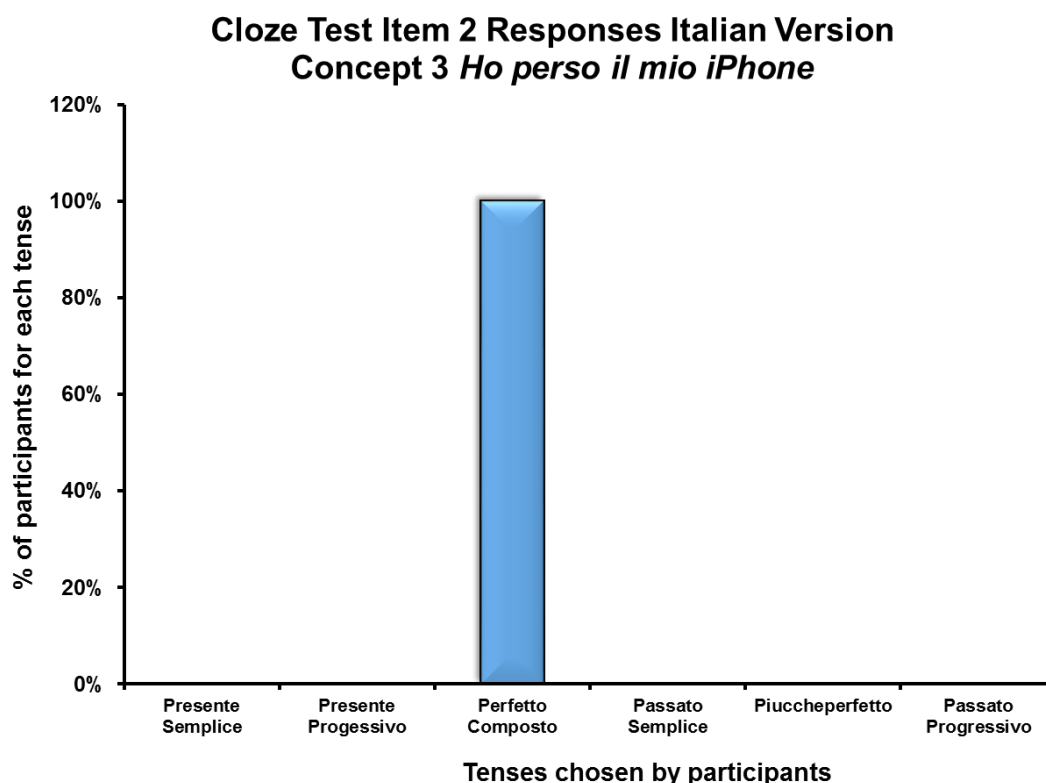


Figure 18. The responses of the Italian L1 control group in Italian for Item 2.

Figure 18 shows that, when working in L1, Italian speakers unanimously chose the Perfetto Composto for this function, as predicted (Chapter 3). However, when using English L2, the results are principally split between the Present Perfect (31%) and Past Simple (67%). That the Italian L1 speakers would chose the Past Simple for this function is predicted by the Chapter 3 tense and aspect analysis showing that the internal makeup of the category (Perfetto Composto) which covers this function in Italian holds a past and finished meaning and, thus, this past and finished conceptualisation of the event may be transferred into the L2.

The majority of the English L1 control and the Maltese L1 control groups also chose the Past Simple for this function, 78% and 90% respectively. The predicted use of the English Present Perfect here by the English L1 control, and corroborated by the pilots, are based on the assumed perception of a result state for this function in English: that

of being upset because of the lost iPhone. However, in this group, that does not appear to be the case, given the use of the Past Simple. This was further tested in the follow-up online version of the test given to 27 native speakers (Appendix 15). Of those 27, 17 (63%) chose the Present Perfect and 37% the Past Simple. This suggests that there may be specific issues in regard to the original group and testing set up, explored in chapter 6. The Maltese population are influenced significantly by American English and so there may be a predominance of the Past Simple for these functions in Maltese English (Bonici 2007:403). So, an alternative explanation for the results of the English speaking control is that the British English L1 speakers may be moving in the same direction.

The verbalisations given in response to Item 2 for the think aloud reports are given in table 10 below.

Table 10. The verbalisations made by each participant for Item 2 of the cloze test

Participant	Verbalisation L1 Italian	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test
7. Giovanni	<i>I lost my phone,</i> penso perché parla sempre del passato.	<i>I lost my phone,</i> I think because she is still talking about the past.	Verbalises choice of structure in L2 in full sentence. Gives temporal reference.	Giovanni uses the Past Simple in English to describe the situation. His explanation is that here the protagonist is still speaking about the past. In fact Giovanni uses <i>I have wait</i> , with a past and finished meaning for Item 1. Giovanni seems to perceive the past features of these actions of <i>waiting</i> and <i>losing</i> .	I lost my iPhone
8. Chiara	Faccio la traduzione, ho perso il mio iPhone <u>quindi siccome è</u> un tempo verbale irregolare <i>I lost.</i>	I do the translation, I LOSE (PerfCOMP) my iPhone so because it is an irregular past tense <i>I lost.</i>	Describes own strategy. Translates into L1. Choice of L1 structure <i>Ho perso</i> . Gives explanation in terms of grammar rules. Verbalises choice of tense in L2.	Chiara makes a translation, using the Perfetto Composto in Italian. She then substitutes it for the Past Simple in English, <i>I lost</i> . She is thinking about the form, reminding herself that <i>to loose</i> is an irregular verb and the past form is <i>lost</i> . The use of the Past Simple here, suggests a past orientation and the possible entailment of the Perfetto Composto with a past and finished meaning.	I lost
9. Elena	I lost my iPhone.	I lost my iPhone.	Verbalises choice of tense in L2 in full sentence.	Elena simply verbalises her response, use of the Past Simple for this action.	I lost
10. Silvia	<i>I lost my iPhone</i> perché è una frase passata	I lost my iPhone because the sentence is past	Verbalises choice of tense in L2. Gives temporal reference. (PAST)	Silvia uses the Past Simple, perceiving the action as past and finished. She says that this is a past sentence, which we could possibly equate with the perception of a past action.	I lost

	e non lo trovo più	and I can't find it any more.	Reasoning based in present truth.	In a further justification, she adds that she cannot find it anymore. This is interesting as the perception of the state of being unable to find the phone would induce the use of the Present Perfect in English which entails a present state in relation to the past action. Silvia seems to see the inability to find the phone as bound up with losing it and the fact that she cannot find it renders the action past and finished.	
11. Giacomo	Poi si mette <i>I have lost</i> , <i>I lost</i> my iPhone, <u><i>lost</i> perché già</u> l'azione è passata.	So, one puts <i>I have lost</i> , <i>I lost</i> my iPhone, <i>lost</i> because the action has already finished.	Verbalises choice of structure in L2 Verbalises second choice of structure in L2 in full sentence. Gives a temporal reference (PAST).	At first Giacomo uses the Present Perfect form <i>I have lost</i> , possibly a translation from L1. Then he appears to think again and changes his response to <i>lost</i> , giving his reasoning as the action being past and finished.	I lost

As can be seen here, all of the participants refer to the action of losing the iPhone as past and finished, and give this as a reason for their choice of the English Past Simple *lost* in this context. This is, in fact, that which is predicted by the hypothesis. Moreover, Silvia, gives an interesting response. She justifies her use of the Past Simple, by saying that the sentence, by which we can infer the context, is past. She then goes on to mention that she cannot find the iPhone anymore. This statement seems to suggest that she does perceive a present result entailed by losing the iPhone but, regardless, she maintains her choice of Past Simple. Either Silvia sees the losing of the iPhone and the fact that she does not have it anymore as bound up together in the past, or she does not consider this present result feature of the situation salient. It is tentatively suggested therefore, that the Italian L1 speakers may perceive the result state feature, but do not consider it salient in terms of the expression of temporal meanings.

As detailed above, the *think aloud* verbalisations, do give an indication of the past and finished orientation of the Italian L1 speakers to this situation. As a result, the hypothesis that the use of the Past Simple for this feature is bound up with L1 conceptualisations and that use of the Past Simple here is a result of conceptual transfer, may not be rejected out of hand. However, the fact that both the L1 English and L1 Maltese speakers also do use the Past Simple for this function does lead to questions regarding both the design of the test, i.e. whether the results state is evident enough (discussed in chapter 6), and also the use of the Present Perfect for this function by native speakers of British English which may be falling in line with the American English pattern (Elness 2009: 242).

5.2.4 Item 3 (Picture for Item 2 above)

This item, like Item 1, represents concept 2 *temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present* - I have been looking. It is evident from the context that Lucy has not yet found her iPhone, and the clock in the picture clearly shows that morning is not yet over. This should elicit the use of the Present Perfect Continuous to show a past activity which is ongoing in the present as the iPhone has not yet been found.

The responses for all groups for Item 3 are given in figures 19 and 20.

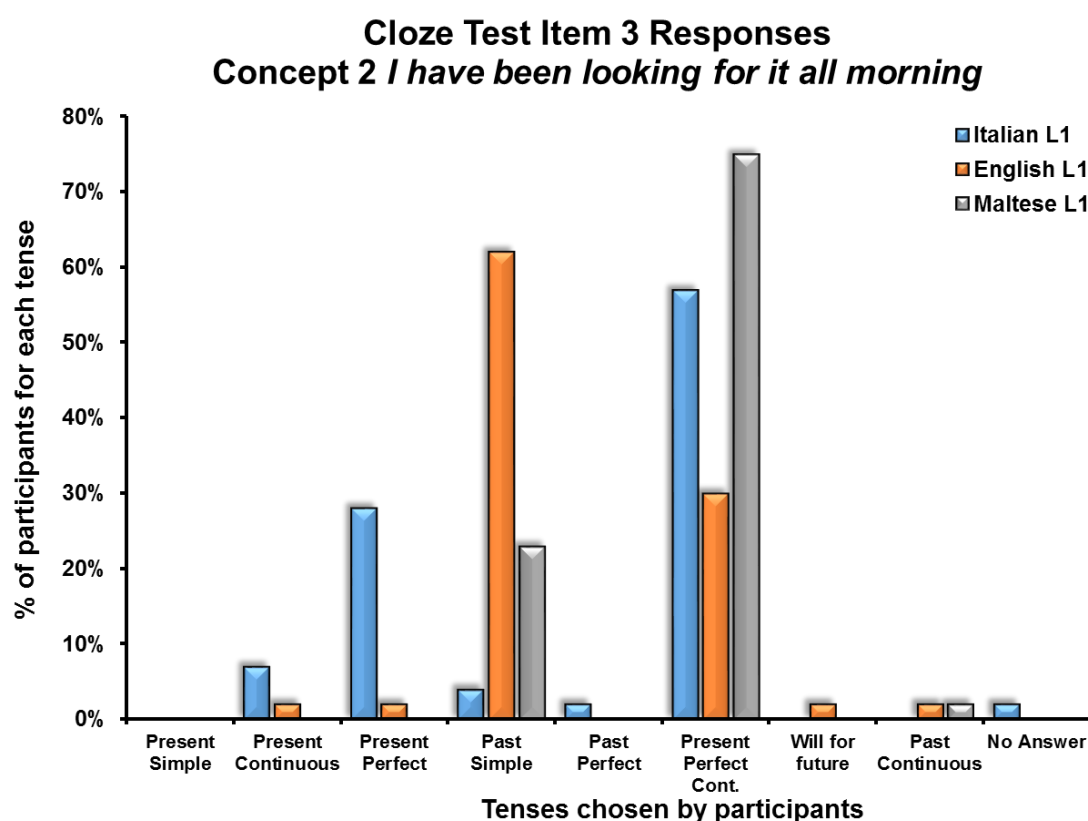


Figure 19. Responses of the experimental group Italian L1 and the English L1 and Maltese L1 controls completing the tests in English for Item 3.

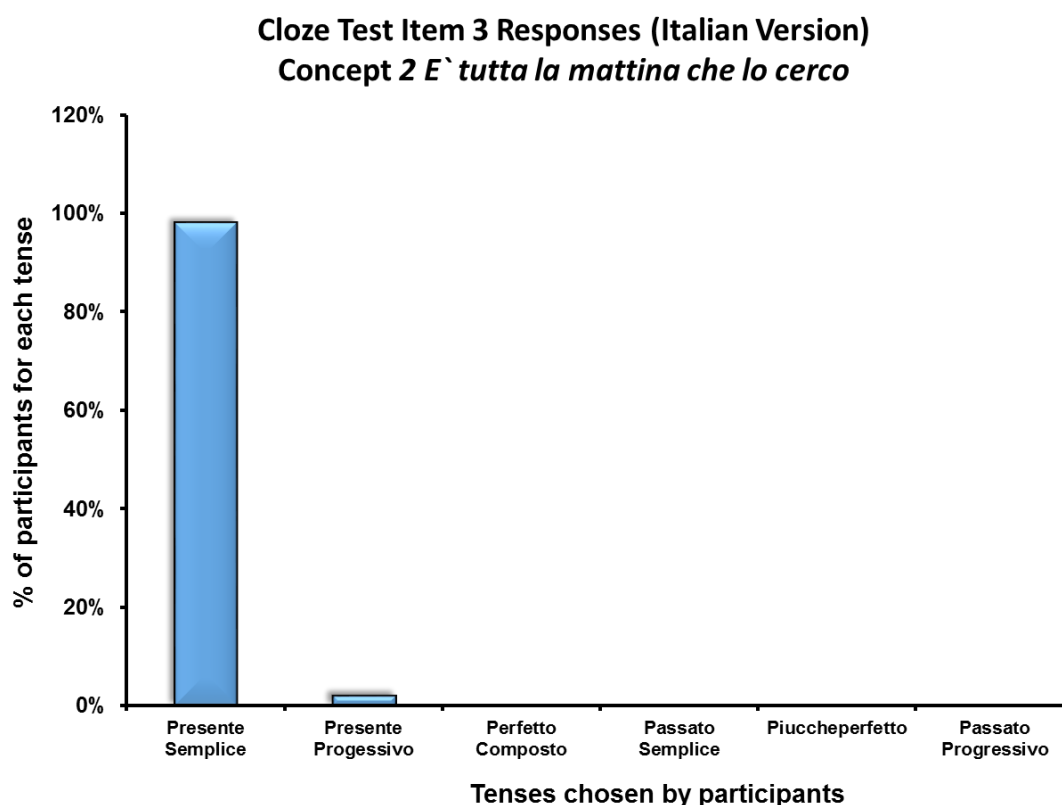


Figure 20. Results of the Italian L1 control group performing in Italian for Item 3.

As can be seen in figure 20, the Italian L1 control group performed as predicted, using the Presente Semplice for the function *temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present* in 98% of the cases. The remaining 2% chose the Presente Progressivo (Perifrasi progressiva).

Figure 19 shows that the majority of the Italian L1 group performing in English L2 chose the Present Perfect Progressive for this function (57%), while a further 28% used the Present Perfect. With regard to the other responses, 7% used a present tense (Presente Progressivo) as predicted by the hypothesis, a potential example of conceptual transfer, which given the small number of participants making this choice, may only be supported through *think aloud* data⁸. 4% and 2% chose the Past Simple

⁸ There is some evidence of a present orientation to this concept in the *think aloud* data for this item.

and Past Perfect, respectively. These results show that more than half of the experimental group used the Present Perfect Progressive correctly in this context. The choice of the Present Perfect by 28% of the group is interesting and explored below in relation to the *think aloud* data.

For both the English L1 and Maltese L1 control groups, the results are split between the use of the Present Perfect Continuous and Past Simple. 75% of the Maltese L1 group responded with the Present Perfect Continuous and 23% with the Past Simple. Further, the use of the Past Simple by 62% of the English L1 participants is particularly notable. The use of the Past Simple here by the English L1 speakers is surprising considering the contextual cues given in the cloze test, particularly the presence of the clock indicating that it is still morning (see above). The Past Tense may be used when morning is over: *I looked for it all morning* (It is now lunchtime). This item was therefore tested on the follow-up online test, 22/27 (81%) of the English native speaker sample used the Present Perfect Progressive as expected. This suggests that here also the first English native speaker control group tested may not have paid attention to the contextual cues given in the test and responded superficially. The use of the Present Perfect Progressive instead by 75% of the Maltese L1 controls, compared to the Italian L1 experimental group (57%) is in line with the suggestion made in Chapter 4, that the Maltese L1 speakers should have a more proficient grasp of the use of this construction compared to Italian native speakers, as their L1 also encodes for past to present actions grammatically (Fabri, R. personal communication July 2014).

Thus, for this concept the Italian L1 group do seem to perform differently compared to the English and Maltese speakers. The Italian L1 group responses are split between the Present Perfect and Present Perfect Continuous, while the English and Maltese L1 speakers' responses are split between the Past Simple and Present Perfect Continuous.

The use of the Present Perfect Continuous for this concept in Item 3 by the Italian L1 and Maltese L1 speakers, may also potentially be explained when the learner status of these two groups is considered. As learners, these two groups are accustomed to looking for clues in a text to help in decisions regarding the correct answer. In this case, the clock indicates that it is only 10am, and so by implication, the protagonist is still looking for the iPhone. English L1 speakers perhaps do not pay attention to these clues assuming that their native speaker knowledge will point them to the correct answer and this may have been the case for the original English L1 control group. However, to further explain the use of the Present Perfect by the Italian L1 speakers, it is helpful to consider the *think aloud* evidence given for Item 3 in table 11, below.

Table 11. The verbalisations made by each participant for Item 3 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation L1 Italian	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test
12. Giovanni	<p><i>I look for it all morning</i></p> <p>Errrrmmmm</p> <p>Allora, se non, non so se al passato</p> <p>C'è non ho capito <i>for it all morning</i></p> <p>C'è che significa? [ok all morning è da tutta la mattina]</p> <p>Esatto e quindi Quindi l'ha cercato per tutta la mattina?</p> <p><i>I have look for it all morning.</i></p>	<p><i>I look for it all morning</i></p> <p>Errrrmmmm</p> <p>So, if not, I don't know if it is past,</p> <p>That is, I don't understand, <i>for it all morning.</i></p> <p>What does it mean? [Ok, all morning means all morning]</p> <p>Exactly and so So, she <i>LOOK FOR</i> (PerfCOMP) all morning?</p> <p><i>I have look for it all morning.</i></p>	<p>Reads text aloud</p> <p>Inserts bare form of the verb.</p> <p>Thinking</p> <p>Signs of doubt.</p> <p>Gives Temporal reference. (PAST)</p> <p>Shows he doesn't understand lexical reference.</p> <p>Asks for clarification.</p> <p>Tests understanding, verbalises choice of L1 structure in a full sentence. (<i>L'ha cercato</i>)</p> <p>Translates to L2.</p>	<p>Giovanni first constructs the sentence using <i>look for</i>, this could either be a use of the Present Simple for this function, or Giovanni inserting the infinitive to try to make sense of the sentence. Given the reasoning that follows, it seems that the latter is the case. He goes on to say that he does not know if the action is past because he needs to clarify the meaning of <i>all morning</i>.</p> <p>The experimenter gives the meaning of all morning.</p> <p>Giovanni then uses the Italian Perfetto Composto to describe the situation in Italian <i>l'ha cercato</i>.</p> <p>This is interesting because when working in L1 for this concept the Italian speakers all used a Present tense, either Presente Semplice for the most part, or Presente Progressivo. So, despite explaining reasoning in L1, where L1 should be prominent, Giovanni uses a structure which could more readily fit the L2 conceptualisation, Perfetto Composto. This could indicate the influence of L2 for this concept which has a past to present feature. However, this construction may be used with a past and finished meaning</p>	I have look

				in Italian and therefore further imply L1 influence. Giovanni's final answer seems to be an approximation of the English Present Perfect <i>I have look</i> , using the auxiliary <i>have</i> plus the incorrect infinitive <i>look</i> , which should be <i>looked</i> .	
13. Chiara	<p>L'ho cercato tutto il giorno,</p> <p>è tutto il giorno che</p> <p>siccome è un tempo verbale ancora non concluso</p> <p><i>I've looking.</i></p> <p>Però non sono sicura</p> <p>perché io mi confondo solitamente quando si tratta di Past Continuous, Past Continuous</p> <p>Questi tempi verbali. Mi confondo un poco.</p>	<p>I LOOK FOR (PerfCOMP) it all day,</p> <p>it BE (PRES) all day that</p> <p>because it is an unfinished tense⁹</p> <p><i>I've looking.</i></p> <p>But I am not sure</p> <p>because I usually get confused when dealing with the Past Continuous, Past Continuous.</p> <p>These tenses, I get a bit confused.</p> <p>Errr, but I think, it could be....</p>	<p>Translates into L1. Verbalises L1 structure choice in full sentence. (<i>L'ho cercato.</i>) Verbalises second structure choice in L1. Refers to aspectual properties of the action. Verbalises choice of structure in L2. Shows doubt.</p> <p>Shows doubt. Verbalises tense choice.</p> <p>Shows doubt.</p> <p>Thinking</p>	<p>Chiara uses the Perfetto Composto <i>l'ho cercato</i> at first to describe this action and then together with her reasoning that the action is ongoing, switches to the Italian Presente Semplice <i>è tutto il giorno che</i>. This reasoning fits the L1 system categorisation in that an action which starts in the past and continues in the present is denoted using the Italian Presente Semplice. It is interesting that Chiara then tries an approximation of the Present Perfect Continuous <i>I've looking</i>. The ongoing feature that she has noted is incorporated in the present participle <i>looking</i>, but she also seems to want to reflect the past nature of the action with the inclusion of 've (have). This would appear to be the influence of L2. Indeed, she then goes on to say that she gets confused with the Past Continuous, the naming of which may signify the importance given by her to the past and continuing features of the action. However, notably, Chiara finishes her reasoning by describing the action using</p>	I've looking

⁹ Chiara speaks about a "tempo verbale ancora non concluso" literally translated means an "unfinished tense". Chiara is confusing the metalanguage needed to describe an unfinished action. Therefore, we can infer that she is referring to the fact that the act of looking for the iPhone is ongoing/unfinished.

	<p>Err però penso che può essere....</p> <p>lo sto cercando, lo sto cercando. <i>I've looking for.</i></p>	<p>I LOOK (PRESprog) for, I LOOK (PRESprog) for. <i>I've looking for.</i></p>	<p>Verbalises choice of structure in L1. Verbalises same choice for second time in L1 Translates to L2</p>	<p>the Italian Presente Progressivo <i>lo sto cercando</i>. This tense is used by only 2% of the Italian speaking participants working in L1 for this function. It shows her present orientation to the event suggesting that the ongoing nature of it is salient for her. She persists with her approximation of the Present Perfect Continuous as a final answer, thus including the past feature from L2.</p>	
14. Silvia	<p><i>I've looked for it all morning.</i> Ci ho messo... tutta la mattina, però</p> <p>addesso sono ancora le dieci lo sta ancora cercando.</p>	<p><i>I've looked for it all morning.</i></p> <p>I put... all morning, but now it is only 10 am, she still LOOK (PRESprog) for it.</p>	<p>Verbalises choice of structure in L2. Refers to lexical cues.</p> <p>Gives a temporal reference. Refers to aspectual properties of the action (ongoing).</p>	<p>Silvia uses the English Present Perfect, with an apparently past to present meaning. She mentions <i>all morning</i> and then says that it is only 10am and that the protagonist is still looking for her iPhone.</p>	I've looked
15. Giacomo	<p>Qua dovrebbe essere un'azione continuata perché l'ha cercato per tutta la mattina.</p>	<p>Here it is an ongoing action,</p> <p>because he LOOK FOR (PerfCOMP) all morning.</p>	<p>Refers to aspectual property of the action. Gives reason based on past truth.</p>	<p>Giacomo uses the Italian Perfetto Composto to describe the action of <i>looking</i>. However, he recognises its continuous feature <i>un'azione continuata</i>, and as such uses the correct L2 form <i>I have been looking</i>.</p>	I've been looking

The Italian L1 experimental group use the Present Perfect in 28% of cases. There are two possible explanations for this. Firstly, they are using it appropriately with the correct past to present result state meaning that it holds in English; or secondly, that they are using it with a past and finished meaning as in L1, indicating conceptual transfer (See Chapter 6 for a discussion of this in terms of concept transfer). The *think aloud* data would suggest that both are possible in this context. In the case of the second, it would align the Italian L1 speakers' choices semantically with the other two groups, who exemplify a split between a tense which reflects a past to present continuing action (Present Perfect Continuous) and one which is past and finished (Past Simple), which is possibly connected to their perception of the context depicted. This is perhaps evident in Giovanni's verbalisations as detailed above. Giovanni's first concern when trying to reason out an answer to this item is to try to establish whether or not the action is in the past: *Non so se al passato/ I don't know if it is past*. He asks for clarification of the meaning of *all morning*, and once he has this, he makes a translation using the Italian Perfetto Composto: ***L'ha cercato per tutta la mattina***. In his translation he substitutes *per* for *da*. The experimenter uses *da tutta la mattina* which, literally translated as *since the whole morning*, entails a past to present meaning and is usually used together with a present tense in Italian. The use of *per* instead, could carry the implication that the morning is over and entail the use of the Perfetto Composto (Bertinetto 1991:89). This could point to a past and finished orientation to the event. Consistently, Giovanni's final answer *I have look*, seems to be an approximation of the Present Perfect, to which he could have ascribed a past perfective meaning. If this is the case, it may be hypothesised that Giovanni's response is a result of conceptual transfer (Jarvis 2011:4), where he perceives the action as past and finished and then takes his L1 category content of past and perfective which is attached

to Perfetto Composto and transfers that to L2, endowing the Present Perfect with the same meaning. However, given Giovanni's erroneous form *I have look*, and the semantics of the Perfetto Composto which, while predominantly perfective also entail a result meaning, interpretation of this verbalisation becomes exceedingly complex. What the data does do, however, is show that there are many influences effecting choices made to represent these temporal concepts in L2, and that quantitative data alone does not provide us with the full picture.

The results for Item 3 are very interesting when we consider all of the factors which may underlie the participants' responses. The split in responses between the Present Perfect Continuous and Past Simple by the English L1 and Maltese L1 controls may be a result of a misreading of the contextual cues in the cartoon leading to a perception of the action being finished in the past and so resulting in the use of the Past Simple in some cases.

Interestingly, the *think aloud* data for both Item 3 (Giovanni) and Item 2 also suggest that the Italian L1 respondent answers may be explained in this way, and also potentially as a result of conceptual transfer. The *think aloud* data for Item 3 as seen above reveals the endowment of a past and finished meaning to the English Present Perfect by the Italian L1 speakers. This suggests that those L1 Italian participants who do not perceive the ongoing nature of the *looking* conceptualise the situation as past and finished and use the English Present Perfect with a past and finished meaning. This effect is perhaps even more evident in the *think aloud* data for Item 2 compared to Item 3 considering the lexical aspect (Vendler 1957) of the verbs *to lose* vs. *to look for*. *To lose* is an achievement, it is telic and has no duration in time, in contrast *to look for* is an activity, and as such has inherent duration. Therefore, it is more probable that a speaker will perceive the ongoing nature and present relevance of the activity rather

than the result state entailed by an achievement verb, where the action of *losing*, for example, took place in the past. It is also more likely that a learner will use continuous morphology (+*ing*) early in the acquisition process for activity verbs (Bardovi-Harlig 2000 - Aspect Hypothesis).

Nevertheless, the fact that the Italian L1 learners do use the Present Perfect with its past to present time span meaning is evident in the *think aloud* data (Silvia Item 3), and as such the use of the Present Perfect here by 28% of the L1 Italian experimental group may also be a function of learners moving towards correct L2 use, recognising the past to present nature of the situation and attaching to that an appropriate L2 construction. This may be facilitated by the lexical aspect of the verb *to look for*, as detailed above. Despite this, the influence of teaching and the recognition that certain structures such as the Present Perfect are used in distinct situations must not be underestimated, and neither must the formal similarity of the Present Perfect and Perfetto Composto. However, while evidence for the influence of teaching is evident in this data, in no verbalisation do we find reference to formal equivalents as reason for construction choice in L2.

Item 3 also provides an indication of a present orientation to the situation described which is predicted to result in conceptual transfer (See Chapter 6 for a discussion of such examples in terms of conceptualisation transfer) by hypothesis (2a). This evidence is available in Chiara's *think aloud* data for Item 3. When thinking using L1, she describes the situation using both the Presente Semplice and Presente Progressivo to emphasise the ongoing nature of the action of *looking for*, and this thinking does appear to persist into L2 as immediately following her use of Italian Present tenses she verbalises a hybrid construction which appears to be half way between the Present Progressive and Present Perfect Progressive: *I've looking*. Whether this is an erroneous

Present Progressive or a recognition of the past feature of the event through the incorporation of the auxiliary 've is difficult to interpret. However, Chiara's data does point to L1 conceptualisations influencing L2 production.

While for Item 3 the predicted use of the Present Simple for this function was not seen in the Italian L1 experimental group, a small number of participants used the Present Progressive, which may equally represent examples of conceptual transfer, as the perception of the ongoing nature of the action does come through in the *think aloud* data (Chiara). The results do highlight the importance of *think aloud* data in this type of research, providing two contrasting explanations for the use of the Present Perfect by the L1 experimental group for Item 3, and revealing possible conceptual transfer of a different kind, with regard to the use of the Present Perfect for both items. This instance of conceptual transfer would not be revealed by the statistical data as it could, in some cases, result in a correct form for that concept (Items 3 and 7).

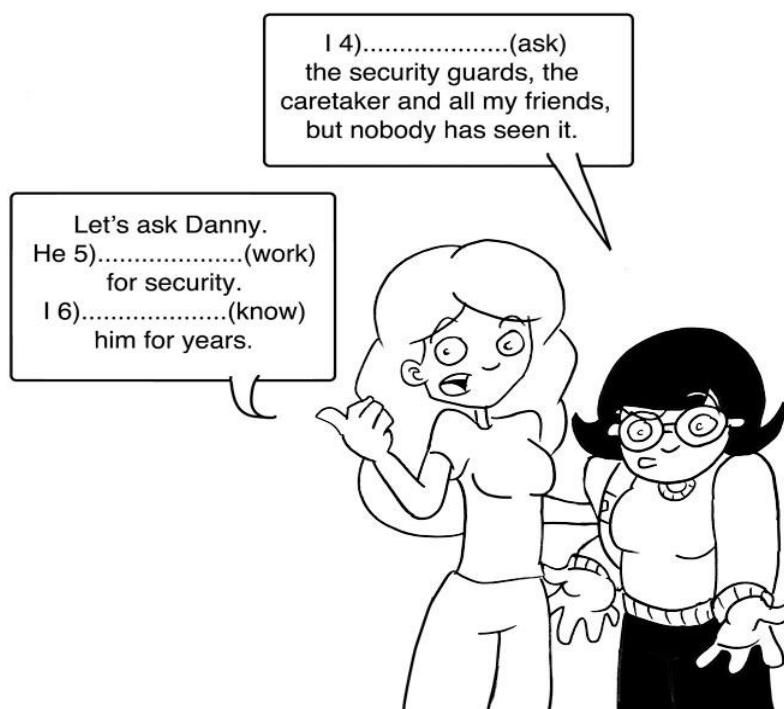
A qualitative approach using *think aloud* reports would appear to confer three particular benefits highlighted so far:

- i) that small numbers of predicted erroneous responses in the qualitative data should not be dismissed as 'noise' as they may in fact be examples of conceptual transfer.
- ii) that correct responses may be revealed to be conceptually erroneous pointing to an incomplete or incorrect assimilation of the target structure.
- iii) that there is no single factor responsible for incorrect responses.

Increasingly, the *think aloud* data demonstrate that revealing conceptual transfer as a cause of L2 error in interlanguage is not solely a matter of showing the number of errors that it could result in, but also the nature of the error where present and the

cognitive processes which come into play when an L2 speaker makes a particular construction choice.

5.2.5 Item 4



Item 4 tests concept 3: *resultative past* - I have asked. The cartoon should cue the idea that the act of asking and also looking for the iPhone is ongoing, and that the past action of *asking* is relevant to the present in that it has not yielded any positive results and as such Lucy is frustrated. The item refers to the state of having asked for something, but having obtained no result as yet.

The cloze test results for Item 4 are given in figures 21 and 22.

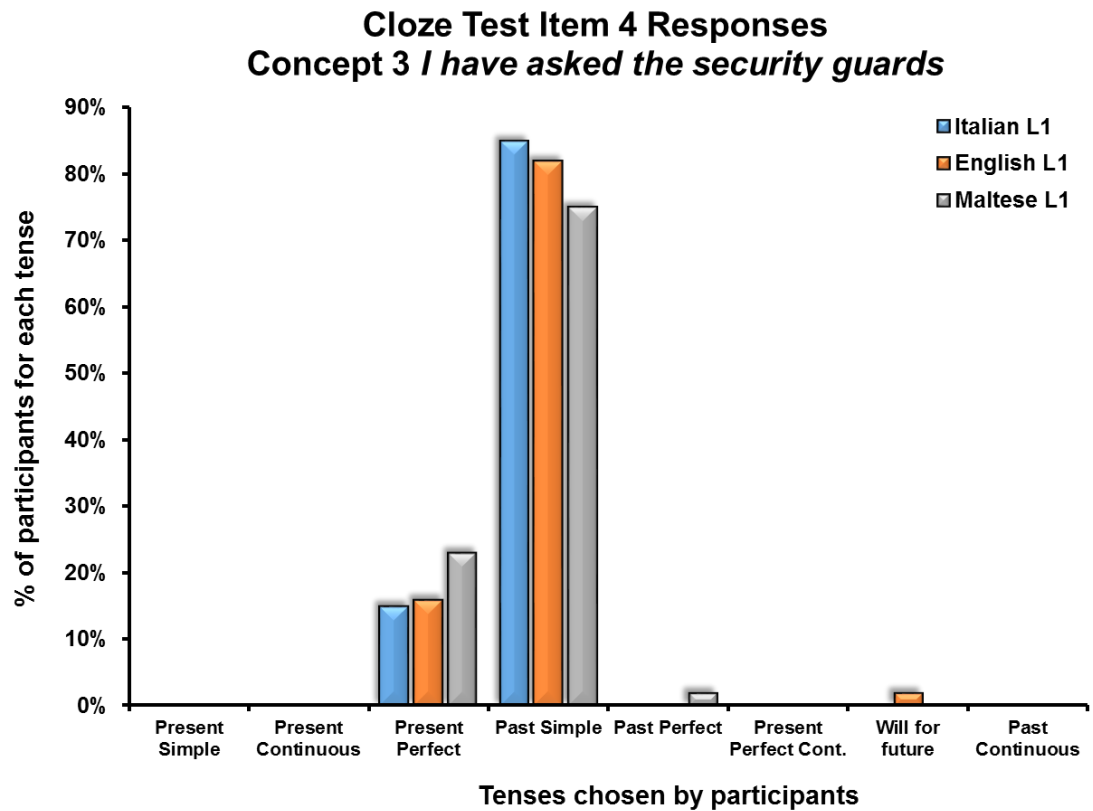


Figure 21. The responses of the Italian L1 experimental group and the Maltese L1 and English L1 control groups for Item 4.

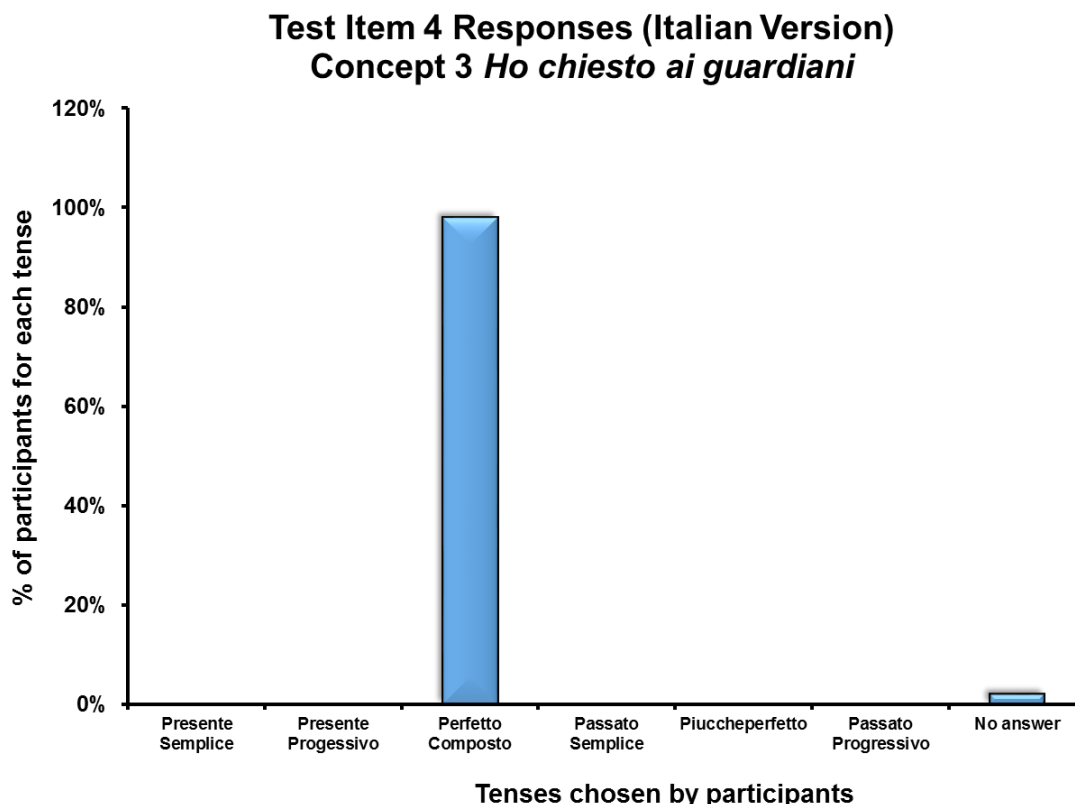


Figure 22. The responses given by the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 4.

As expected the Italian L1 control group used the *Perfetto Composto* for this concept, 98% gave *ho chiesto* as the answer, a further 2% gave no answer.

With regards to the results for Item 4 for the groups working in English, it is evident that the majority of all the groups used the Past Simple. The experimental L1 Italian group used it in 85% of cases, the English L1 in 82% of cases and the Maltese L1 group in 75% of cases. For the most part, the remainder of each group chose the Present Perfect. That the L1 Italian group would err using the Past Simple for this concept was predicted by the hypothesis in that it reflects a past oriented view of this event. This is due to the fact that the tense used in L1 for this concept is the *Perfetto Composto*, which is semantically perfective.

However, that so many of the English L1 control group used the Past Simple here was not expected. The contextual cues to this item were designed to elicit the idea that the

act of looking for the cell phone is ongoing and that the act of asking is relevant to the present in that it has not yet obtained any positive results (Chapter 4). In the post-hoc online test the use of the Past Simple and Present Perfect was split almost equally in the English native speakers. 12/27 (44%) used the Past Simple, while 13/27 (48%) used the Present Perfect. Similarly to Item 3 for the *resultative past* concept, the English L1 speakers predominantly use the Past Simple, and in the follow-up the use of the Past Simple was almost equal to that of the Present Perfect. Again the explanations for this may be twofold: i) that the contextual cues are not effective enough, or ii) that the use of the Present Perfect for this concept in English is diminishing. In order to further clarify this it would be interesting to perform *think aloud* reports for the English L1 control. This would achieve the dual aim of testing the contextual cues developed in the test and could further shed light on changes in use for this construction. This will be discussed in Chapter 6.

That the Italian L1 group, however, maintain a past and finished orientation to this action is to a certain extent also corroborated by the *think aloud* data detailed in table 12 below.

Table 12. The verbalisations made by each participant for Item 4 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test.
16. Giovanni	<i>I ask the security guards... and all my friends, but nobody has seen it.</i> Errmmm I errrrmm <i>I asked</i> the security guards dovrebbe essere.	<i>I ask the security guards...and all my friends, but nobody has seen it.</i> Errmmm I errrrmm <i>I asked</i> the security guards, it should be.	Reads text aloud. Inserts bare form of the verb. Thinking Verbalises structure choice in L2. (<i>I asked</i>)	Giovanni firstly reads the text aloud, up to nobody has seen it. He then thinks about his answer, indicted by errrrmmm twice. He then decides on <i>I asked</i> .	I asked
17. Chiara	<i>I ask</i> the security guards, Ho chiesto alla sicurezza ai guardiani alla security errm quindi <i>I asked</i> .	<i>I ask</i> the security guards, I ASK (PerfCOMP) the security guards, errrm so <i>I asked</i> .	Reads the text aloud. Inserts bare form of the verb. Translates into L1 Uses L1 to prompt L2 form choice. Verbalises structure choice in L2. (<i>I asked</i>)	Chiara reads the text, inserting the infinitive form. She then translates using the Perfetto Composto <i>ho chiesto</i> . She then reasons that the correct form is <i>asked</i> .	I asked
18. Silvia	<i>I asked</i> Ha chiesto forse perché nessuna ha dato una risposta positiva	<i>I asked</i> She ASK (PerfCOMP) maybe because no one has given a positive response,	Verbalises structure choice in L2. (<i>I asked</i>) Gives reason based in present truth.	Silvia verbalises her answer in the English Simple Past, <i>I asked</i> . She reasons that this may be because no one has given a positive response and	I asked

	penso che l'atto di chiedere è nel passato.	I think that the act of asking is in the past.	Gives temporal reference. (PAST)	she says that the act of asking is in the past.	
19. Giacomo	Poi <i>I asked</i> the security guards, I asked, ha chiesto è un'azione già passata.	Then, <i>I asked</i> the security guards, I asked, I ASK (PerfCOMP) it is an action that has already passed.	Verbalises choice of structure in L2 in full sentence. (<i>I asked</i>). Verbalises choice of structure in L2 for second time. Translates to L1 (<i>Ha chiesto</i>). Gives temporal reference.(PAST)	Giacomo reads the text and inserts the Past Simple form <i>I asked</i> . His reasoning is that this is an action which is already in the past.	I asked
20. Rosanna	Ho chiesto a tutti, err ho chiesto a tutti	I ASK (PerfCOMP) everyone, errr I ASK (PerfCOMP) everyone,	Verbalises choice of structure in L1 (<i>Ho chiesto</i>) and repeats same in L1.	Rosanna translates using the Perfetto Composto form for chiedere: <i>Ho chiesto</i> .	I asked

When talking about the context represented in Item 4 in L1 Italian, the respondents consistently use the Perfetto Composto, a choice which is in line with the statistical data showing that almost 100% of the Italian control group used the same tense for this context. In the cases of Giovanni, Chiara and Rosanna, the Perfetto Composto is used in L1 and after reflection the Past Simple is returned as the answer. It is unclear here whether or not these three respondents are making a substitution of Past Simple for Perfetto Composto without recourse to further levels of conceptualisation or semantics, so called formal transfer, or are reasoning that the context depicts a past and finished action, and therefore match the semantics of the English Past Simple. All of the verbalisations are short, particularly that of Rosanna, and this could indicate that perfectivity is a straightforward concept, once arrived at, which does not require significant metalinguistic reasoning, or that formal transfer does not require significant cognitive processing.

However, Silvia and Giacomo's verbal reports are more indicative of their perspective on the event. Both reason that the act of *asking* is past (1- Silvia and 2 - Giacomo).

1) Penso che l'atto di chiedere è nel passato/ I think that the act of asking is in the past.

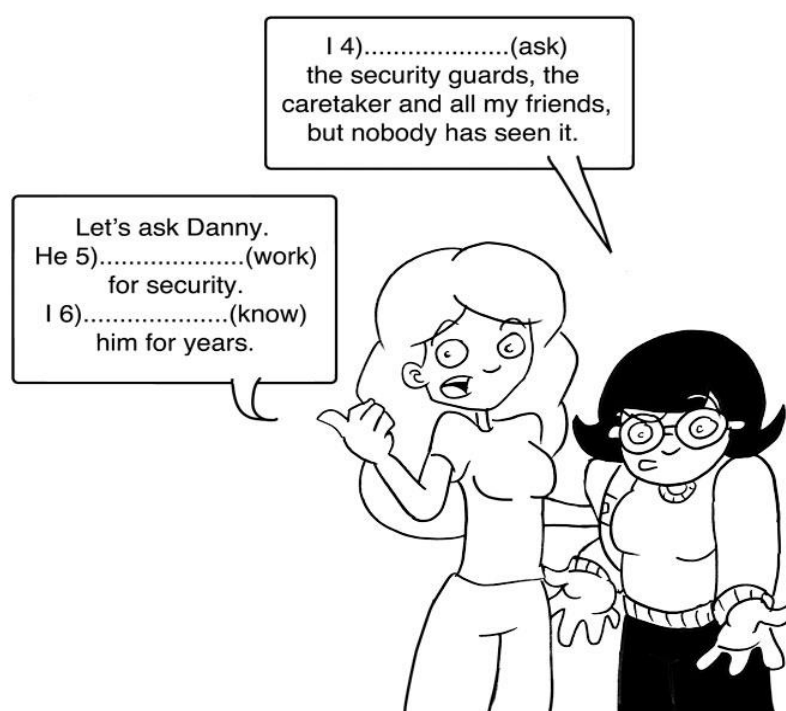
2) I asked, ha chiesto è un'azione già passata./ I asked, I ASK (PerfCOMP) is a past action.

Interestingly, Silvia also sees a present result of the past action of asking (3), but she does not seem to consider that salient. At least, it is not reflected in her choice of tense in L2.

3) Ha chiesto forse perché nessuno ha dato una risposta positiva/ I ASK (PerfCOMP) maybe because no one has given a positive answer.

In example 3, Silvia shows that she appreciates the present outcome of the *asking*, the fact that no one has given a positive answer and the iPhone still hasn't been found. However, it would appear possible that the act of *asking*, which does indeed take place in the past, is the most attended to feature and results in the choice of Past Simple for this particular function. If this is the case, we may hypothesise a tentative case for conceptual transfer; however, the high number of English control group respondents who also used the Past Simple for this item may suggest that the result state feature of this situation is equally not so evident to them, in which case, the test design for this item would need to be reconsidered as will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

5.2.6 Item 6



Item 6 has been designed to test concept 1: *state up to the present* -I have known him. This item should reveal the ways in which perceptions of the act of *knowing* differ cross-linguistically and influence L2 performance.

Figures 23 and 24 show the responses given by the participants for Item 6 of the cloze test.

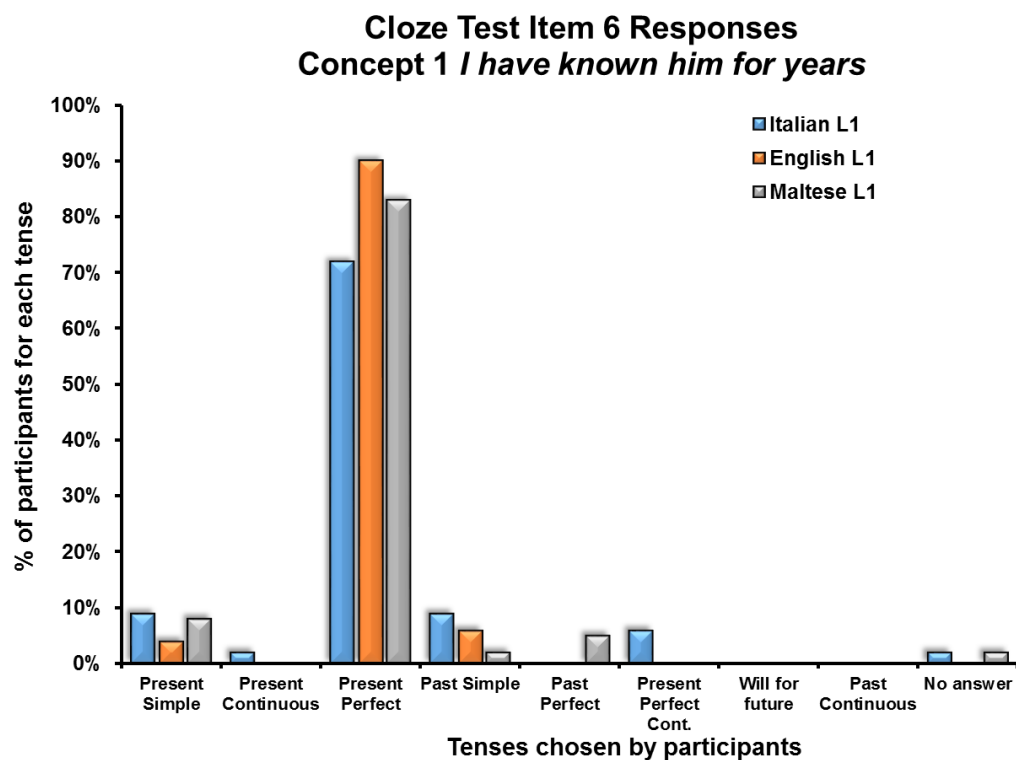


Figure 23. The responses of the Italian experimental group, the English L1 control and the Maltese L1 control groups for Item 6.

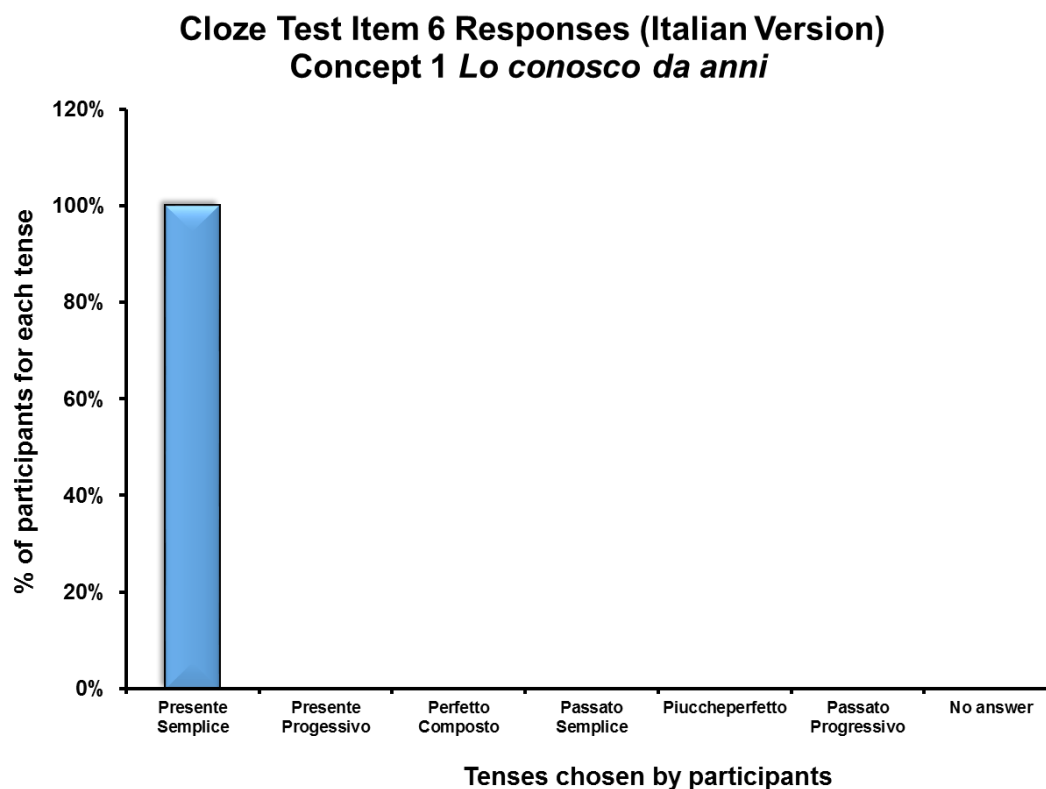


Figure 24. The responses given by the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 6.

As can be seen in figure 24, the Italian L1 controls unanimously chose the *Presente Semplice* for the concept *state up to the present*, as expected and detailed in the literature (Chapter 3).

With regards to figure 23, it is evident that the majority of the participants over all three groups, experimental group 1, English L1 controls and Maltese L1 controls, favour the Present Perfect for this concept, with 72%, 90% and 83% using the Present Perfect respectively. For the experimental group, erroneous responses were split between the Present Simple 9%, the Present Continuous 2%, the Past Simple 9% and Present Perfect Continuous 6%. A similar picture emerges for the Maltese L1 group, with erroneous responses in the Present Simple 8%, and the Past Simple 2%; however,

5% also erroneously use the Past Perfect which is an error commonly found in the English of Maltese L1 speakers (Fabri 2014 – personal communication).

Interestingly, the *think aloud* data help to shed some light on the experimental group's use of the L2 tense and aspect system for this concept; particularly, the use of the Present Simple and Present Perfect. Table 13 below details the *think aloud* evidence obtained for Item 6.

Table 13. Table details the verbalisations made by each participant for Item 6 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation L1 Italian	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test
21. Giovanni	<p><i>I know him I know him</i> for years.</p> <p>I know him for years allora, perché comunque c'è ora che ci penso era un Present Continuous perché lo continua a conoscere lo conosceva prima c'è Errrm</p> <p><i>I have knowing</i> non lo so al momento mi sembrava dovessi lasciarlo all'infinito quindi ho messo <i>know</i></p> <p>non lo so il fatto che parlava al presente mi ha portato a scrivere <i>know</i> ma ora che ci penso forse era un Present Continuous non lo so.)</p>	<p><i>I know him, I know him</i> for years.</p> <p><i>I know him for years</i> so, because, anyway, that is, now that I think about it, it should be Present Continuous because she still knows him, she KNOW (IMP) him before, that is errmmm</p> <p><i>I have knowing</i> I don't know, at that time I thought I should leave it in the infinitive so I put <i>know</i>.</p> <p>I don't know, the fact that she was speaking in the present brought me to write <i>know</i>, but now that I think about it, maybe it</p>	<p>Verbalises structure choice in L2 and repeats same. (<i>I know him</i>)</p> <p>Verbalises structure choice for third time in full sentence. Thinking. Verbalises tense choice Gives reason based in present truth and past truth.</p> <p>Thinking Verbalises second structure choice in L2. Signs of doubt Inserts bare form of verb Signs of doubt Gives a temporal reference. (PRESENT). Thinking Verbalises tense choice</p>	<p>Giovanni uses the L2 Present Simple for this item <i>I know him for years</i>. He does not verbalise during the test, but is asked at the end of the test to speak more about his answer.* At this point he thinks again, and seems to recognise the past to present nature of the state <i>to know</i>. He says she still knows him, and that she knew him before. With this in mind, he produces <i>I have knowing</i>. This seems to incorporate both the idea of past <i>have</i> and also continuous with the + <i>ing</i> on the verb. He calls this tense the Present Continuous, but could be confusing it with the Present Perfect Progressive.</p>	I know him.

		should be Present Continuous.		He then goes on to explain his original answer saying that the fact that the protagonist was speaking in the present brought him to write <i>know</i> . Here there is a tendency towards a present orientation with regards to the original answer. However, when asked to clarify, Giovanni seems to attend to the past to present feature reflected in L2. He does not change his answer.	
22. Chiara	<i>I know him,</i> ah io lo conosco da tempo, <i>I know</i> , lo conosco da tempo, siccome che... presente	<i>I know him,</i> ah I KNOW (PRES) him for a long time, <i>I know</i> , I KNOW (PRES) him for a long time, because it's..... present.	Reads text aloud. Inserts bare form of the verb. Shows she has understood. Translates into L1. Verbalises structure choice in L2. (<i>I know</i> .) Translates into L1. Gives temporal reference.	Reading the text Chiara inserts <i>know</i> into the sentence. With <i>ah</i> she shows that she has understood the meaning of the sentence translating into Italian. <i>Io lo conosco</i> da tempo. She then again verbalises <i>I know</i> and repeats the translation of the sentence. Finally, she gives her reasoning, that <i>it</i> , by which we can infer the <i>knowing</i> is present.	I know him.
23. Silvia	<i>I've known him for years,</i> perché lo conosce ancora, <i>I've known him for years.</i>	<i>I've known him for years,</i> because I still KNOW (PRES) him.	Verbalises structure choice in L2. Gives reason based in present truth.	Silvia uses a Present Perfect, with the explanation that state continues into the present moment. <i>Lo conosce</i>	I've known him.

		<i>I've known him for years.</i>	Verbalises structure choice for second time in L2. (<i>I've known him</i>)	<i>ancora/I still know him.</i> Silvia's reasoning reflects text book and classroom metalanguage used to explain the Present Perfect in Italy.	
24. Giacomo	<i>I have known him for years</i> perché la conosce da anni	<i>I've known him for years</i> because she know (PRES) him for years.	Verbalises structure choice in L2. (<i>I've known</i>). Gives reason based in past to present truth.	Giacomo verbalises his response of Present Perfect, and then gives his reason through a translation of the English sentence into Italian L1. It is unclear whether this translation which holds the correct meaning, indicates that he has grasped the concept of past to present time attached to the English Present Perfect, or whether this is indicative of classroom training where students are taught to recognise that certain sentences, such as those with <i>da/since</i> in Italian require specific constructions.	I've known him.
25. Roberta	<i>I have known</i> ma non ne sono certa.	<i>I have known,</i> but I am not sure.	Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>I've known.</i>) Shows doubt	Roberta uses the correct Present Perfect construction, but has some doubts about her answer.	I have known him.
26. Rosanna	Chiediamo a Danny lui lavora nella sicurezza lo conosco da anni	Let's ask Danny, he WORK (PRES) for security, I KNOW (PRES) him for years.	Translates text into L1.	Rosanna verbalises her online translation of the text.	I've known.

As can be seen in table 13, both Giovanni and Chiara use the erroneous Present Simple for the concept *state up to the present*, as predicted by the hypothesis. The *think aloud* data are suggestive of a possible present oriented perception of the situation and, therefore, could represent tentative evidence for the influence of conceptual transfer (See Chapter 6 for a discussion of this in terms of conceptualisation transfer) with regards to the participants' choice of the Present Simple for this concept.

Giovanni's answer on the cloze test was *I know*. As he did not verbalise anything for this item during the test, he was asked to speak more about it immediately after. The use of retrospective questioning is justified here given the richness of the data produced; moreover, it should not affect the integrity of the data as questioning occurred immediately after the test, with the material still in view (See Chapter 4). Interestingly, when asked to reflect, Giovanni attends to the past to present nature of the state *to know someone for years*, saying that *she knew him before* and uses a form which seems to be an approximation of the Present Perfect Progressive: *I have knowing*. With regards to his original answer he says that the fact that the protagonist was speaking in the present encouraged him to use the Present Simple. This could tentatively be interpreted as salience given to the present features of the situation, resulting in the use of the English Present Simple.

Similarly, Chiara's *think aloud* verbalisation for this item is evocative of a present oriented conceptualisation. She first inserts the verb *to know* into the sentence and makes a translation into L1 to ascertain the meaning. She then repeats *know*, and the translation, as if she is checking her answer. Finally, she offers an explanation that *it* is present. By *it* we infer the state of *knowing*. Notably, also in contrast to the other respondents, she does not refer at all to the past to present feature.

Certainly, the possibility that the answers given by Chiara and Giovanni are a result of formal transfer of Present Simple for Presente Semplice may not be dismissed out of hand. Nevertheless, in both cases the participants' reasoning, reflection and attention to the present features of the state depicted, do seem to imply their attendance to the particular present feature of the event. It is only once Giovanni is asked to reflect that he seems to see the past to present feature which is grammaticalised in L2.

Silvia, Giacomo, Roberta and Rosanna all use the correct Present Perfect form for this concept. However, the *think aloud* data provide us with an unclear picture as to whether or not these participants have fully assimilated this construction for correct use. With regard to Roberta and Rosanna, the former indicates that she is not confident with her answer *non ne sono certa/I'm not sure* and the latter, Rosanna, simply verbalises her online translation of the text. For a clearer picture, it is interesting to compare Silvia and Giacomo's answers. Silvia justifies her answer with *lo conosce ancora/she still knows him*. Here the use of *ancora* which may be translated into English as *still* is indicative of attention to a past to present time period. *She still knows him* implies that she also knew him in the past. It is thus, perhaps suggestive of attention to the past to present nature of the state of knowing depicted here. Nevertheless, as noted above, this use of *ancora/still* is commonly used Italian classroom metalanguage as a trigger to prompt the use of the Present Perfect, and may not mean that the participant has fully understood the use of this construction in this context as they see the word *still* and this triggers the use of the Present Perfect. Giacomo translates the English sentence into Italian L1, *perché lo conosce da anni/because she has known him for years* as a justification. This literal translation necessitates the use of another lexical trigger *da/for/since*, which may prompt the use of the Present Perfect in L2. Silvia and Giacomo seem to have a more accurate grasp

of the appropriate use of the English tense and aspect system for this concept; however, their answers are indicative of influence from classroom metalanguage and teaching, which leads to questions regarding their actual assimilation of the target construction. To sum up, the data for this item include some tentative evidence for a present orientation to the state of *knowing* in two instances (Giovanni and Chiara). It also reveals the use of classroom metalanguage with regards to the Present Perfect, which possibly casts some doubt upon the participants' full assimilation of the Present Perfect construction in terms of meaning and usage in this context.

5.2.7 Item 7



Like Item 6, Item 7 also targets concept 1: *state up to the present*. – I have been here in the shade all morning.

Figures 25 and 26 detail the answers given across all four groups for Item 7.

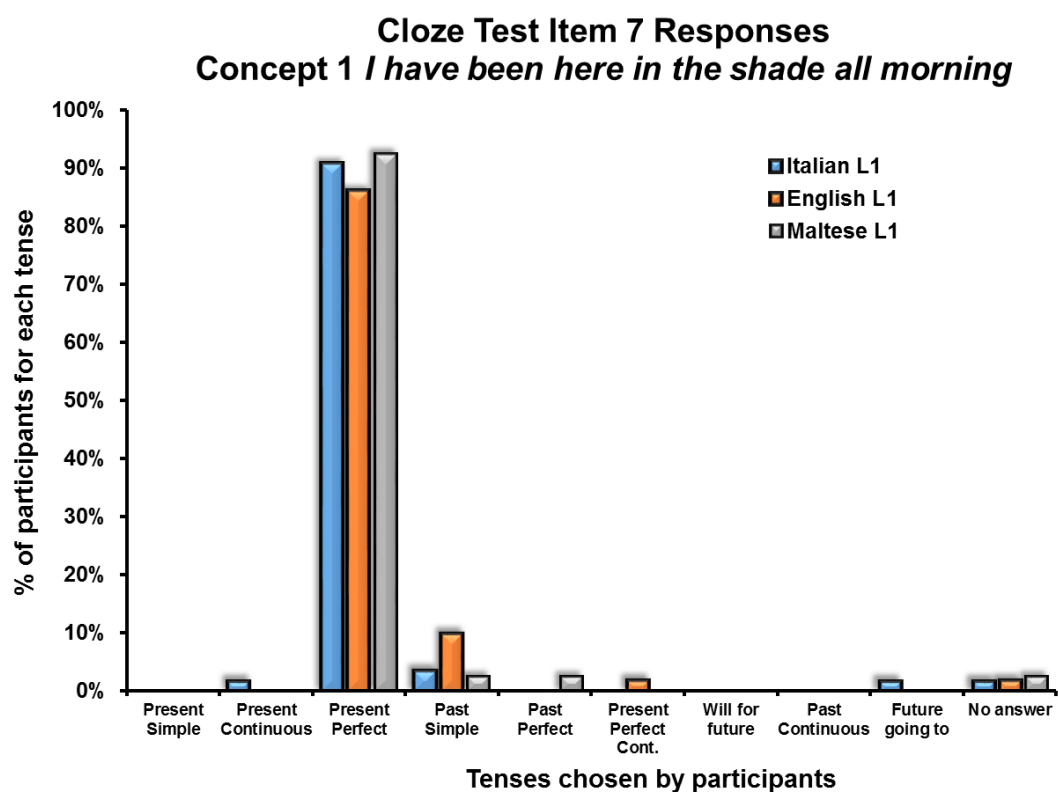


Figure 25. The results for the groups working in English: the experimental Italian L1 group, the English L1 and Maltese L1 controls for Item 7.

Cloze Test Item 7 (Italian Version)
Concept 1 Sono qui all'ombra da stamattina

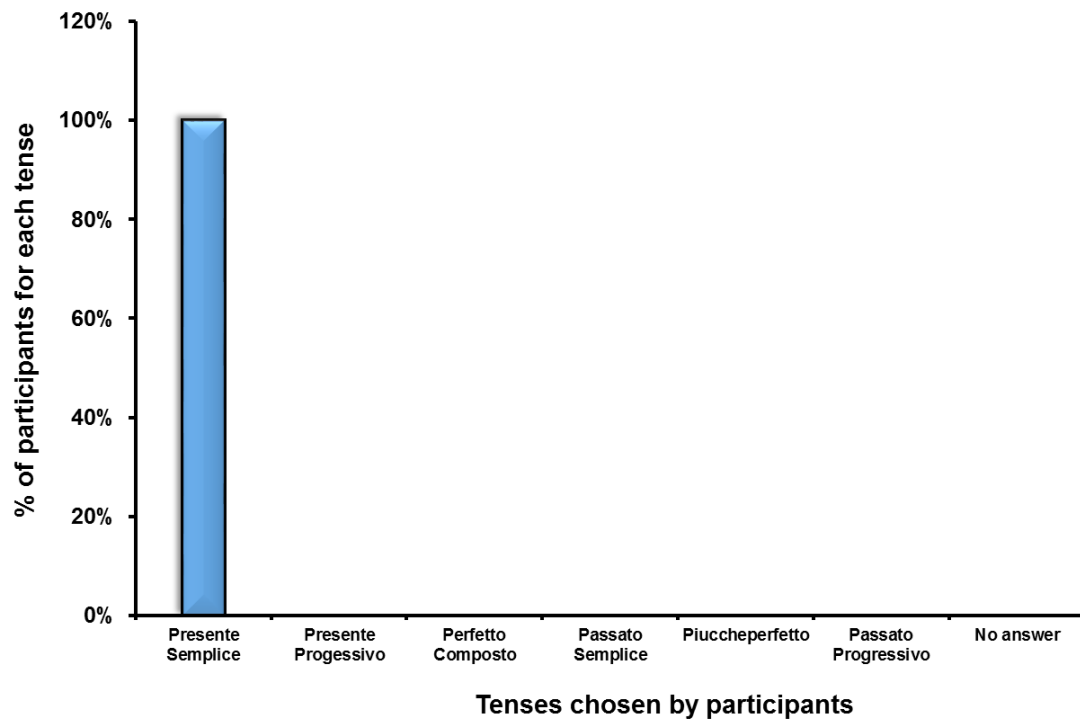


Figure 26. The results for the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 7.

As can be seen in figure 26, 100% of the respondents chose the Italian Presente Semplice to represent the concept: *state up to the present* as expected (Chapter 3).

Figure 25 shows that for all three groups working in English the Present Perfect was the preferred tense for this function. It was chosen by 92% of the Experimental group, 86% of the English L1 control group and 93% of the Maltese L1 control group.

Although the statistical results do not reflect the hypothesis that the experimental group would err using the Present Simple, the *think aloud* data below does help to explain participants' reasoning behind the use of the Present Perfect.

Table 14 details the think aloud data gathered in response to Item 7.

Table 14. The verbalisations made by each participant for Item 7 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation L1 Italian	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test
27. Giovanni	<p>I errmmm I <i>be</i> here in the shade [all'ombra]</p> <p><i>I'm here</i> in the shade all morning o sono stato, I have...che può essere?</p> <p><i>I stayed, I been, I I I</i> Io sono stato ma io non mi ricordo com'è la forma. At end of test: (Perché allora prima la prima volta che l'ho letto pensavo dicesse che dicesse che lui era sotto era all'ombra tutto il giorno</p> <p>però poi c'è lui parlava al passato dice che è stato all'ombra tutta la mattinata quindi c'è parlava si riferiva al passato</p> <p>però non mi ricordavo come si potesse mettere</p>	<p>I errrrmmmm I <i>be</i> here in the shade [all'ombra]</p> <p><i>I'm here</i> in the shade all morning or I BE (Perf COMP), I have what can it be?</p> <p><i>I stayed, I been, I I I</i> BE (PerfCOMP), but I don't remember the form. At end of test: Because, so, first, the first time I read it I thought it said that, it said that he BE (IMP) under, he BE (IMP) in the shade all day but then, that is, he was speaking about the past, he says that that he BE (PerfCOMP) in the shade all morning, so that is he was speaking, he was referring to the past,</p>	<p>Reads text aloud. Inserts bare form of the verb.</p> <p>Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>I'm here</i>). Verbalises second structure choice in L1 (<i>Sono stato</i>). Shows doubt</p> <p>Verbalises third structure choice in L2 (<i>I stayed</i>). Verbalises fourth structure choice in L2 (<i>I been</i>). Verbalises structure choice in L1 (<i>era</i>)</p> <p>Describes what is happening in the story</p> <p>Gives temporal reference. (PAST)</p> <p>Verbalises second structure choice in L1 (<i>è stato</i>)</p> <p>Translates into L1. Gives temporal reference. (PAST)</p>	<p>Giovanni first inserts the infinitive <i>be</i>, to try to make sense of the sentence. He then uses the English Present Simple to describe the situation and then switching to L1 uses the Perfetto Composto <i>sono stato</i>. Looking to the experimenter for help, he is told that he will be able to discuss this item at the end. At the end of the test, Giovanni says that he believes the speaker was talking about the past, but couldn't remember the correct structure. In Italian, he uses two different tenses to describe being in the shade. At first, he uses the Imperfect <i>era all'ombra tutto il giorno/he BE (IMP) in the shade all day</i>. This has the effect of distancing speech time from the action. The Imperfect describes an ongoing past and finished state. Interestingly, he pairs this with <i>tutto il giorno/all day</i>, whereas the text actually reads <i>all morning</i>. Then Giovanni uses the Perfetto</p>	No answer

	OK I errmmm	but I don't remember, how, how to put it OK I errmmm	Does not remember the form/structure.	Composto and pairs it with all morning. <i>È stato all'ombra tutta la mattinata/ He BE (PerfCOMP) in the shade all morning.</i> Giovanni seems undecided in L1 with regards to the temporal anchoring of this state. He does not offer an answer, and this may be a function of his inability to remember how to compose the form he requires.	
28. Chiara	<i>I'm here</i> , io sono. no...sono stato qui, sono stato here... sono stato qui tutto il giorno.	<i>I'm here</i> , I BE (PRES), no I BE (PerfCOMP) here I BE (PerfCOMP) here, I BE (PerfCOMP) here all day.	Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>I'm here</i>). Translates to L1 Shows doubt. Verbalises new structure choice in L2. (<i>Sono stato</i>). Repeats same Translates entire sentence into L1. Verbalises L1 structure choice (<i>Sono stato</i> .)	Chiara first verbalises her thinking about the item using the English Present Simple, <i>I'm here</i> . She then translates to L2 and thinks again using the Perfetto Composto <i>sono stato qui, sono stato here</i> . It is very interesting the way that Chiara switches from L2 to L1 to L2 and back again even at a lexical level using <i>qui</i> and then <i>here</i> . She appears to be trying different combinations to see which sounds right for her. Her answer is in the Past Simple, possibly reflecting the past and finished meaning attached to the Perfetto Composto. Note the use of <i>tutto il giorno/all day</i> , the text actually reads all morning.	I was

29.Silvia	I've been here in the shade all morning, perché è ancora all'ombra.	<i>I've been here in the shade all morning,</i> because he is still in the shade.	Verbalises structure choice in L2 in full sentence. (<i>I've been</i>) Gives reason based in present truth.	Silvia uses the Present Perfect for this function and gives her reasoning that he is <i>ancora/still</i> in the shade. The use of <i>ancora</i> suggests an appreciation of the past to present nature of the state <i>to be in the shade</i> as detailed for Item 6. However, it is reminiscent of classroom metalanguage.	I've been
30. Elena	I have been here in the shade all morning credo perché l'indicazione mi da <i>all morning</i> , ho speso tutta la mattina qui. Ok	I have been here in the shade all morning, I think because, <i>all morning</i> gives me a clue, I SPEND (PerfCOMP) all morning here. OK.	Verbalises structure choice in L2. Thinking. Refers to lexical cues in text. Translates into L1. Shows comprehension/closes.	Elena first verbalises her choice of the Present Perfect. She says that she uses the phrase <i>all morning</i> as a cue to her tense choice. She says “ <i>All morning</i> mi da l'indicazione/ all morning gives me a clue” <i>All morning</i> would seem to give her an indication of the temporal span of the action. She also explains further with <i>ho speso tutta la mattina qui/I have spent all morning here</i> . The use of <i>spendere/to spend</i> in the Perfetto Composto is suggestive of a past to present focus, and possibly her perception of the morning being over. It is perhaps for this reason that she uses <i>spendere</i> in the Perfetto Composto rather than <i>essere</i> in the Presente Semplice to explain her answer. The latter would imply that the morning is not over, where the	I have been

				former is more indicative of a finished action.	
31. Rosanna	Ciao mia amica ha perso il suo iPhone, lei l'ha visto? No non lo so, c'è troppo caldo per lavorare Vanno nei luoghi dove era la ragazza per vedere se trovano il telefono	Hi, my friend has lost her iPhone, have you seen it? No I don't know, it's too hot to work. They go to all the places that the girl has been in to see if they find the telephone.	Translates text into L1. Describes what is happening in the story.	Rosanna translates the cloze test text from L2 to L1 and then goes on to explain what the protagonists are doing: going to the various places that the girl has been to see if they can find the telephone. This is an excellent example of covert understanding of a situation which is applied to L2 tense choice.	I've been
32. Giacomo	Here in the shade all morning I I'm I am ok perché sono stato	Here in the shade all morning. I I'm I am ok because I BE (PerfCOMP)	Reads text aloud/ Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>I'm</i>). Repeats same. Gives reason based on past truth.	Giacomo answers this item using the Present Simple. First he verbalises the English <i>here in the shade all morning</i> possibly as a way to understand the time frame. Then he repeats his answer twice <i>I I'm I am OK</i> . His reasoning is given using the Perfetto Composto to express the past truth that he has been there all morning. The meaning of the Perfetto Composto is predominantly <i>perfective</i> , although it can entail a situation which continues up to speech time. It seems that Giacomo sees the past to present feature of the event and verbalises it in L1; however, he does not alter his answer to reflect this in L2, retaining the original Present Simple. Is this because L1	I am

				Italian caters for the past to present with the imperfective nature of the Presente Semplice, and so Giacomo erroneously believes he has captured this with the English Present Simple?	
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As can be seen from the statistical data above, the majority of the L1 Italian speakers in the experimental group correctly used the Present Perfect for this concept. However, the *think aloud data* reveal that their use of this construction is not necessarily a reflection of their full understanding of its meaning and use in this context. It appears that, at least in the cases of Chiara and Elena, there may be evidence for a past and finished orientation to the situation and, in the case of Elena, a use of the Present Perfect with past and finished meaning.

Chiara's verbalisation is interesting as she shows her confusion by switching between L1 and L2. She first uses the English Present Simple, then indicates her change of mind with *no* and switches to L2 Perfetto Composto to describe the situation. Notably, she adds *tutto il giorno/ all day* to her sentence. This is a misreading of the text which says *all morning/tutta la mattina*. This misreading, accompanied by the use of the Perfetto Composto in Italian, implies an understanding that the situation and the time frame within which it occurs is either over or just over, and this is clearly contradicted by the contextual cues given in the cloze test itself. However, Chiara, consistent with this view, then answers the question with the Past Simple which entails a past and finished state in L2.

Elena's *think aloud* report sheds further light on the possible reasons for a past oriented perception of the concept in this case. Notably, she says that the clue that she uses for tense choice is *all morning*, she then glosses using the Perfetto Composto *Ho speso tutta la mattina qui/ I have spent all morning here*. While in English the combination of Present Perfect *I have been* and *all morning* entails that the morning is still in progress, whereas the combination of Perfetto Composto and *tutta la mattina* in Italian may imply that the morning is over.

Interestingly, Giovanni also glosses using a combination of L1 past tenses, *tutto il giorno* and *tutta la mattina*. Like Chiara he starts with the Present Simple and then switches to the Perfetto Composto. After the test he explains that he felt that the answer should be in the past and uses first (i) and then (ii) to explain his reasoning.

- (i) *era all'ombra tutto il giorno/he BE (IMP) in the shade all day.*
- (ii) *È stato all'ombra tutta la mattinata/ He BE (PerfCOMP) in the shade all morning*

The use of the Italian Imperfetto in (i) is indicative of a state persisting in the past, which is now over. The use of the Perfetto Composto in (ii) as detailed above implies that the time frame *morning* and the state of *being in the shade* are over or just over.

There seems to have been a tendency within the group to take the phrase *all morning* to imply that the morning was over. This led to the use of the Past Simple in Chiara's case and the Present Perfect in Elena's case with a possible past and finished meaning. Silvia also uses the Present Perfect; however, her reasoning is different to that of Elena. While Elena glosses with Perfetto Composto + *tutta la mattina*, Silvia instead justifies her answer by saying *perché è ancora all'ombra / because he is still in the shade*. Elena shows that she has a more complete grasp of the meaning of the L2 concept as she refers to the present continuing situation which obtains with relation to *being in the shade*.

The *think aloud* data detailed here does, however, shed some light on the quantitative results. The increased use of the Present Perfect for this item by the experimental group may not be a function of their full understanding of the meaning and use of the construction, but may be, in contrast, a result of a misreading of the lexical temporal reference cues inducing a past and finished reading of the situation. Given that the

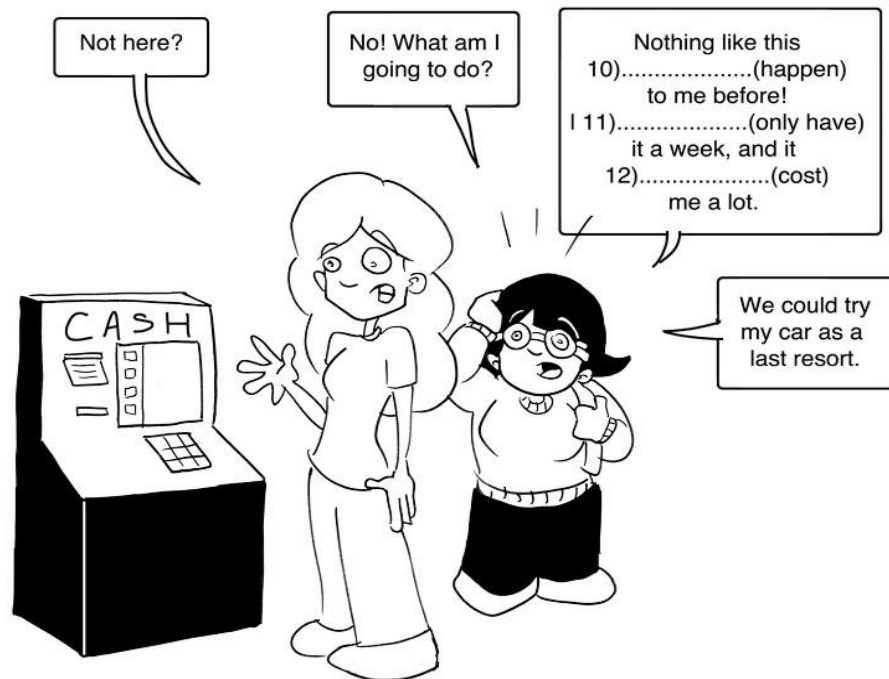
Present Perfect can be falsely ascribed a past and finished meaning by these L1 Italian L1 speakers, this tense may be used here as a function of conceptual transfer. This past and complete reading of the situation is exemplified in the *think aloud* data by the use of L2 Simple Past in Chiara's case, or the L2 Present Perfect with a past and finished meaning as exemplified by Elena.

With regard to the prediction that Italian L1 speakers of English L2 would err using the Present Simple in this context, the *think aloud* data seems to indicate that the Present Simple may be activated in some cases, but it is then discarded as thinking moves into L2. Giovanni and Chiara both start their verbalisations glossing with the Present Simple, they both use *I'm here*. They do not use the infinitive form to make sense of the sentence, but they conjugate the verb, only to dismiss it in favour of a "past" tense. Giacomo is the only participant who retains his Present Simple answer. It is interesting, as he glosses it using a *Perfetto Composto*. He shows an appreciation of the past feature of the state of *being in the shade*, but does not change his answer. Perhaps because the present conceptualisation of *being in the shade* at that moment is salient.

For this item, there is tentative evidence for influence of L1 concepts which interfere with tense choice in L2 in varying directions. Present tenses, in both L1 and then used in L2 (a reflection of L1 influence) feature for respondents such as Chiara, Giovanni and Giacomo as they try to understand the situation. This results in an answer given in the English Present Simple by Giacomo. However, Giacomo's verbalisation is not enough to determine whether or not his answer is a true example of conceptual transfer; nevertheless, the perception of the situation as present oriented, as a first port of call, would seem to be evident for all three of these respondents.

Also, we see the use of the Present Perfect with the meaning of its structural equivalent, the *Perfetto Composto* (past and finished action), in the case of Elena. “In this case, the possibility of semantic transfer (the formulaic transfer of a form/function pairing) may not be eliminated with regard to Elena’s response. Elena does not give any indication of her categorisation of this etic situation as past and finished apart from her use of the verb *spendere* + *tutta la mattina*, which implies a finished action. This has also been seen for other items. In order for concept transfer to be verified, categorisation of this situation as past and finished would need to be evident in the participant response. This may be achieved by creating further test items where participants are required to categorise specific situations according to their perception of their temporal similarities and differences leaving language aside if possible. For example, placing the concept: state up to the present – I have been here all morning in this context, in a category including concepts such as past and finished actions – I was at the bar this morning, would indicate transfer of conceptual category content and potentially shed light on this complex phenomenon.”

5.2.8 Item 10



Item 10 represents concept 4: *existential past*. – Nothing like this has happened to me before. Figures 27 and 28 show the responses across all four groups to Item 10.

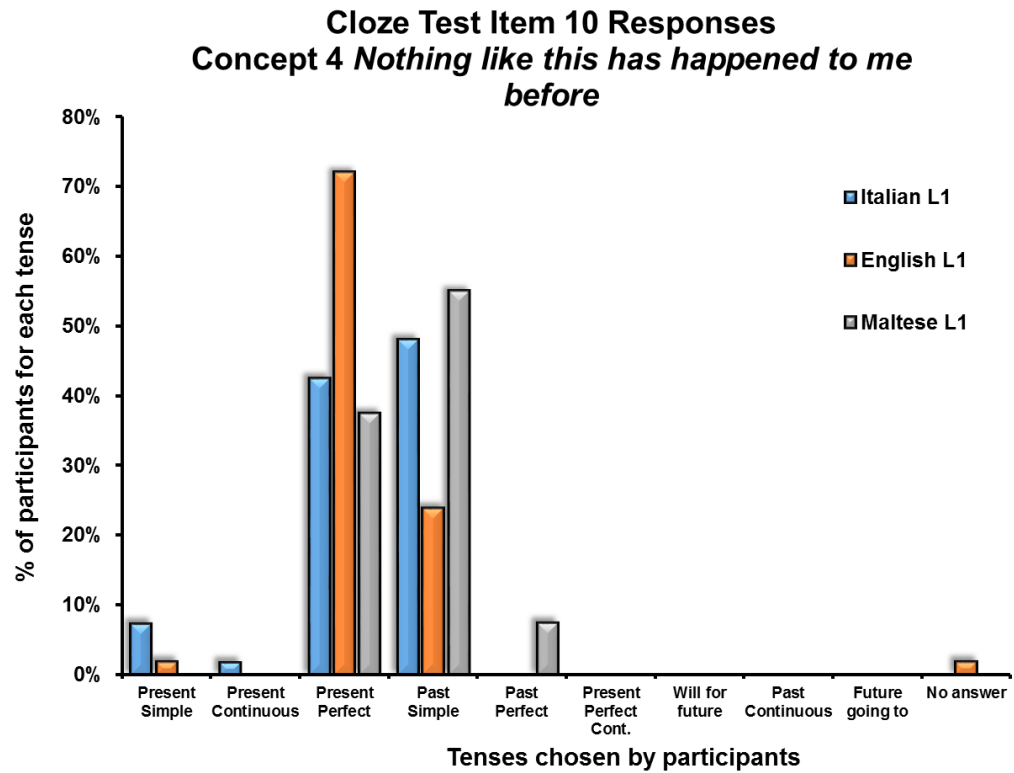


Figure 27. The responses of the three groups working in English: the Italian L1 experimental group, the English L1 control and the Maltese L1 control for Item 10.

Cloze Test Item 10 Responses (Italian Version)
Concept 4 *Non mi e' mai successa una cosa dal genere!*

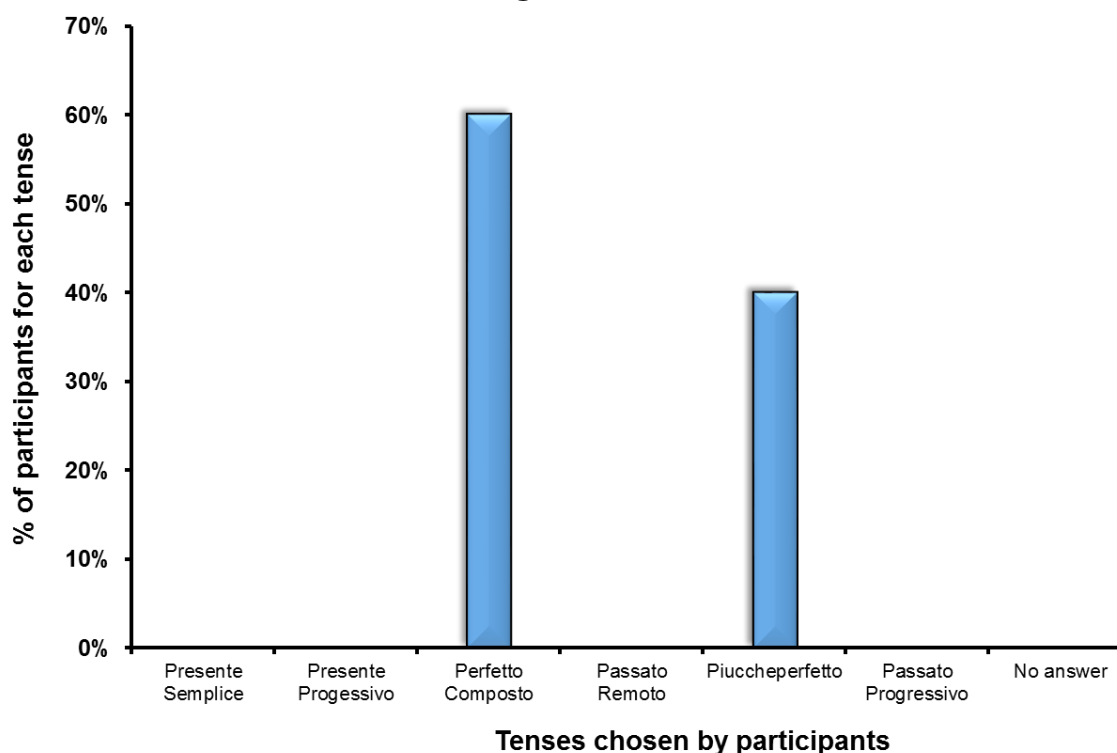


Figure 28. The responses for the Italian L1 control performing in Italian.

Figure 27 shows that answers for this item for the groups working in English, were principally split between the English Present Perfect and Past Simple. The majority of the English L1 control used the Present Perfect (72%) with a further 24% using the Past Simple. In contrast to the English L1 control, more participants in the Italian L1 and Maltese L1 groups used the Past Simple, 48% and 55% respectively, compared to their use of the Present Perfect at 42% and 37% respectively. This slightly increased use of the Past Simple by the experimental group is predicted by the hypothesis that Italian L1 speakers take a past oriented perception of the concept: *existential past*, and that this may be transferred into L2. However, numbers are small and therefore, can not be considered support for this hypothesis. Here, we also see some limited heterogeneity in performance between the English L1 control on one hand and the

experimental and Maltese L1 control groups on the other in their use of Present Perfect and Past Simple for this item.

Figure 28 shows a split between the Perfetto Composto 60% and the Piuccheperfetto 40% in the Italian L1 group working in Italian. This is very interesting when considered together with the *think aloud* data, the responses given by the English L1 controls and responses to other items such as Item 2.

The Piuccheperfetto is a relative tense which presupposes a past reference point. It means that the event being spoken about takes place before another event in the past. The Past Perfect, which is the English equivalent tense, is not used by any of the groups working in English. This poses two questions: firstly, why did 40% of the Italian L1 speakers use this tense in this context in Italian; and secondly, what does that mean with regards to interpretation of the experimental group's responses to this item?

With regards to the first question, use of the Piuccheperfetto here would imply that *nothing like this had happened* before another past event. This past event would necessarily be losing the iPhone. The loss of the iPhone is detailed in Item 2, for which 100% of the Italian L1 control group used the Perfetto Composto. For the same item (Item 2), 67% of respondents in the experimental group used the Past Simple in English, which entails a past and finished action. The English L1 control group also predominantly use the Past Simple for Item 2 (78%); however, they do not seem to use this event as a past reference point for this existential past concept in Item 10. On the contrary, more than 70% of respondents in the English L1 control group use the Present Perfect which has its reference point in the present and according to Michaelis (2004:14) entails an intermediate result in the present, with the possibility of such an event occurring again in the future.

Interestingly, these results would seem to suggest a past and perfect-in-past oriented perception of the situations described in Item 2 and Item 10, respectively, on behalf of the Italian L1 speakers in L1, reflected in the past reference point which emerges in the L1 control group responses to Item 10. This is not reflected in L2, where the Past Simple is preferred in both cases by the experimental group.

This is also seen in the *think aloud* reports generated for Item 10 and detailed in table 15.

Table 15. The verbalisations made by each participant for Item 10 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test.
33. Giovanni	<p><i>Nothing like this happened to me before</i></p> <p>allora perché perché lei dice c'è per quello che ho capito pensavo che nulla gli era accaduto prima e quindi era un passato</p> <p>c'è diciamo <i>happened</i> era al passato che secondo me era da mettere.</p>	<p><i>Nothing like this happened to me before</i></p> <p>so because, because, she says that is, as far as I have understood, I thought that nothing HAPPEN (PPerfetto) to her before and therefore, it was a past</p> <p>that is, we say <i>happened</i> it was in the past, in my opinion that was what to put.</p>	<p>Verbalises Structure choice in L2.</p> <p>Describes action in L1.</p> <p>Verbalises structure choice in L1 (<i>era accaduto</i>)</p> <p>Gives temporal reference. (PAST)</p> <p>Refers to a past tense.</p> <p>Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>happened</i>) Gives a temporal reference. (PAST)</p>	<p>Giovanni uses the Past Simple for this item. His reasoning is interesting as he employs the Piuccheperfetto <i>nulla gli era accaduto/ nothing had happened</i> to justify his answer. The use of this tense implies an action which took place before another in the past. In English, the translation would be <i>had happened</i>. It implies a past temporal reference point. The temporal reference point for this item is present as the protagonist is still in the situation of having lost her phone.</p>	happened
34. Chiara	Non mi era mai successo.	It HAPPEN (PPerfetto) to me.	Verbalises L1 structure choice (<i>era successo</i>).	Chiara verbalises her understanding of the sentence. Like	happened

				Giovanni, she uses the Piuccheperfetto in L1 Italian. Her answer is in the past Simple.	
35. Elena	Non mi è mai successo prima... quindi <i>has happened</i>	It never HAPPEN (PerfCOMP) to me before, so <i>has happened</i> .	Uses L1 translation to prompt L2 form choice (<i>has happened</i>).	Elena translates the cloze test text using the Perfetto Composto and reasons that the answer should be <i>has happened</i> .	has happened
36. Silvia	<i>Happened</i> to me before, non mi è mai successo quindi	<i>Happened</i> to me before, it HAPPEN (PerfCOMP) so	Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>happened</i>). Translates into L1.	Silvia also translates using the Perfetto Composto, but answers using the Past Simple <i>happened</i> .	happened
37. Giacomo	Nothing like this <i>has happened</i> to me before.	Nothing like this <i>has happened</i> to me before.	Verbalises choice of L2 structure (<i>has happened</i>) in full sentence.	Giacomo reads the text aloud and inserts the Present Perfect form.	has happened

Both Giovanni and Chiara use the *Piuccheperfetto* to elaborate their answers to Item 10. Giovanni goes on to explain that *nothing had happened before* and for that reason it is past. However, both participants answer the question using the Past Simple in English. It would appear, unusually, that this sense of past-in-past is transferred and connected to the English Past Simple rather than the ‘correct’ Present Perfect. The Past Perfect is addressed late on in the English syllabus in schools in Palermo and potentially these students lack the Past Perfect form. The fact that the *Piuccheperfetto* features as a gloss in two out of the five verbalisations for this item both of which then answer using the Past Simple could shed some light on the answers given on the cloze tests by the experimental group.

The original hypothesis states that the experimental group are more likely to err in this context with the Past Simple given a past orientated conceptualisation of the event. This is to some extent supported by the statistical data presented here. Also, the *think aloud* data offer us another angle on interpretation of the data. Where the Past Simple is used, it may be a result of a perception of the event as past and finished as predicted by the hypothesis, or erroneously used in this context for an event which took place further back in the past before another past event, that of losing the phone. This was unpredicted and did not appear in the pilot tests; the use of Past Simple for *Piuccheperfetto* is unusual as an English equivalent exists: the Past Perfect which holds a similar semantic and conceptual structure. As suggested above, this may be a result of participants lacking the L2 Past Perfect form and substituting with the nearest semantic equivalent holding past and finished meaning, the Past Simple.

This analysis places two events in the spotlight. One, that of *losing the iPhone*, and the other, that of *nothing like that having happened before*. The Italian L1 and English L1 groups potentially have two different orientations to these events. Even though the

English speakers predominantly use the Past Simple to describe losing the iPhone (I lost), their reference point appears to be the present as they use the Present Perfect to describe nothing like this having happened before. However, the Italian L1 speakers seem to perceive two past events, and this may be linked to a more specific sense of the past and finished feature of losing the iPhone compared to the English speakers. This implies the influence of the L1 tense and aspect system working as a whole, taking into account the entire sequence and context of the story, rather than conceptual and semantic content being brought into focus individually for an item by item level analysis. The answers to this item suggest that there may be a tendency towards differences in the way that events are perceived in terms of their temporal organisation and sequencing, and that the impact that any L1 tense and aspect system as a whole may have upon choices with regard to the expression of temporal concepts is an area which warrants further investigation.

5.2.9 Item 11



Item 11 has been designed to target concept 1: *state up to the present*- I have only had it a week. As with Items 6 and 7, the different constructions used to cover this function in English and Italian are the Present Perfect and the Presente Semplice respectively. The cartoon was designed to portray the idea that the iPhone was not definitively lost, as the protagonist is in the process of looking for it, and, therefore, to generate the Present Perfect form of the verb *to have*: *I have only had it a week*. However, an alternative reading of the situation emerged as part of the post-hoc analysis. Should the participant understand that the iPhone is lost for good, they might use the Past Simple for this item, with the idea that the protagonist had the phone and will not get it back again.

Figures 29 and 30 detail the responses of all four groups on the cloze test for Item 11.

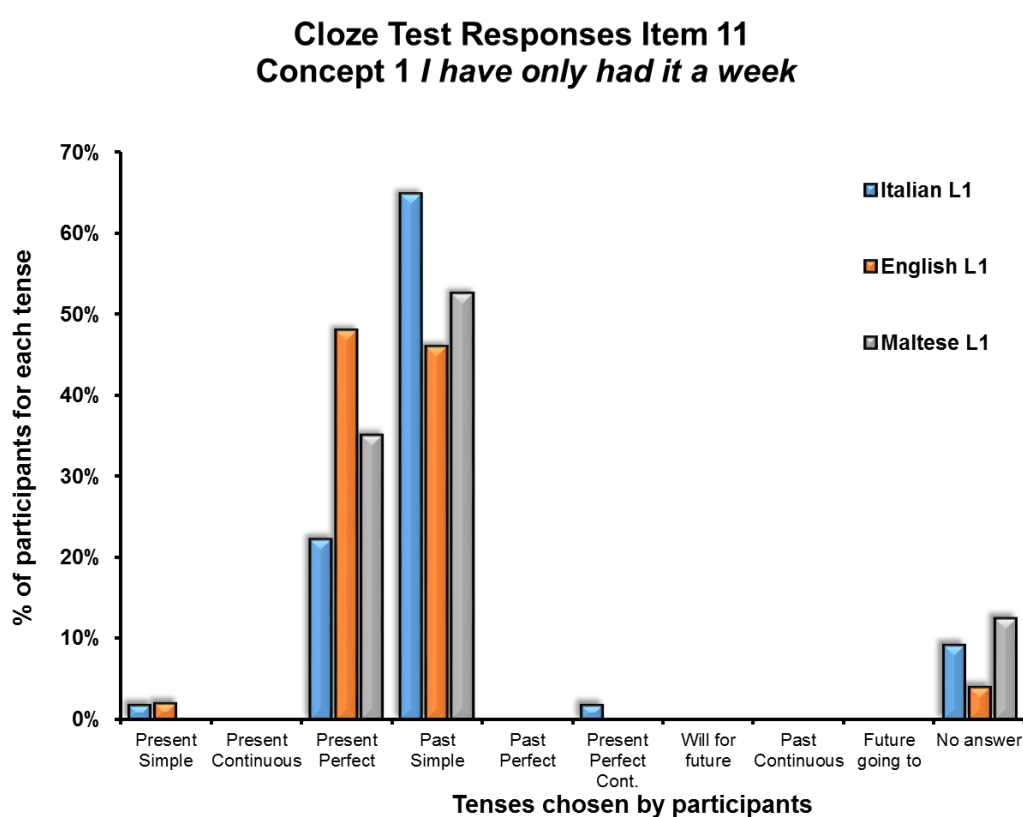


Figure 29. The results for the groups working in English: the Italian L1 experimental group, the English L1 control and the Maltese L1 control for Item 11.

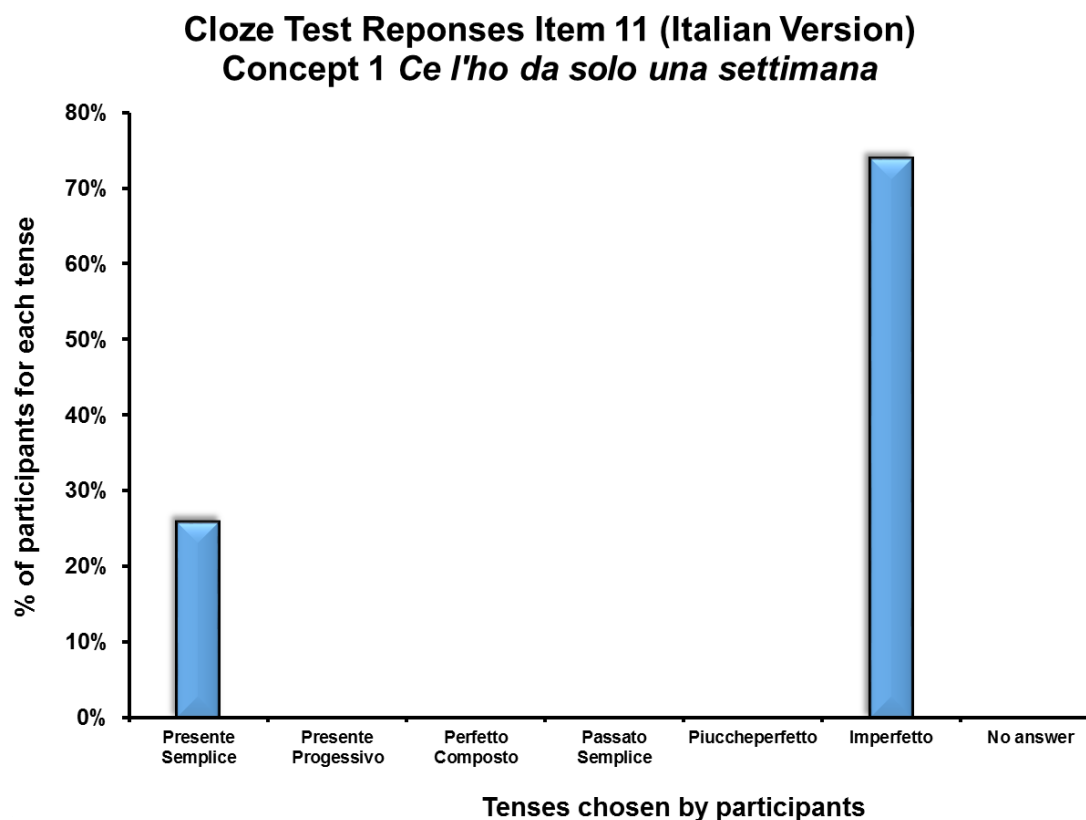


Figure 30. The results for the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 11.

The Italian L1 control group were expected to use the Presente Semplice for this concept, as seen in the pilot test. However, the results are split between the Presente Semplice (26%) and Imperfetto (74%) (Figure 30). The use of the Imperfetto here is evident of a past reading of the situation described, as it is used to denote a past state which is now over; the Presente Semplice, in contrast is used for a present state which spans past and present. The implication, therefore, is that the majority of this group perceived the state of *having the iPhone* as over in the past.

It is interesting to consider this evidence in the light of the results for the English L1 control group. 46% of the group chose the Past Simple for this concept, suggesting they perceive the state as over in the past; however, 48% use the Present Perfect as predicted, which is indicative of a past to present orientation, that the state of *having the iPhone* is not yet over.

These results show that for these groups, where two alternative readings were available, the past and over orientation to the state was activated for 74% of the Italian L1 participants and 46% of the English L1 participants.

Turning to the results for the experimental group, Figure 29 shows that 64% of the participants used the Past Simple in English L2 and 22% used the Present Perfect, while no answer was given on 9% of the scripts. The Present Simple was used by less than 2% of the sample. These results also point to a past and finished orientation to the state of *having the iPhone* in L2.

The *think aloud* verbalisations given below in table 16 also bear testimony to a past and finished orientation to this concept in two cases and also show the type of reasoning which may result in the correct use (Elena) of the Present Perfect by L1 Italian speakers for this function.

Table 16. The verbalisations made by each participant for Item 11 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test
38. Giovanni	<p><i>I only have it a week.</i></p> <p>Sì perché diceva che lo aveva da solo una settimana quindi era un passato non un presente.</p> <p>errm I I <i>had</i> it a week and it ...)</p>	<p><i>I only have it a week.</i></p> <p>Yes, because she said that she HAVE (IMP) it for only a week, so it was a past, not a present.</p> <p>Errrrm I <i>had</i> it a week</p>	<p>Verbalises structure choice in L2 in full sentence.</p> <p>Describes action in L1. Verbalises L1 structure choice (<i>aveva</i>).Refers to past/present tenses.</p> <p>Verbalises second L2 tense choice.</p>	<p>At first Giovanni inserts the infinitive, but with a present meaning. As implied by his verbalisation post-test.¹⁰When he thinks about his answer he reconsiders and says that the answer should be past, not present. This is exemplified in his use of the Italian Imperfetto to describe the action in Italian: <i>l'aveva</i>. In this case it denotes a state which was ongoing in the past, but that is now over.</p>	I only have it a week.
39. Chiara	<p>Comunque l'avevo da una settimana, I <i>had</i></p>	<p>However, I HAVE (IMP) it a week, I <i>had</i></p>	<p>Uses L1 translation to prompt L2 form choice (<i>I had</i>).</p>	<p>Chiara describes the state in Italian using the Imperfetto, she then gives an answer in the English Past Simple. These two tenses share the feature of past and finished as detailed above.</p>	I had
40. Silvia	<p><i>I've only had</i> it a week</p>	<p><i>I've only had</i> it a week.</p>	<p>Verbalises choice of structure in L2 in full sentence (<i>I've only had</i>).</p>	<p>Silvia inserts her choice of Present Perfect directly into the L2 sentence and verbalises that.</p>	I've had.

¹⁰ As detailed previously, Giovanni was allowed to evaluate his answers post-test, which should not impact upon validity as explained above.

41.Elena	<p>L'ho avuto solo per una settimana e mi è costato tanto</p> <p>quindi qua penso sicuro il past simple. hmmmmmm su questo ho delle perplessità perché l'ho avuto solo una settimana quindi in teoria la settimana in cui glielo avuto e il momento che l'ho già perso sia concluso per cui ne l'ho usufruito in un tempo ormai passato</p> <p>dall'altro lato è un tempo recente quindi potrei anche usare il Present Perfect</p> <p>ancora ho delle perplessità</p>	<p>I HAVE (PerfCOMP) for only a week and it cost me so much,</p> <p>so here I think for sure the Past Simple, hmmmmm, I am a bit confused about this one because I HAVE (PerfCOMP) only a week, so in theory the week in which I had it and the moment in which I lost it have finished, so I have used it for a time which is now over</p> <p>on the other hand, it is a recent time frame and I could also use the Present Perfect,</p> <p>I still have some doubts,</p>	<p>Translates into L1</p> <p>Refers to past tense Thinking</p> <p>Shows doubt</p> <p>Gives reason based on past truths. Gives temporal reference points.(PAST)</p> <p>Thinks again Gives temporal reference. (Recent PAST). Verbalises tense choice.</p> <p>Shows doubt</p> <p>Gives reason based on past and recent truths.</p> <p>Verbalises tense choice.</p> <p>Shows doubt.</p>	<p>Elena translates into L1, and at first is convinced that the correct L2 form is the Past Simple.</p> <p>However, she then goes on to consider the nature of the situation in detail and is unsure. Elena's <i>think aloud</i> data is indicative of the tension that exists in the minds of L2 speakers as they try to decide between the Past Simple and Present Perfect in English. She gives past temporal reference points for having the iPhone and for losing it. She refers to the Present Perfect for recent actions with present effects: <i>il fatto che l'ho perso adesso quindi fino ad ora l'ho avuto/ the fact that I LOSE (PerfCOMP) it now and up to now I had it.</i></p> <p>She also goes on to mention lexical cues to use of the Present Perfect which she can't find in the text: <i>for a week.</i></p> <p>At the end Elena is still unconvinced, but uses the Present Perfect.</p>	I've had.
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	<p>il fatto che l'ho perso adesso quindi io fino ad ora l'ho avuto</p> <p>hmhhh quindi sarei tentata a mettere il Present Perfect</p> <p>però non mi convince l'indicazione temporale c'è per il Present Perfect mi aspetterei qua di trovare <i>for a week</i> quindi qua in realtà non lo so non lo so devo scegliere per forza [si]</p> <p>penso il Present Perfect però senza nessuna convinzione</p>	<p>the fact that I LOSE (PerfCOMP) it now, so up to now I HAVE (PerfCOMP) it</p> <p>hmhhh so I would be tempted to put the Present Perfect, but I am not convinced by the temporal indications, that is for the Present Perfect I would expect to find <i>for a week</i> here, so here in reality I don't know, I don't know, do I have to choose? [Yes]</p> <p>I think the Present Perfect, but I am not convinced.</p>	<p>Uses lexical cues. Refers to Present Perfect tense. Shows doubt.</p> <p>Verbalises tense choice. Expresses doubt.</p>		
42. Giacomo	I it a week, I <i>have had</i> .	I it a week, I <i>have had</i> .	<p>Reads text aloud. Verbalises structure choice in L2.</p>	Giacomo reads the text aloud and then verbalises this L2 answer.	I have had.

As can be seen above, Giovanni and Chiara both use the Imperfetto to describe the concept depicted in L1. Giovanni's first answer is in the English Present Simple, *I only have it a week*, and this is consistent with the hypothesis that Italian L1 speakers would err here using the Present Simple, reflecting L1 conceptualisations. Giovanni first seems to take a present orientation to the event; however, when he thinks about his answer, he uses the Imperfetto to describe the state *to have* and states clearly that this situation takes place in the past, not in the present. Chiara also uses the Imperfetto in L1 and answers the test using the L2 Past Simple, *I had*.

In sum, the use of the Imperfetto in Italian for a past state and the corresponding use of the Past Simple in English by Italian L1 speakers is consistent when a state is perceived as past and finished. It is interesting, however, that in this situation, competing readings of the situation were available, and that the Italian L1 and English L1 speakers responded differently. Where the majority of the Italian L1 speakers chose a tense denoting a state which was over in the past both in L1 (Imperfetto) and L2 (Past Simple), 74% and 64% respectively, the English L1 control speakers were split almost equally between the Present Perfect 48% and Past Simple 46%. The past and finished reading of the situation is not prevalent in responses of the English L1 speakers, where in the Italian L1 speakers it would appear to be, both in L1 and then again in L2. This may be a function of the contrasting emphases placed upon the semantic representation of past, present and past to present in the two tense systems. The English system enables the denotation of a past to present state which continues in the present through the use of the Present Perfect. This option is not available in Italian, where a choice must be made between the Imperfetto and Presente Semplice, a choice essentially between past and present. Here the majority of Italian L1 speakers

preferred the Imperfetto, the meaning of which was conveyed using the Past Simple in L2. The Past Simple was not used by the majority of English L1 speakers, the majority of whom preferred the Present Perfect (48%). It may be postulated, then, that for this item there is a subtle influence of L1 on L2 with its origin the organisation of the L1 tense and aspect system for this function, *past to present state*, when a past reading is possible. The past reading being that I only had the iPhone a week, which in English has the implication that the iPhone is lost for good. This manifests as a forced dichotic choice between present and past in Italian for this context which spills into L2 and results in the choice of a tense which represents a past and finished action (Past Simple). In English the use of the Present Perfect is more usual as the search for the iPhone is ongoing and the idea of recovering it is still relevant: *I have only had it a week*.

There is little evidence for conceptual transfer of a present orientation to the situation, as described in the original hypothesis for this item, unless we consider Giovanni's use of the Present Simple. Here, once again, it seems that Giovanni's first reaction is to use the L2 equivalent of the L1 structure used for this function in Italian, the Present Simple. However, his verbal report does not reveal whether his conceptualisation at this point is also in line with the L1. In fact, as he goes on to think about the item, he uses the Imperfetto a past tense, to describe the situation.

Nevertheless, as detailed above, there may be reason to postulate L1 influence from a different direction. Where there is a dichotomy in the Italian tense and aspect system for the description of past and present states, leading to the use of either the Imperfetto or Presente Semplice, the English tense and aspect system provides for a past to present time span through the Present Perfect. In this case we see: i) three competing

conceptualisations of the same situation, one past and finished, one present orientated, and one past to present; ii) the majority of Italian L1 speakers chose a tense which denotes a past and finished state in both L1 and L2; iii) English L1 speakers more or less equally chose tenses which reflect both a past and finished state and a state which has a past to present time span. This suggests a subtle influence of L1 Italian favouring the past and finished conceptualisation as grammaticalised in L1.

Elena's *think aloud* data for this item also reveals some interesting evidence regarding the types of information that is heeded and called into short term memory from long term memory when processing the answer to this type of question. Elena's verbalisation for this item is long and reference is made to difference tense types, different temporal reference points and lexical cues, and in the end she is still not sure about her answer.

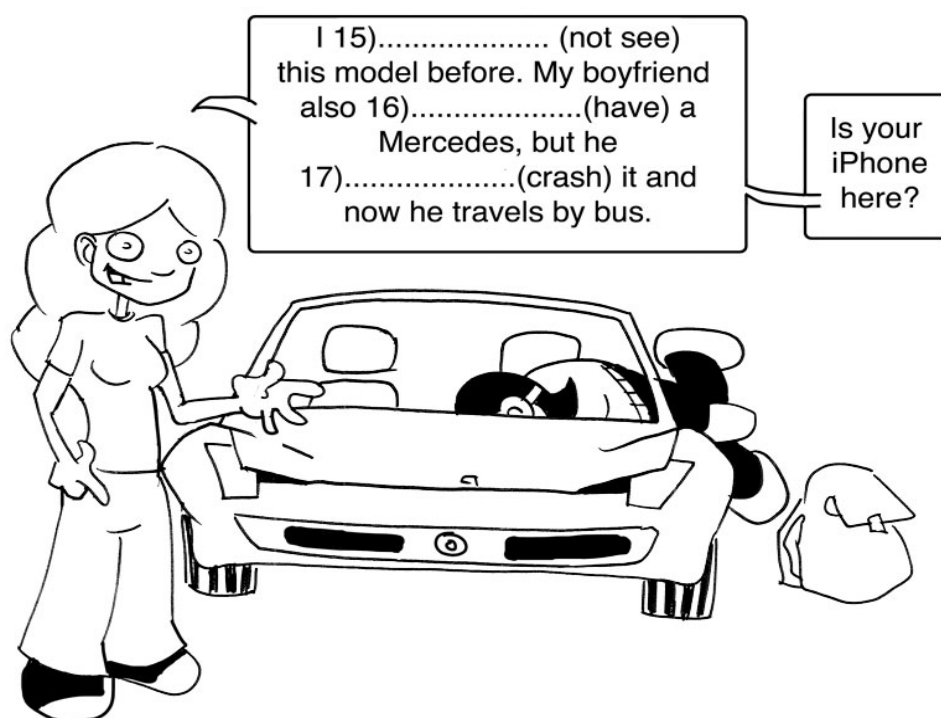
At first, Elena translates the sentence into L1, and she says that she is sure that the answer should be in the Past Simple, and here she names the tense, rather than verbalising the chosen structure. However, she goes on to say that she has doubts about her answer and proceeds to give a number of facts true of the past (that she had it for a week, that she lost it in the past), together with past temporal reference points (*la settimana in cui glielo avuto e il momento che l'ho già perso sia concluso/the week in which I had it and the moment in which I lost it are over*), supporting her use of the Past Simple. She then thinks again and cites the near past nature of the time frame as a reason for using the Present Perfect.¹¹ Nevertheless, Elena is still not sure, and at

¹¹ The use and meaning of the Present Perfect is often explained in terms of its appropriateness for use with recent past events and situations in Italian classrooms. Although the Present Perfect is often used for events and situations which belong to the recent past, this is not necessarily part of its meaning as discussed in Chapter 3.

this point she looks for lexical cues in the text to point her in the right direction. She cannot find the type of cues that she has been taught to recognise for use of the Present Perfect such as *for a week*, so she remains in doubt. In short, Elena considers what is true of the situation, when the events happened and what she has been taught in terms of use of specific tenses and lexical cues to help her decide her answer. Interestingly, she does arrive at the correct conclusion, the Present Perfect *I have had*.

To sum up, evidence from this item points to cross-linguistic differences with regard to the interplay of temporal reasoning and differing available constructions in the tense and aspect systems of L1 and L2 as having an influence on L2 tense and aspect choices. It also highlights the depth and breadth of the knowledge that is drawn upon by L2 speakers as they make decisions with regard to the representation of distinct temporal concepts in L2.

5.2.10 Item 15



Item 15, like Item 10 represents concept 4: *existential past* - I have not seen this model before. The results for this item on the cloze test are given in Figures 31 and 32.

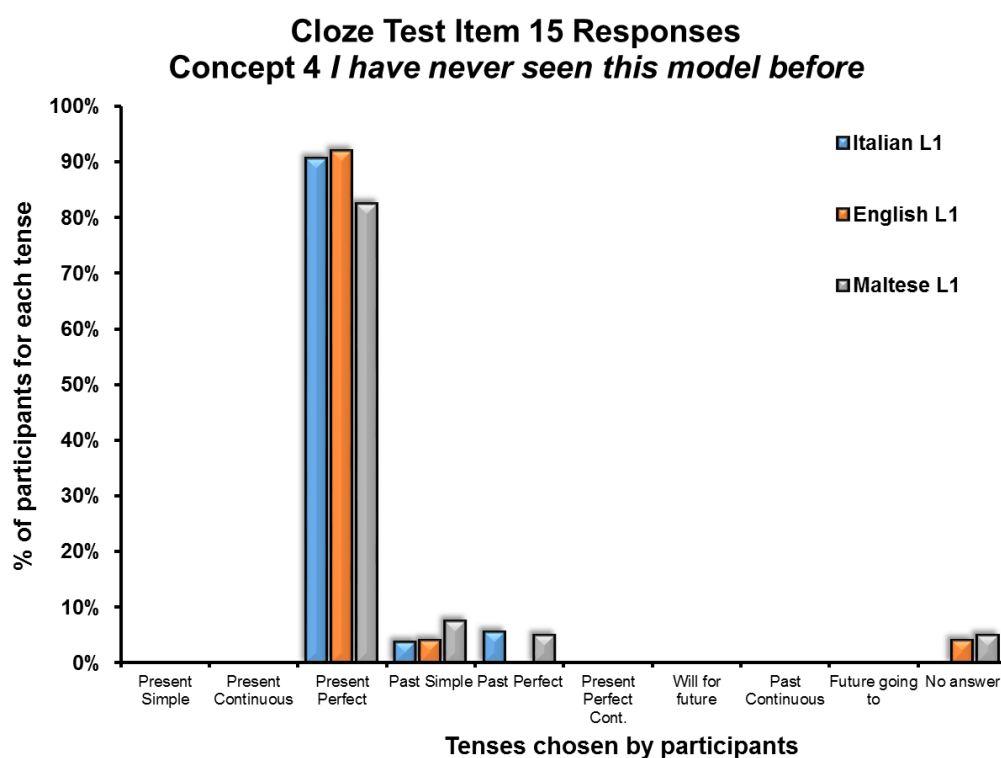


Figure 31. The results for the L1 Italian experimental group, the English L1 control and Maltese L1 control for Item 15.

Cloze Test Item 15 Responses (Italian Version)
Concept 4 *Questo modello non l'ho mai visto prima*

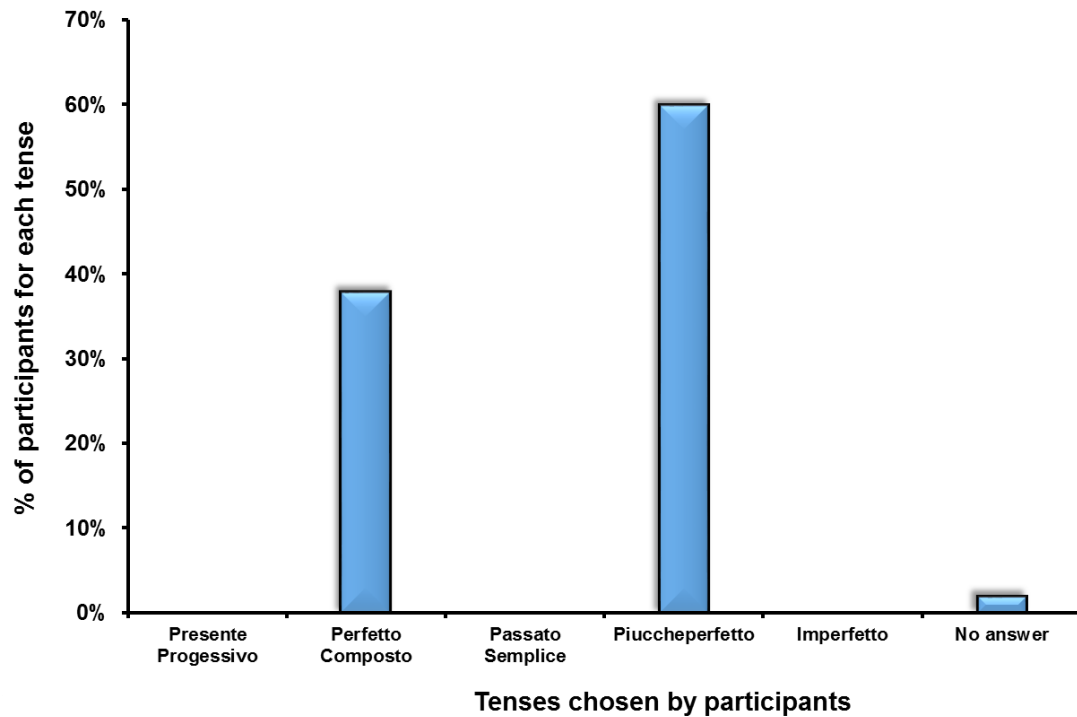


Figure 32. The responses given by the Italian L1 control working in Italian for Item 15.

As can be seen in Figure 31, the preferred tense for all three groups working in English (Experimental group, English L1 control, Maltese third language control) is the English Present Perfect. In contrast, the Italian L1 control group results are split between the Piuccheperfetto and the Perfetto Composto (Figure 32). The majority of the sample, 60%, use the Piuccheperfetto. The Piuccheperfetto is a relative tense, which presupposes a past reference point, before which the action which is referred to happened. In contrast to the Perfetto Composto, the Piuccheperfetto does not entail any relation with the speech time. This is interesting because the past reference point before which the participants perceived the *seeing* to have happened is not immediately apparent in the context of the cartoon, as for Item 10 where the

Piuccheperfetto is also used, unless we consider that *now* has just passed, before the speech time and acts as a past reference point. In fact, constructions such as the following are permissible in Italian:

Non l'avevo mai visto prima d'ora/ I had never seen it before now.

The Italian version of the cartoon is included here below in Figure 33 for reference.

However, in English, the seeing takes place in the present and as such the Present Perfect is necessary and more than 90% of both the English L1 control and Italian L1 experimental group used the Present Perfect. Nonetheless, only 5% of the Italian L1 experimental group use the Past Perfect, the English equivalent of the Italian Piuccheperfetto.



Figure 33. The Italian version for Items 15, 16 and 17.

A possible explanation for these results may be deducted from contrasts in the English and Italian tense and aspect system with regards to the concepts represented and how they are represented. The English tense and aspect system provides specifically for the representation of a temporal meaning from past to present which can go up to and include the speech time in the form of the Present Perfect. This makes it a natural choice for the *existential past* concept which entails an intermediate result state in the present (Michaelis 2004:14). In Italian, the expected choice here was the *Perfetto Composto*, which while perfective, even up to the point of holding aoristic meaning (Bertinetto 1991:89) may also entail relevance at speech time. In fact, 38% of the Italian L1 sample chose this tense. However, there seems to be a tendency in the group to see the activity of *seeing the car before* as separate from the speech time, through

the use of the Piuccheperfecto. 60% would seem to perceive two events of i) *seeing the car* and ii) *not seeing it before* as before speech time, the latter prior to the former. The *think aloud* data in table 17 do not give us any real clue as to whether this type of thinking, generated in L1 through use of the Piuccheperfecto, influences tense choice in L2.

Table 17. The verbalisations made by each participant for Item 15 of the cloze test.

Participant	Verbalisation	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer on cloze test.
43. Giovanni	<i>I doesn't see</i> this model before	<i>I doesn't see</i> this model before	Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>I doesn't see</i>) in full sentence.	Giovanni uses the Present Simple for this function. This is an unusual choice. It is suggestive of a present orientation to the action.	doesn't see
44. Silvia	<i>I haven't seen</i> this model before	<i>I haven't seen</i> this model before	Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>I haven't seen</i>) in full sentence.	Silvia directly uses the Present Perfect.	haven't seen
45. Elena	Qua il Present Perfect perché non l'ho mai visto prima d'ora	Here the Present Perfect because I NOT SEE (PerfCOMP) it before.	Verbalises tense choice. Gives reason based in past truth.	Elena uses the Present Perfect and gives a reason consistent with its meaning in L2.	haven't seen
46. Giacomo	<i>I did not see</i> this model before, <i>I haven't seen</i> this model before.	<i>I did not see</i> this model before, <i>I haven't seen</i> this model before.	Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>I did not see</i>) in full sentence. Verbalises second structure choice in L2 (<i>I haven't seen</i>) in full sentence.	Giacomo reads the text aloud twice and the second reading seems to prompt a change in thinking about the answer, from Past Simple to Present Perfect.	haven't seen

Silvia reads the text and inserts the Present Perfect as her answer. Elena choses the Present Perfect and cites the fact that she has not seen it before now as her reason. Giacomo tries out a first choice of the Past Simple, and then rejects it in favour of the Present Perfect. Given the paucity of verbal data for this item, it would be interesting to try to ascertain with further testing what meaning the Present Perfect holds for these participants in this context. The Present Perfect seems to be tied up with a number of different meanings for these students and the evidence regarding the use of the *Piuccheperfetto* in this function from the L1 Italian control suggests that there may be yet another way of viewing the situation, not accounted for here. This warrants further investigation.

Giovanni's choice of the Present Simple is unusual, especially considering the presence of *before* which entails a past feature to the situation. It is suggestive of a present orientation to the action of *seeing*; however, this is not evident in any of the other data, either from the cloze tests or the *think aloud* reports for this item.

5.2.11 Item 18



Item 18 tests concept 3: *resultative past*. - Maybe someone has found it by now.

Figures 34 and 35 detail the responses across all four groups for Item 18.

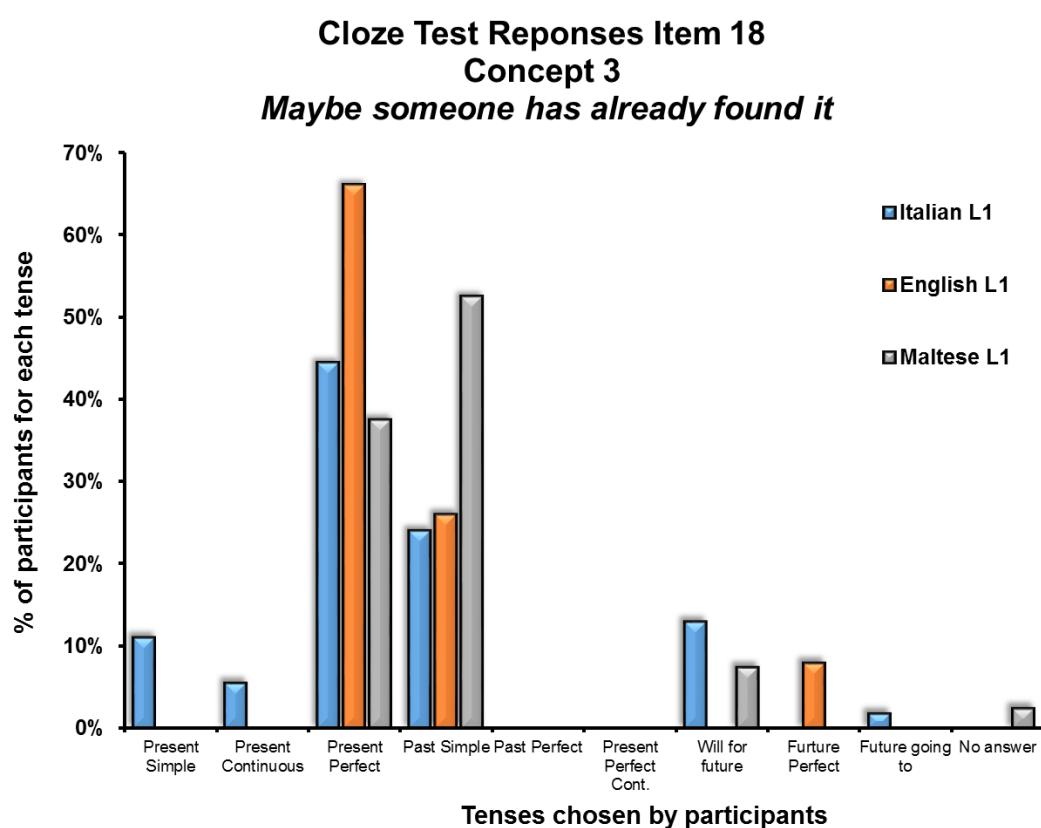


Figure 34. Figure shows the results for the experimental group Italian L1 working in English L2, the English L1 control and the Maltese L1 control for Item 18.

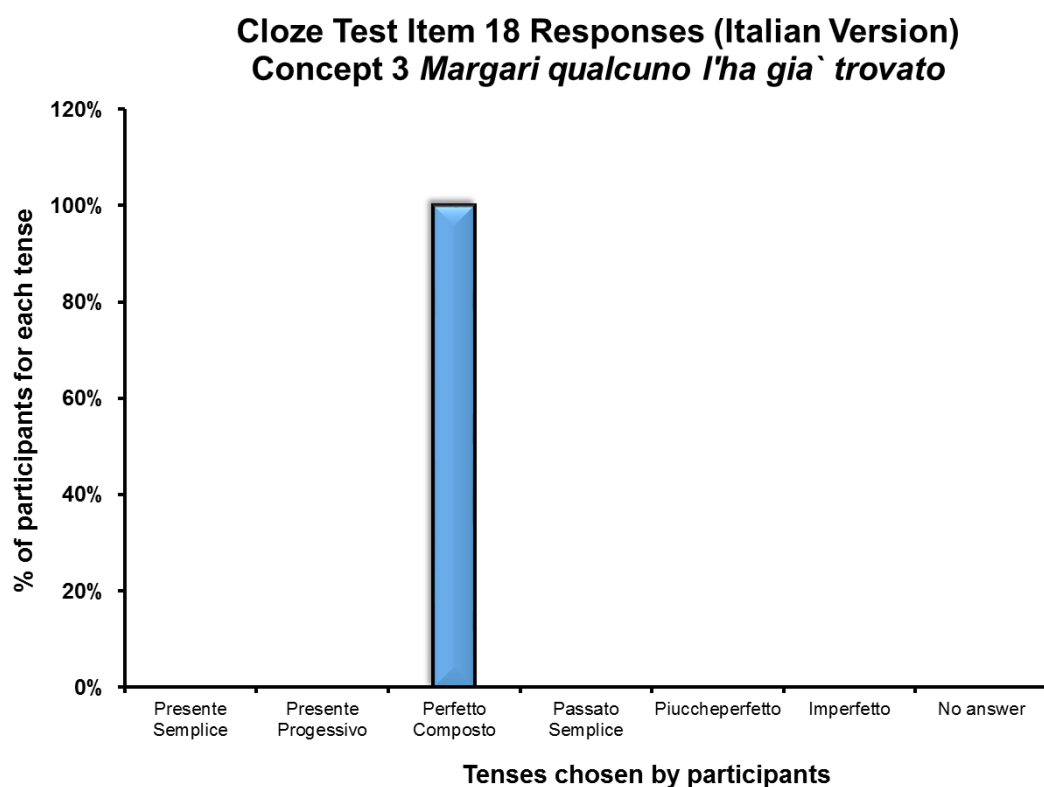


Figure 35. The results for the Italian L1 control group for Item 18.

Figure 35 shows that 100% of the Italian L1 group used the Perfetto Composto for this concept as expected.

Figure 34, however, shows a rather different picture. While the results for the English L1 control and Maltese L1 third language control are split principally between the English Present Perfect and Past Simple, the experimental group results cover a number of different tenses.

66% of the English L1 control group used the Present Perfect for this concept, 26% used the Past Simple and 8% the Future Perfect. Therefore, 74% of the English L1 control group used a perfect tense entailing a present result state, as expected. The Maltese L1 group results are also principally split between the English Present Perfect and Past Simple; however the Maltese L1 group seem to favour the Past Simple, 53% compared to the Present Perfect 37%.

In contrast, the Italian L1 experimental group's responses are less consistent. While 44% of the sample use the Present Perfect, the rest of the responses are split between the Past Simple 24%, Present Simple 11%, Present Continuous 5%, future with *will* 13%, and future with *going to* 2%. The erroneous use of the Past Simple for this concept is predicted by the hypothesis. The remaining answers across a number of different tenses are perhaps indicative of a certain amount of confusion regarding the correct answer.

Here there would appear to be a certain amount of inter-group heterogeneity in responses given across the three groups. This range of responses could be indicative of varying perceptions of the situation denoted; however, the fact that participants may have been distracted by distinct lexical or other cues in this item as detailed below, can not be ruled out.

It is evident that the Italian L1 group pay attention to lexical cues while they are making decisions regarding tense choice. It is tempting to hypothesise that the phrase *by now*, which is part of this item, may have led to some confusion regarding the answer. 16% of the sample use a Present Tense, perhaps triggered by the presence of *now*, and 15% a future construction perhaps with the idea that the iPhone will be found in the future.

Interpretation of this data is challenging due to the number of factors which can affect responses in this context. It is very difficult to draw meaningful conclusions for such complex phenomena from the statistical data alone. The addition of the *think aloud* report was made to help deal with such ambiguities. Table 18, details the verbalisations given by the *think aloud* participants for this item. They show some doubt regarding the use of the Present Perfect (Silvia) and once again we see the use of Perfetto Composto in Italian with a corresponding use of Past Simple in English (Elena).

Table 18. The verbalisations made by each participants for Item 18 of the cloze test

Participant	Verbalisation	English	Categories	Analysis	Answer given on test
47. Giovanni	Maybe someone <i>found</i> it by now	Maybe someone <i>found</i> it by now	Verbalises structure choice in L2 (<i>found</i>) in full sentence.	Giovanni reads the text and inserts the Past Simple form: <i>found</i> .	found
48. Silvia	Maybe someone <i>has found</i> it devo scrivere per forza o posso lasciare in bianco?	Maybe someone <i>has found</i> it, do I have to give an answer or can I leave it blank?	Verbalises L2 structure choice (<i>has found</i>) in full sentence. Shows doubt. Asks for clarification.	Silvia inserts the Present Perfect directly into the text as she reads aloud. She has some doubts about her answer, however.	has found
49. Elena	Forse qualcuno l'ha trovato	Maybe someone FIND (PerfCOMP)	Translates into L1. Verbalises L1 structure choice (<i>L'ha trovato</i>).	Elena translates into L1 using the Perfetto Composto and then answers in the English Past Simple.	found
50. Giacomo	Maybe someone <i>found</i> , <i>has found</i> it... <i>found</i> it. Poi vediamo... <i>has found</i> Perché non so se già qualcuno	Maybe someone <i>found</i> ... <i>has found</i> ... <i>found</i> it. Ok, let's see... has found Because I don't know if someone FIND	Verbalises choice of structure in L2 (<i>has found</i>). Inserts second structure choice in L2 (<i>found</i>). Thinking Verbalises original choice (<i>has found</i>)	Giacomo uses the Present Perfect. However, he says that he is not sure about his answer because he does not know if the phone has been found at a particular time. He then refers to the fact that he has it (looking on in the	has found

	l'aveva trovato, c'è in un tempo preciso oppure ancora un tempo preciso, una data precisa, però ce l'hoqua.	(PPerfetto), that is, at a particular time or still, a particular time or date, but I have it here.	Expresses doubt. Gives a reference point. (PAST) (Use of Piuccheperfetto) Refers to present truth.	story). Here there is a conflict between the idea of the phone being found in the past and the fact that the protagonist has it now. This would fit with his alternation of Present Perfect and Past Simple for his answer.	
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Giacomo's verbalisation is interesting in that it provides an insight into the type of reasoning which is involved in the choice between the Past Simple and Present Perfect for these students of English. His first response is to use the Present Perfect; however, he then expresses some doubt as he is not sure if the iPhone has been found at a particular time. The idea of the iPhone being found at a particular time would correspond with the use of the Past Simple, and this is an explanation which is frequently given to support the use of the Past Simple in Italian classrooms. However, looking on in the story, Giacomo sees that the protagonist finds her iPhone at the end and answers using the Present Perfect. The correct answer is the Present Perfect, but not because the protagonist finds the iPhone in the next picture. The prevailing conceptualisation in L1 is that someone else has found it, and therefore has it in the present.

With regards to the use of a perfect tense denoting a present result state for this item, it would appear that the English L1 speakers in this sample are more predisposed to represent the concept in this way, with 74% choosing a perfect tense. 44 % of the experimental group chose the Present Perfect for this item, while 66% of the experimental group chose a tense which was not the Present Perfect, with the majority, 24%, choosing the Past Simple. Thus, the data are equivocal with regard to an effect of L1 conceptual transfer in this context. A liberal interpretation of the results could infer a slight tendency for the experimental group to err on this item, and to err using the Past Simple as predicted by the hypothesis. Moreover, the *think aloud* data does not give any particular clue as to the possibility of L1 transfer of a perfective orientation in this case. However, as is evident in the data from other items, there is a tendency in the experimental group to use the L2 Past Simple for *resultative past*

concepts where the Present Perfect would be used in L1 and also to use the Present Perfect with a past and complete meaning, similar to the meaning of the L1 structural equivalent the *Perfetto Composto*. Thus, the possibility of conceptual transfer where a past and finished orientation to the event is present in L1 and transferred to L2 for this item may not be dismissed, and could be worthy of further investigation.

5.3 Non Conceptual Difference Items.

The non-Conceptual Difference (NCD) items on the cloze test, are the items listed here below (target forms are in ***bold***):

- 5) He ***works*** for security.
- 8) I ***sat*** here.
- 9) I never ***go*** there.
- 12) It ***cost*** me a lot.
- 13) I ***bought*** it last week.
- 14) This ***was*** a real bargain.
- 16) My boyfriend also ***had*** a Mercedes.
- 17) He ***crashed*** it.
- 19) I ***will*** call you.
- 20) It ***was/has been*** in my bag all the time.

As can be seen from Figure 35. The number of errors made on the NCD items for both the experimental group (Italian L1) and the third language control group (Maltese L1) is significantly less than the number of errors made for the CD items in each group. This has been discussed in section 1.

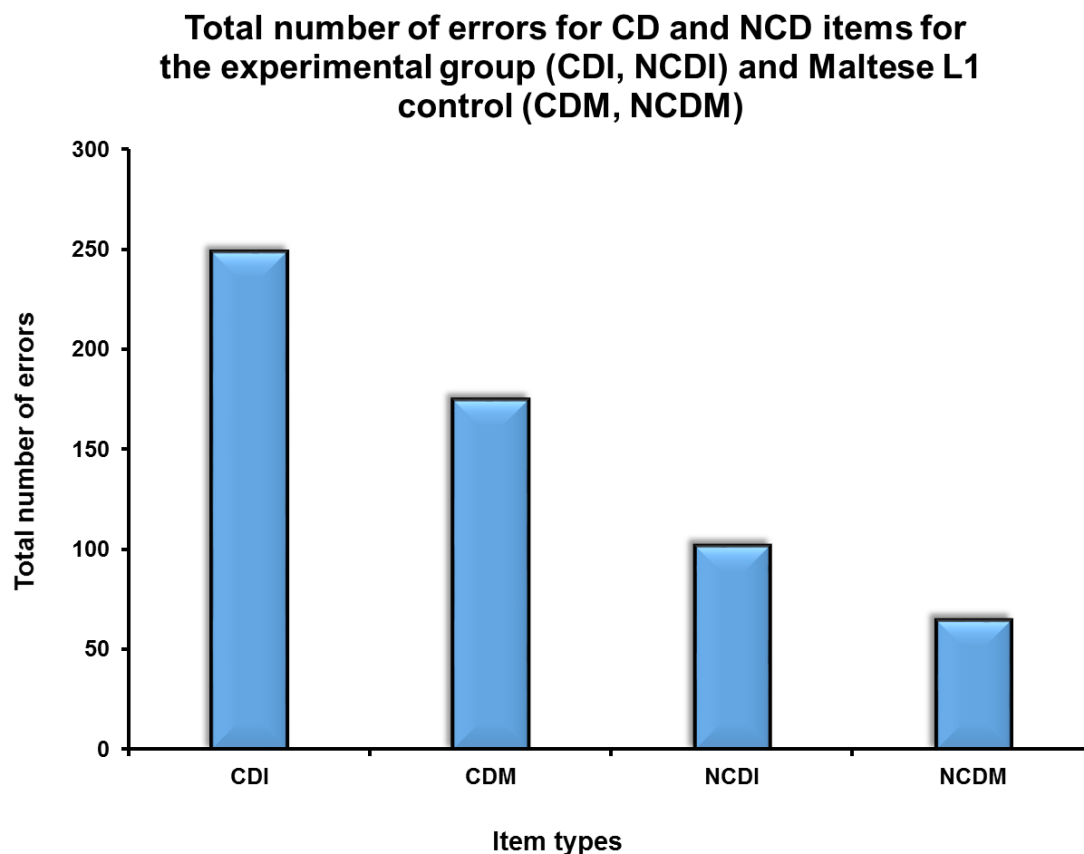


Figure 36. The total number of errors for CD and NCD items for the experimental group and Maltese L1 control.

Figure 37 shows the number of errors made for each NCD item by the Experimental group (Italian L1). As can be seen from the chart, there are two items which produced more errors than the others, Item 9 and Item 19. With regards to Item 9: I never *go* there, the increased number of errors is due to the use of the Past Simple, giving the answer: I never *went* there. While the test was designed to elicit the Present Simple for a habit; that of *never going to the library*, some of the sample interpreted the text to refer only to the day in question, and therefore, the use of the Past Simple: *went*. Should this prove to be the case, a further example of conceptual transfer may be hypothesised, with Past Simple: *I went* denoting a past and finished action being used

in a situation which would, in English require the Present Perfect as the time frame within which the event occurs, i.e. today, is not yet over.

Item 19, I **will** call you, also resulted in slightly more errors than the other items, but not as many as Item 9. These errors are a result of the use of the Present Simple I **call** you, for this function. This would appear to be influence from L1, where the Presente Semplice: *Ti chiamo*, is used to denote a decision taken at the time of speaking leading to an immediate future action. The representation for future temporal concepts has not been covered by this study, which is limited to past and present. Nevertheless, this error may point to some conceptual difference with regard to the expression of: *decisions regarding immediate future action taken at the moment of speaking*, a concept which potentially could be investigated further in future work.

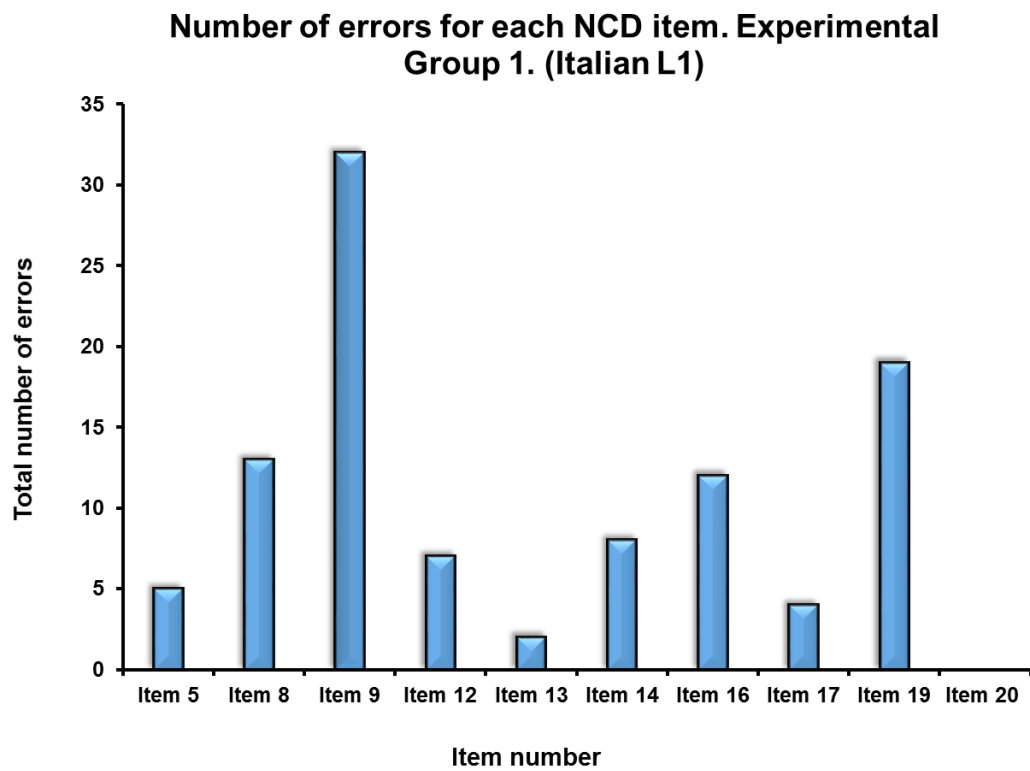


Figure 37. Figure shows the number of errors for each NCD item for Experimental Group 1 (Italian L1).

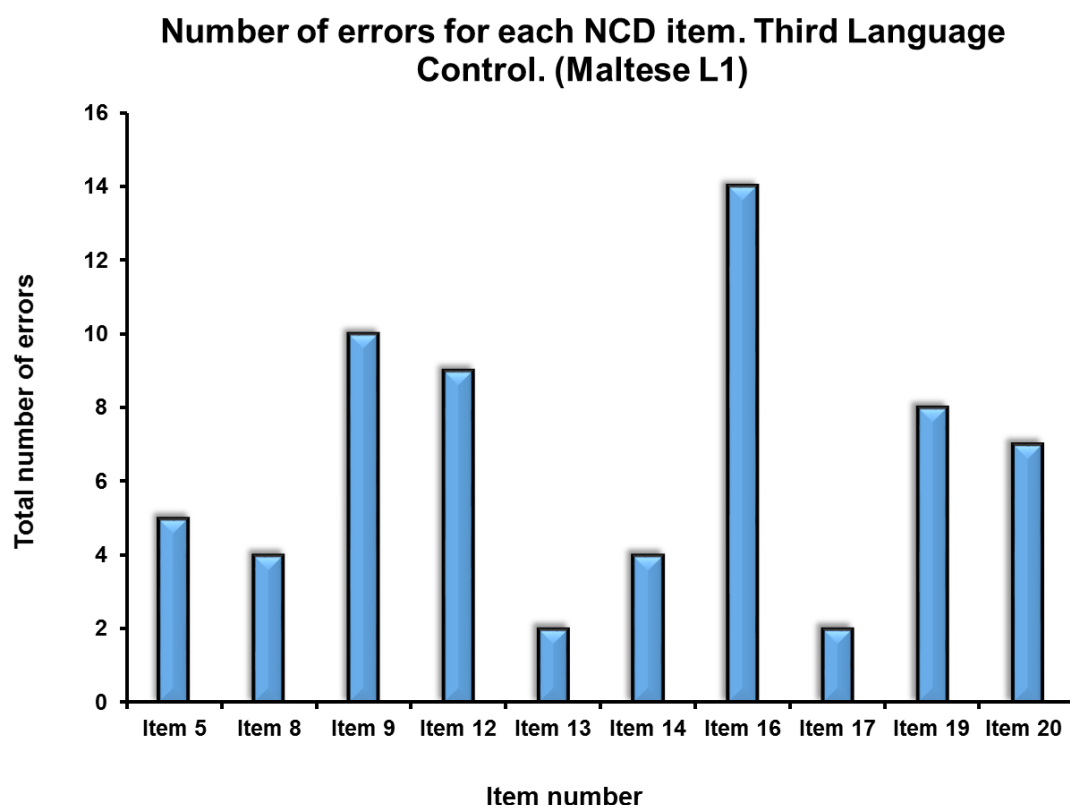


Figure 38. The number of errors made for each NCD item by the Maltese L1 third language control group.

Figure 38 represents the number of errors for each NCD item for the third language control group 4 (Maltese L1). The highest number of errors occurs for Item 16: My boyfriend also *had* a Mercedes. There is an increased use of the Present Simple for this function, which would appear to be a misreading of the text, as the following sentence clearly implies that *having* the Mercedes is over as the boyfriend crashed it and the fact that he no longer has it is implied by him now traveling by bus. The high number of erroneous responses for Item 9 are of the same type as Group 1, detailed above, with the use of the Past Simple instead of Present Simple.

Interestingly, the higher number of errors for Items 12 and 20, stem from the use of the Past Perfect for this function, which is not seen in the Italian L1 group. The use of

the Past Perfect in place of the Past Simple and Present Perfect in English by Maltese speakers is detailed in the literature and was confirmed in a personal communication by Prof. Ray Fabri (2014) (Chapter 4) and is thought to be a result of influence from L1 Maltese. While the numbers are small, this does point to inter-L1-group heterogeneity in responses for some individual items.

This brief analysis of the data for the NCD items leads to two conclusions. Firstly, that piloting the *think aloud* across all groups would help to eliminate any possible ambiguous items and limit errors due to diverging interpretations of the test. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6. Secondly, that some inter-L1-group heterogeneity has been revealed which may warrant further investigation.

5.4. Further Evidence

5.4.1 Temporal Perspective Task

The temporal perspective task (Chapter 4 Section 4.4) was designed to assess how an Italian and an English speaker's perception of the flow of time might differ. The idea that they may differ is drawn from the notions of unmarked tenses in each language falling in either ascending and descending time (Hewson (1991:51) (See Chapter 4 Section 4.4 for full explanation) In brief, an Italian L1 speaker is hypothesised to perceive time as flowing backwards away from them, while an English L1 speaker sees an individual moving forward through time. In order to gain a clearer picture of this, 78 English L1 and 100 Italian L1 speakers were presented with a wheel (Appendix 11) showing a figure and a background (the background showed time passing though

changes in the environment.) Participants were asked to show time passing by moving either the figure or the background. The results were analysed using Student's 2 tailed t-test and while not statistically significant ($p < 0.76$), the results do show that 65% of the Italian L1 group moved the background, compared to 44.6% of the English L1 group. 55.4% of the English L1 group moved the figure compared to 30% of the Italian L1 group.

Therefore, there appears to be a tendency towards a difference in performance here reflecting a different perception of the flow of time, the English L1 speakers perhaps exhibiting a more agentive view moved the figure, while the Italian L1 speakers, less involved in the passing of time, moved the background; however, this has not proved to be statistically significant. This perhaps warrants further investigation with refinements to the testing instrument (discussed in Chapter 6).

Table 19. Results in percentages for temporal perspective task.

	Italian L1 speakers	Percentage of total	English L1 speakers	Percentage of total
Moved background back	49	49%	30	42%
Moved background forward	16	16%	2	2.6%
Moved background back and figure forward	5	5%	0	0
Moved figure forward	20	20%	45	54%
Moved background forward and figure forward	2	2%	0	0
Moved figure back	7	7%	1	1.4 %
Moved figure back and background forward	1	1%	0	0
	100	100%	78	100%

5.4.2 Think aloud reports further analysis (Length and Number of Verbalisations)

The *think aloud* reports were also analysed with regard to the number of verbalisations for each item and the length of verbalisation for each item. Interestingly, the participants in the study were shown not only to verbalise significantly more often for CD items ($p < 0.001$, significant at $p \leq 0.05$ Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test), but also that these verbalisations were significantly longer (W-value 1. The critical value of W for $N = 9$ at $p \leq 0.05$ is 8. Therefore, the result is significant at $p \leq 0.05$ Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test (Raw data available in appendix 14).

These results would seem to indicate increased cognitive processing for CD compared to NCD items, and therefore, that perhaps items where conceptual difference is present between English and Italian produce an increased cognitive load, whereas assumed congruence between L1 and L2 results in faster responses and less cognitive processing.

Section 5.5 Summary

The results detailed here in section 5.1.1 satisfy the first of Jarvis' (2000) criteria for establishing statistical significance for conceptual transfer, that the experimental group should show intra-L1-group homogeneity in responses. In fact, the experimental group erred significantly more on CD items compared to NCD items.

However, the study was unable to establish statistical significance for the two other criteria of inter-L1-group heterogeneity and intra-L1-Group congruity. Interestingly, criteria that Jarvis himself also struggled to fulfil (Jarvis 2000:289). Jarvis was, however, able to show a subtle influence for L1 with a comparison of the internal consistency of his results using Cronbach's alpha values between groups. Cronbach's

alpha values show how closely related a set of items are as a group. He found that Cronbach's alpha values for the inter-L1-group comparisons were significantly lower and therefore that responses were less closely related than those for the intra-L1-group comparisons which were therefore more consistent and more closely related. This pointed to higher homogeneity in responses from participants of the same L1 background than those with different L1 backgrounds (Jarvis 2000:289). Both studies are able to claim a subtle influence of L1 in learner language: Jarvis through a comparison of levels of homogeneity and heterogeneity within and between groups (Jarvis 2000: 283, 288, 289); and, in this study, through the combination of statistical and qualitative *think aloud* data. However, this study is able also to delineate and exemplify specific but tentative examples of conceptual transfer where errors occurred, and which were revealed through the categorisation and analysis of *think aloud* reports. Moreover, data coming from the temporal perspective task and comparison of verbalisation length between CD and NCD items point to differing spatio-temporal perspectives cross-linguistically and also increased cognitive load where conceptual difference is present between the Italian and English tense and aspect systems.

Conceptual transfer is seen in the use of the English Present Perfect with a past and finished meaning consistent with the core semantics of its nearest formal and semantic equivalent in Italian the Perfetto Composto (Items 1,3 and 7). It is also evident through the use of the Past Simple instead of the Present Perfect for *resultative* past meanings, where the Italian speakers seem to focus on the salience of the past event, consistent with L1 rather than its present result state, leading to the erroneous use of the English Past Simple in L2 (Items 2, 4 and 18). There is also evidence for conceptual transfer

in the use of the Present Simple instead of the Present Perfect for the past to present state: *I have known*, consistent with the L1 construction (Presente Semplice) used in this context (Items 6 and 7). The *think aloud* reports reveal tentative evidence for a present orientation to this situation *past to present state* leading to the erroneous choice of English Present Simple in L2.

With regard to the first example of conceptual transfer, use of English Present Perfect with a past and finished meaning, the conceptual difference which precipitates the transfer would seem to pertain to the internal make-up of the categories Perfetto Composto and Present Perfect. The learner seems to be using the Present Perfect with Perfetto Composto category conceptual structure and semantics (Giovanni and Silvia Item 1) and this could potentially point to concept transfer as defined by Jarvis (2011:4). The use of the *think aloud* reports in this case has been essential in ruling out formal transfer (Perfetto Composto: *Io ho comprato* for Present Perfect: *I have bought* for example) as the reasoning given by the participants for their choice is indicative of cross-linguistic contrasting viewpoints, construction semantics and conceptual structure which influence L2. This area warrants further exploration to confirm concept transfer and rule out semantic transfer (see footnote page 51) with tests which assess the categorisation of target situations in L2 compared to L1. In contrast, the further two examples, use of Past Simple for Present Perfect for *resultative past* meanings, and Present Simple for Present Perfect for *past to present state* meanings, reflect a difference in perspective taking, a past and finished orientation compared to past to present and result state for the former, and present oriented compared to past to present for the latter (Giovanni and Chiara Item 6). These differences in temporal perspective taking which are manifest in the grammaticalisation of these concepts in

L1 and L2 point to the transfer of L1 conceptualisations as defined by Jarvis (2011). As well as suggesting evidence for L1 conceptual transfer through concepts and conceptualisations influencing L2 interlanguage, this study has also been able to set up the possibility of distinguishing between concept and conceptualisation transfer through the cognitive analysis of tense and aspect combined with *think aloud* data. This places this study in an interesting position with regard to the future differentiation of concept and conceptualisation transfer as defined by Jarvis, in L2 acquisition, and this is discussed in Chapter 6.

This study has also revealed a possible role for the influence on L2 of the L1 tense and aspect system working as a whole, in its interaction with the situations depicted and conceptualisations elicited by the text (Items 10 and 11). As well as revealing some tentative examples of conceptual transfer in L2 interlanguage, the data generated in this study also bears testimony to the multi-factorial reasoning and strategies that impact upon L2 speakers' decisions regarding appropriate tense and aspect marking, taking into account for example, their own L2 and L1 knowledge, classroom teaching and metalanguage, perceived temporal anchoring, concepts, conceptualisations, and the discourse context.

5.6 Conclusions

The data collected and analysed here does provide potential evidence for the influence of L1 conceptual transfer in the expression of distinct temporal concepts by Italian L1 speakers of English L2. Central to this has been the *think aloud* report, which has been instrumental in: i) allowing conceptual transfer to be distinguished from formal

transfer; ii) revealing that no single factor is responsible for errors made on the target concepts; iii) showing that even where error numbers are small, conceptual transfer may still be present; iv) demonstrating that even ‘correct’ responses may be a result of L1 conceptual transfer; and v) delineating and differentiating examples of concept and conceptualisation transfer (See Chapter 6 for full explanation). Consequently, this study moves the field of conceptual transfer research on, both in terms of the evidence collected and the methodology used to do so. In fact, the data points to some particular differences with regard to the construal of certain temporal concepts, linked not only to individual constructions, but also to the interplay of the tense and aspect system as a whole with the discourse context and concepts represented.

Chapter 6

Discussion

6.0 Overview

This research project looking at the role of L1 conceptual transfer in errors made by Italian L1 speakers of English L2 was designed with the aim of exploring the following three research questions, as detailed in Chapter 2.

- 1) The tense and aspect systems of English and Italian diverge in their grammaticalisation of temporal concepts. Do these point to underlying conceptual difference?
- 2) Italian L1 learners of English L2 predictably make production errors when expressing distinct aspects of temporality which are realised by the Present Perfect in English. Is this the result of transfer at a conceptual level?
- 3) Can evidence be obtained to distinguish between concept and conceptualisation transfer?

The answers to questions 1 and 2 were sought together using the full cognitive analysis of the systems of tense and aspect in English and Italian (Chapter 3) which was performed drawing on authoritative sources in the literature (Chapter 3) and the descriptive methodology of RCG; semantic maps (Croft 2003) and the testing instruments developed as a result. The cognitive analysis highlighted four areas of

potential conceptual difference (Research Question 1) in the expression of four temporal concepts namely:

- 1) *state up to the present*. I have known him for years.
- 2) *temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present*. I have been running.
- 3) *resultative past*. I have had my hair cut.
- 4) *existential past*. I have been to South Africa.

All four areas pertained to the use of the English Present Perfect construction.

These areas, where conceptual divergence is hypothesised to occur between the English and Italian systems, were investigated in relation to research question 2 regarding the common errors made by Italian L1 speakers of English L2, as they seek to express the four detailed concepts in English.

This was achieved by developing a cartoon cloze test in English and Italian (Chapter 4) targeting these areas of potential conceptual divergence which was administered to four groups of participants. Three groups performed the test in English: Experimental group 1 (Italian L1 speakers of English L2), English L1 speakers (Native speaker control), Maltese L1 speakers (Third language control), and one group performed the test in Italian: Italian L1 speakers (Italian L1 Control). This was done in order that the number of errors made on items designed to reflect the target concepts might be compared within and between the groups in accordance with Jarvis' (2000) recommended methodology for robustness in CLI research (Chapter 4).

Think aloud reports were also collected from 6 participants and analysed in accordance with categories which emerged as the analysis progressed (Chapter 5). A further

temporal perspective task (Chapter 4) was used as a measure of the perception of the passing of time between the two native language groups (English and Italian).

The within and between groups analysis of the quantitative data generated from the cloze tests showed that Italian L1 speakers were significantly more likely to err where conceptual difference occurred between English and Italian, and this combined with the *think aloud* data points to the potential influence of L1 concepts and conceptualisations in the acquisition of L2 for the expression of the distinct temporal concepts targeted. In fact, it is the inclusion and analysis of *think aloud* data, a novel approach to the investigation of conceptual transfer, which represents the main original contribution of this thesis to the conceptual transfer field to date. It has been instrumental not only in distinguishing conceptual transfer from formal transfer and showing that even ‘expected’ responses may be a result of L1 conceptual transfer, but also revealing the multifactorial nature of errors made on the target concepts and showing that even where error numbers are small, conceptual transfer may still be present. In addition, it has allowed for the delineation and differentiation of examples of concept and conceptualisation transfer as defined by Jarvis (2011:4), a possibility that became apparent only as the research work progressed..

The results of the temporal perspective task, while not significant, are interesting and warrant further investigation as discussed below.

The inclusion of the *think aloud* report, and its role in distinguishing between concept and conceptualisation transfer, is discussed in the following section.

6.1 Concept and Conceptualisation transfer

In answer to research questions 1 and 2, some tentative evidence for conceptual transfer has been obtained using *think aloud* reports and is detailed in Chapter 5. The third research question addressed in this thesis is whether or not it is possible, with the methodology employed, to distinguish between concept and conceptualisation transfer. In this section some of this data is examined particularly with concept and conceptualisation transfer in mind, looking for evidence that might distinguish the two. As described in Chapter 2, concept transfer refers to the transfer of the mental representation of a perceivable phenomenon such as an event, situation or object which has been categorised and stored in long-term memory (Jarvis 2011:4), this mental representation is conceived as a form/meaning pairing or construction which contains semantic, conceptual and structural information (See Chapter 2); on the other hand, conceptualisation transfer refers to the process of selecting and organising concepts for verbalisation (Jarvis 2011:4). According to a cognitive linguistics model, this would occur at the level of construal operations, and in the case of temporal concept representation, be manifest in perspective taking. The *think aloud* data does provide some evidence for L1 rooted perspective taking; however, this often occurs as an initial step, before the influence of L2 knowledge comes into play.

Concept and Conceptualisation Transfer

In order to make a case for concept transfer, it is necessary to find evidence in the *think aloud* data where the semantic and conceptual content of a particular construction is

brought from long-term memory and used in the decision making process. This should reflect the L1 stored categories and their content¹². As has been discussed previously, this type of transfer may be evident when Italian L1 speakers of English L2 are dealing with the use of the English Present Perfect when it denotes a result state. In Chapter 5 we have seen: i) evidence of the Present Perfect being used with a past and finished meaning in line with its nearest structural equivalent in L1 (Perfetto Composto); and ii) the Past Simple being used by Italian L1 speakers in place of the Present Perfect in English where a result state is implied.

In examples (1) and (2) there is evidence of the connection of the Present Perfect construction *have + past participle* with a past and finished meaning. In these examples Giovanni (1) and Silvia (2) are explaining their reasoning with regard to item 1 – *I have been waiting for ages*. It would seem that for Giovanni and Silvia the category content related to the construction *have + past participle* includes a past and finished concept which is consistent with the L1 category content for the formal equivalent Perfetto Composto (Semantic Map 5). This is consistent with Jarvis' (2011:4) definition of concept transfer.

Item 1

1) Io ho messo *have wait* perché perché c'è mi pare visto che dice al passato che ha aspettato molto tempo io metto *have e wait*. /I put *have wait* because there

¹² Given that the L1 category content contains the semantics of the construction used to cover the function in L1, it is difficult to distinguish between semantic and concept transfer and definitively rule out the former (See footnote on page 51.) However, this thesis does reveal evidence for potential concept transfer and therefore, points to areas which could be tested further with regard to patterns of categorisation of target concepts in L2 compared to L1.

is, it seems to me, because she says in the past that she wait (PerfCOMP) a long time, I put *have* and *wait*. – **Giovanni**

2) *I have waited for ages* penso perché comunque è una frase al passato/ *I have waited for ages* I think because anyway it is a past sentence – **Silvia Item**

1

In his verbalisation, Giovanni (1) implies that he understands that the protagonist's waiting has its place in the past "*mi pare che dice al passato che ha aspettato molto tempo/it seems to me because she says in the past that she WAIT (PerfCOMP) for a long time*" and connects this with the Present Perfect form. Silvia (2) also ascribes the use of the Present Perfect to a past concept "*è una frase al passato/it is a past sentence.*"

This difference in category content and boundaries with regard to the Present Perfect in English and Perfetto Composto in Italian also seems to manifest in a further example of conceptual transfer. In examples (3) and (4) we see the use of the Past Simple for a resultative past meaning, where a *perfect* construction would be more appropriate in English. While the underlying cause of the transfer would seem to be differences in category content, this appears also to lead to a differing conceptualisation of the situation, which bears testimony to the interplay between grammaticalisation and conceptualisation and also the difficulties which arise when trying to distinguish these two types of transfer. An in depth analysis of the *think aloud* data is appropriate here in order to tease apart indications for the work or concepts and/or conceptualisations in these instances of conceptual transfer.

- 3) *I lost my phone*, penso perché parla sempre del passato. / *I lost my phone*, I think because it is still talking about the past. **Giovanni Item 2**
- 4) *I asked* Ha chiesto forse perché nessuno ha dato una risposta positiva penso che l'atto di chiedere è nel passato/ *I asked* She ask (PerfCOMP) maybe because no one has given a positive response, I think that the act of asking is in the past. **Silvia Item 4**

In example 3, Giovanni is explaining his reasoning with regard to the use of *I lost my iPhone* for a *resultative past* concept. He explains that the protagonist is speaking about the past and as such uses the English Past Simple, he does not refer to the present situation of being without the iPhone. Interestingly, Silvia does refer to a present consequence of the action of *asking* (no one has given a positive response), but she specifies that the act of asking is past and so uses the Past Simple. Here it appears that the past act of asking is more salient than the entailed present result state for the Italian speakers.

The subtle difference in reasoning of Giovanni and Silvia for this item could help to distinguish between concept and conceptualisation transfer in this context. Where no reference is made to the result state element of the situation (Giovanni), L1 conceptualisation transfer may be hypothesised, based in L1 conceptualisation patterns, in such a case, the L1 construction (Perfetto Composto) invokes a past and complete conceptualisation which is evident in the participant verbalisation (Example 3). On the other hand, Silvia's recognition of the present consequence of the action is consistent with L2 conceptualisation, but her use of the Past Simple, highlighting the

fact that the act of *asking* is in the past is consistent with L1 category content, and suggestive of concept transfer. Silvia takes the L1 construction (Perfetto Composto) meaning and conceptual content and matches them to the L2 construction which holds similar meaning and conceptual content (Past Simple) resulting in her use of the Past Simple for this item.

This data is indicative of how differences in stored conceptual categories and their content between L1 and L2 may affect production in L2, and how these differences impact upon situation construal leading to conceptualisation transfer.

Further examples of possible conceptualisation transfer are seen in (6) and (7). They reveal an L1 rooted present orientation to a past to present state concept- *I have known him for years* and *I have been here in the shade all morning*. In Italian, the Presente Semplice with core semantics denoting a present and imperfective situation is used in this context, suggesting a present oriented perspective on the situation, and this is reflected in the *think aloud* verbalisations for these two participants. In example (6) Chiara clearly states that the situation is *present*, and Giovanni, while his first recourse is to a present orientation through conjugation of the verb *to be* in this context - *I'm here in the shade all morning*, then implies a more past oriented viewpoint with his use of Perfetto Composto (See Chapter 5 for full analysis).

6) *I know him*, ah io lo conosco da tempo, *I know*, lo conosco da tempo, siccome che... presente/ *I know him*, ah I know (PRES) him for a long time, *I know*, I know (PRES) him for a long time, because it's..... present. **Chiara item 6**

7) I errmmm I *be* here in the shade [all'ombra] *I'm here* in the shade all morning o sono stato, I have...che può essere?/ I errrrmmmm I *be* here in the shade

[all'ombra] *I'm here* in the shade all morning or I be (Perf COMP), I have
...what can it be? **Giovanni item 7**

As is evident here, conceptualisation transfer occurs where learners maintain an L1 constrained conceptualisation of an event or situation and this is manifest not only in their response, but also in their overt reasoning found in the *think aloud*.

It appears, therefore, that *think aloud* data can be instrumental in isolating instances of conceptual transfer which may not be revealed through a purely quantitative approach.

A quantitative approach, such as evaluating numerically the occurrences of a target form in verbal production, can show that a particular verbalisation is statistically more likely to be a result of CLI; however, in terms of revealing conceptual transfer and distinguishing concept and conceptualisation transfer *think aloud* reports are instrumental in elaborating the types of processes which occur in the minds of L2 speakers as they attempt to express the target concepts in L2. Notably, the original aim of this thesis was only to find evidence for conceptual transfer in the L2 English of Italian L1 speakers as they attempt to describe distinct temporal concepts as is reflected in the discussion of the results in Chapter 5. As the *think aloud* analysis progressed and using the knowledge gained through the tense and aspect analysis in Chapter 3, a discernible difference became apparent with regard to the two types of conceptual transfer and where they might occur in the system. This has brought new and more in depth information to light regarding *concept* and *conceptualisation* transfer and their classification and observation.

The classification of an example of conceptual transfer as belonging to conceptualisation or concept transfer requires identifying differences in terms of the manifest cognitive processes or construal operations employed giving rise to a

language specific conceptualisation for the former, and stored conceptual knowledge referenced in the form of construction categories and their conceptual content for the latter as seen above. Conceptualisation transfer is suggested where a description of the situation to be described is consistent with the L1 conceptualisation which is derived from the core semantics of the construction used to cover the particular function in L1. It is revealed in differing viewpoints or perceptions of an event or situation which are consistent with L1 and divergent from L2, and perhaps, as suggested here which involves two different conceptual categories with fully contrasting associated conceptual content and invoked conceptualisations: the use of the Present Simple by Italian L1 speakers for *state up to the present*, where the present oriented conceptualisation of the L1 is drawn from the Italian Presente Semplice and English Present Simple is used in error. For concept transfer, interference arises from contrasting stored conceptual category content where the content of the specific inter-linguistic categories is conceptually related; such as the English Present Perfect, Italian Perfetto Composto and English Past Simple (See Chapter 3 sections 3.5.1, 3.6.5, 3.6.1). In cases of concept transfer, reference should be made to the form or construction being used and its conceptual meaning or use for the speaker, these should correspond with the L1 pattern.. As has been seen in this thesis, this may or may not result in the use of a non-predicted or inappropriate form in L2 as concept transfer may underly the use of a required form in L2, but with the L1 constrained conceptual content.

As is evident, this is an area which warrants expansion and would benefit from further exploration. This may be achieved through obtaining more detailed and more numerous *think aloud* reports, with a refined testing instrument (See limitations section

6.3 below). This is also an area in which it would be beneficial to obtain *think aloud* reports from native speakers of the languages under investigation, so that concepts and conceptualisations revealed may be cross-referenced and compared. With regards to conceptualisation transfer especially, it may be interesting to look at responses from participants with a lower level of English such as B1, as evidence for L1 conceptualisations is found in the least competent of the L2 speakers and is often pushed aside as L2 knowledge comes into play (Chiara, Giovanni at a lower level vs. Silvia and Elena who are more proficient).

The idea that L1 conceptualisations manifest principally in the L2 production of speakers with a lesser competence (Chiara, Giovanni) and concept transfer with more proficient speakers (Silvia and Elena), suggests that there could be progression in interlanguage error where conceptualisation transfer is gradually phased out as the acquisition of L2 constructions progresses towards a more effective L2 system, where constructions are applied to etic situations consistent with the L2 conceptualisation. This is a notion which could be very interesting to explore further in terms of its impact on language acquisition in general and, in particular, the learning and teaching of second languages.

6.2 Contribution to the research field of conceptual transfer

As with the studies of Bylund and Jarvis (2011), this study takes a cognitive linguistics approach to the phenomenon of conceptual transfer and explores the topic under the auspices of the conceptual transfer hypothesis (CTH. Jarvis 2011). It draws on the notion of the construction as a unit which holds semantic, conceptual and

morphological information which drives construal to produce distinct conceptualisations (Evans 2012:78) to which speakers become sensitized. As constructions differ cross-linguistically in terms of their semantic and conceptual content, so may the conceptualisations they evoke, and this leaves room for conceptual transfer of two sorts in L2 interlanguage.

Drawing on this cognitive framework and previous research work in the field, this study uses a novel approach to the investigation of conceptual transfer: firstly in its utilisation of a full cognitive analysis of tense and aspect systems in order to uncover areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference; and, secondly, in its use of *think aloud* reports analysed with reference to the aforementioned cognitive analysis of tense and aspect systems to reveal the impact of these differences on learner production of target concepts.

So far, the influence of L1 concepts and conceptualisations in learner production and bilingualism has principally been investigated quantitatively, using external stimuli such as film to prompt verbal production of target forms which are counted and compared with monolingual or bilingual controls (Brown and Gullberg 2011; Bylund and Jarvis 2011; Daller *et al.* 2011). The field has recently seen the addition of eye-tracking and speech onset time data providing evidence for the influence of L1 in online processing (Flecken 2011; Schmiedtová *et al.* 2011). This research has produced convincing statistical evidence for the influence of cross-linguistic differences in conceptualisation manifest in the verbal production of bilinguals and language learners. However, this type of data works through inference, it is a covert measure, and does not show how these differences manifest themselves in the cognitive processes which accompany decision making for the representation of

particular concepts in L2. The qualitative approach, in contrast, represents a direct measure of these cognitive processes and, consequently, opens up a further perspective on conceptual transfer, particularly with regard to learner language. In this study the qualitative approach has been instrumental in:

- revealing that no single factor is responsible for errors made on the target concepts;
- showing that even where error numbers are small, conceptual transfer may still be present;
- demonstrating that even ‘correct’ responses may be a result of L1 conceptual transfer.

By taking a cognitive approach and including qualitative data, this study adds to the current body of evidence in three important ways:

- i) the cognitive analysis of tense and aspect of English and Italian systems has provided for a detailed description of category content and organisation with regard to temporal concepts in the minds of speakers of both English as an L1, and speakers of Italian as an L1, highlighting areas of conceptual difference. This has informed not only test design, but also helped identify instances of conceptual transfer in the *think aloud* reports of Italian L1 learners of English L2; and
- ii) it has allowed for the delineation and explanation of how and where conceptual transfer may come into play in L2 production, again aiding its identification in the *think aloud* reports, which have been instrumental in identifying possible examples of conceptual transfer; and

iii) further distinguishing concept and conceptualisation transfer, as well as revealing the multifactorial nature of processing for temporal representation in L2. The *think aloud* reports showed evidence of the influence of meta-language, classroom/teaching influences, L1 concepts and the L1 system working as a whole with regard to temporal anchoring in a narrative discourse context, and its consequent impact upon distinct temporal concept expression (Chapter 5).

With particular reference to the work of Jarvis (2000, 2010, 2015) in conceptual transfer research, this study has sought to replicate his recommended methodology (Jarvis 2000) to ensure robustness in establishing an influence for L1 in L2 temporal expression in this sample. It also recognises the role for the analysis of intra-lingual contrasts (Jarvis 2010:175) in transfer research, which in this case, were indicated through the cognitive analysis of tense and aspect (Chapter 3) and used to inform test design (the identification of semantically congruent and incongruent items with respect to L1) and revealed in participant response analysis. Notably, the intra-lingual contrasts detailed here are of a conceptual nature, as discussed, and allow, therefore, for statistical evidence to point to conceptual transfer which is further confirmed and/or elaborated using the *think aloud* report.

The inception of this study was six years ago, and it is interesting to note that in his most recent article (Jarvis 2015), Jarvis outlines four prerequisite criteria and three questions pertinent to the exploration of conceptual transfer (Jarvis 2015:13) which correspond with the approach taken here. Jarvis' four prerequisite criteria for the verification of cross-linguistic influence (CLI) in L2 involve the establishment of evidence for four effects of CLI: i) within-group similarities, ii) between group differences, iii) cross-language congruity in performance on individual features and

iv) source language signatures in the use of multiple features of the target language. The first three of these criteria are used in this study in the establishment of CLI in this context consistent with Jarvis (2000). In his 2015 article, Jarvis includes a further criterion which refers to source language influence in multiple areas of the target language. Considered in the context of this study, this fourth criterion could be applied to the fact that evidence from the semantic maps, cognitive analysis and *think aloud* reports suggest a contrasting view of present time between Italian L1 and English L1 speakers which exerts an effect on the use of a number of L2 constructions. The Italian Presente Semplice covers a vast number of concepts which can temporally denote past, present and future time, and this has an effect on the use of constructions such as the Present Perfect, Present Perfect Continuous and Present Progressive and *will* for future in L2 which cover these temporal concepts. The temporal salience of the present is also seen in phrases such as:

Lo faccio finché non arriva. / I DO (PRES) as long as he NOT ARRIVE (PRES). - I'll do it until he arrives.

In Italian, the speaker's focus is on the present action of doing something while the other person is not around. In contrast, in English the temporal focus is pushed forwards to the future to the point of visualising the other person's arrival. This is a fascinating area for future research.

Jarvis proposes these four criteria as a prerequisite because statistical evidence alone is not enough for the verification of conceptual transfer. This is the case, even when the tests themselves are designed to reflect conceptual difference, as in this study. Interlanguage is influenced by a number of factors and error in temporal expression may occur for a variety of reasons including L2 learning and teaching strategies as is

evident here. Convincing evidence for conceptual transfer is produced by accessing the cognitive processes which underlie construction choice in a distinct temporal context as has been achieved through the use of *think aloud* reports this study.

Notably, with regard to the third of Jarvis' criteria listed above, this study highlights the importance of a cognitive linguistics approach with regards to establishing congruence between L1 and IL (Intra-L1-group homogeneity). In this study, congruence was established based on the cognitive analysis of tense and aspect in the two languages under investigation and was revealed also to be a function of the interplay between perception of the situation to be represented and stored concepts (5.1.3).

In order to establish congruence in lexical reference between the two language groups in his 2000 study, Jarvis uses lexis elicited in a pilot study, his own knowledge "the words I felt were appropriate to refer to the denotata" (Jarvis 2000:275), together with synonyms and translations based again on his own knowledge of Finnish and Swedish. From this he says he can report "semantic and conceptual" congruence. However, synonyms and translations do not necessarily always represent conceptual congruence. Consider the case of the Italian Perfetto Composto and English Present Perfect, where they may be formally similar both formed using the auxiliary *have* plus past participle, in terms of semantic and conceptual content these tenses diverge. The Italian Perfetto Composto is inherently perfective where the Present Perfect denotes a past to present time frame. The nearest conceptual equivalent to the Perfetto Composto in English would be the Simple Past which represents past and finished actions. These two tenses share the conceptually salient past and complete feature. The benefit of the cognitive analysis and semantic maps is that they offer a way of revealing conceptual congruence

and divergence in the minds of the speakers of different languages in a systematic way in relation to the etic concepts being expressed. Congruence may therefore, be considered more consistent in this approach.

According to Jarvis, once CLI has been established by addressing the criteria listed above, researchers may ask three questions about the potential conceptual influence exerted by L1 in the target area which need to be reflected in verbal data obtained: 1) Does language use reflect different conceptual meanings cross-linguistically? 2) Does language use suggest that speakers of different languages perceive, recognise or evaluate situations differently? 3) Is the CLI reflected in performance on non-verbal tasks assessing behavioural patterns? (Jarvis 2015:13).

First of all, question one means that, when describing a given situation, the forms used in each language express different conceptual meanings and, for conceptual transfer to be verified, these different meanings must be evident in verbal data. Conceptual meanings are part of the stored knowledge of conceptual categories present in long-term memory. L1 influence stemming from differences in such category content has previously been described as concept transfer (Jarvis 2011:4). In this study the existence of different conceptual meanings has been suggested through the cognitive comparison of the tense and aspect systems of English and Italian where, using RCG, different constructions with potentially different conceptual meanings are shown to be used for the same etic contexts cross-linguistically. A conceptual base for cross-linguistic difference is then supported in this study as the prevailing conceptual meaning of the Italian *Perfetto Composto*, *past and perfective*, is evident in the *think aloud* reports of Italian L1 speakers as they express certain temporal concepts which would usually be covered by the Present Perfect in English such as the *resultative past*:

I have found it, for example. It is suggested that the prominence of this L1 conceptual meaning results in the erroneous use of the Past Simple in these contexts, reflecting a possible L1 conceptualisation (Conceptualisation Transfer) and also use of the Present Perfect with a past and perfective meaning reflecting L1 conceptual content and possible conceptualisation transfer (Conceptualisation and Concept Transfer – See Chapter 2).

Jarvis' second question refers to CLI where language use reflects differences in the perception, recognition or evaluation of etic situations cross-linguistically which he terms language specific conceptualisation. This study is concerned with the perception and subsequent expression of distinct temporal concepts. Interestingly, Jarvis (2015:18) makes references to the link between differences in stored knowledge leading to potential differences in perception and the value of verbal responses in indicating this:

Almost any verbal response to a stimulus will be meaningful and thus reflect a mental representation that has been categorised, but some differences in categorisation can be linked to differences in perception

The *think aloud* data reported here reveal evidence for error in L2 as a result of L1 perspective taking derived from differences in the organisation of conceptual knowledge cross-linguistically as schematised on the semantic maps. For example, *think aloud* data suggest that the erroneous use of the Present Simple *I know* for the past to present state concept *I have known him for years* is not simply a case of formal transfer, but is in fact a result of the Italian L1 speaker perceiving this etic situation as belonging to the present (see data for Giovanni and Chiara item 6), consistent with the

L1 grammaticalisation of this concept and thus a potential example of conceptualisation transfer.

Thirdly, Jarvis refers to CLI reflected in performance on non-verbal tasks, which is also a question that has been addressed in this study. The temporal perspective task, where participants could choose to move the figure or the background on a wheel to show time passing (Appendix 11), was included in an attempt to assess the extent to which a language specific view of the passing of time could be identified with regard to English L1 and Italian L1 speakers. Based on the notion of tense systems in relation to their falling into Ascending or Descending time (Hewson 1991:512), Italian speakers were hypothesised to perceive time as the background falling away from them into the past, and English speakers to perceive themselves moving through time from the present into the future (see section 4.4 for full explanation). The temporal perspective task was designed to test whether any conceptual difference may have at its root the contrasting organisation of these two tense and aspect systems into Ascending and Descending time as described by Hewson (1991:512). The results of the test are not significant here; however, they represent an avenue worth pursuing in further research (5.3.1).

Jarvis' most recent work calls for exactly the type of evidence and approach taken by this study for the advancement of the field of conceptual transfer research. The approach taken here is cognitive and framed within the Conceptual Transfer Hypothesis (CTH); it reveals cross-linguistic conceptual difference through a cognitive analysis of tense and aspect systems pointing to intra-lingual contrasts in English and Italian which is used for a test design which is based in Jarvis' prerequisites as detailed above; *think aloud* reports are used to look for evidence of L1

concept and conceptualisation in L2 production consistent with Jarvis questions 1 and 2 above; the temporal perspective task was included as a behavioural measurement to assess any difference in the perception of the passing of time.

In sum, this project makes an important contribution to the field of conceptual transfer research today. Through its cognitive approach and the application of a novel and robust methodology, this study offers new insights into the underlying conceptual differences which need to be present for conceptual transfer to occur, and further sheds light on the cognitive processes which are involved in both concept and conceptualisation transfer when learners express distinct temporal meanings in L2, allowing for them to be differentiated.

6.3 Limitations and Future Directions

English L1 Control Group data

i) As discussed in Chapter 5, for some cloze test items, the responses of the L1 English control were unexpected, and not consistent with the pilot study. The original L1 control group were English L1 medical students in their first year of medicine at the University of Malta. All of the students had completed their secondary education in the UK. It is unclear what led to this anomaly; however, two possible reasons have emerged. The group had been living in Malta for over a year, and as such their English may have changed to reflect usage patterns in the prevailing culture; however, this would seem unlikely as their usage in this case does not seem to reflect patterns typical of Maltese English. In fact, for the items in question (Items 1-4) the Maltese third language control performance was consistent with the English L1 pilot. A possible

explanation is that the participants in the original English L1 control group completed the test in a superficial manner, not paying attention to the contextual cues given in the cartoon. In fact, a further English L1 control, performed post-hoc online returned results consistent with the original pilot data (See Chapter 5 and Appendix 15). Notwithstanding, it is possible that the original group were responding in accordance with their view of the events depicted and this could be a result of language change (Past Simple being used for Present Perfect in resultative past contexts (Elness 2009:242)). In future research, the English native speaker pilot and control group would be selected from native speakers studying at a UK university, they would also be instructed to pay close attention to the contextual cues in the cloze test.

Erroneous responses

ii) *Erroneous* responses were those which were considered inappropriate for the context depicted in the cartoon cloze test. This was evaluated both in terms of what was grammatically usual or expected and the temporal cues provided in the test. It is acknowledged that the notion of whether or not a particular form is suitable for a particular context might differ with regard to speaker's target variety, and indeed, in this study the first native English control group did give some unexpected responses (detailed and discussed in section 6.3i above). Other factors affecting participant judgement as to acceptable responses could include genre and register. In terms of genre, the style of the text was typical of a cloze test used in English language teaching to test knowledge of the English tense system. It is a format which would be very familiar to the Italian L1 and Maltese L1 speakers, but less so to the English native speakers. This may also be a reason for the unexpected responses given by the native

English control group in the first instance. The register of the text is informal, pitched at a European Framework B2 language level, and as such should have been easily understood, recognised and accepted by all three groups.

A final factor which may have affected responses is that of the syntagmatic relationship of linguistic features in the text. This is relevant to use of the Present Perfect and Past Simple in English as sequentially the former usually occurs before the latter in a text. This could be avoided in future research through a careful consideration of the syntagmatic features of the cloze test text during design.

Think aloud reports for Control Groups

iii) As discussed above, previous evidence for conceptual transfer research has been obtained by quantifying the incidences of target forms in verbal production. The aim of this study was to further elaborate upon this in terms of looking at how particular concepts are represented cognitively, and how they impact upon processing for temporal concept representation in L2. As detailed above, this approach has been particularly fruitful and led to some interesting conclusions with regards to the nature of conceptual transfer in the sample population and how it affects L2 interlanguage production.

As analysis of the *think aloud* data progressed, it became evident that further *think aloud* reports, performed with native Italian L1 and English L1 speakers, would provide further insights and perspectives on concepts and conceptualisations related to the target concepts in L1 English and Italian. This would add further evidence about the representation of target concepts in the minds of speakers of the two languages, already reproduced theoretically through the semantic maps, and inform us with regard

to the influences that come into play when native speakers make decisions about tense and aspect forms in their first language. Consequently, this would also help with the identification of areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference and their manifestation in online processing, where comparisons may be made between L1 speakers of English and Italian and Italian L1 speakers of English L2. In a wider study, a third language control group may also be included to assess processing differences between two different L1 groups learning the same L2. Moreover, such additions would also further inform decisions regarding congruence of L1 and IL forms, accessing conceptual structure and content, rather than form alone, as has been discussed above in relation to Jarvis (2000). Such evidence may also be used to add to the information represented on the semantic maps and in the cognitive analysis of tense and aspect of the target systems.

Given also the equivocal performance of the native English speaker control group necessitating a further test group post-hoc, it would be advisable to pilot the concepts represented on any testing instrument developed in the future. This could mean either pilot *think aloud* reports to assess native speaker understanding of the pictures/temporal context represented or narratives based on the cartoon context presented.

Refinements to the Temporal Perspective Task

iv) The Temporal Perspective Task. This task was included in order to assess any potential differences with regard to participants' perspective on time passing which may be linked to their L1 tense and aspect system. As described in Chapters 4 and 5, this refers to the notions of ascending and descending time (Hewson (1991:51) (See

Chapter 4 (4.4) and Chapter 5 (5.4.1) for full explanation). While not significant, the results of the temporal perspective task do indicate a difference in perspective and one which warrants further investigation, perhaps with refinements to the testing instrument.

It could be argued, for example, that the salience of the figure, placed at the forefront of the testing instrument, as well as the requirement to move *something*, predisposed participants to move the figure therefore affecting scores. However, it is interesting to note that only participants in the L1 Italian group chose to move both the figure and the background, pointing to an inclination to include the background in their representation of time passing in this context. Moreover, it is not only the figure, representing agency, that is important, but also the directionality of the flow of time that may differ between these groups. In this model, moving the background forward and leaving the figure, would actually indicate the figure moving back in time while moving both together would give the effect of time standing still. According to Hewson (1991:512), ascending time means the flow of time moves from the present into the future. The model should also include an option where participants are able to move the background to show time moving from the present into the future. Participants could be given a choice to move the background only, in one of two directions, either forward into the future or backwards into the past, with the figure still in the centre of scene. This could help to establish whether there is a difference in perspective on the flow of time in these two language groups, avoiding the issue of figure salience.

Non-Conceptual Difference (NCD) items.

v) The analysis of error rates for the NCD items revealed three interesting points. The first, as is mentioned at the first part of this section is that the concepts should be piloted before testing, to make sure that the target concepts are represented accurately. This was evident in one particular response which was clearly an example of misunderstanding the temporal concept depicted. For item 9, participants were unsure as to whether *I never (go) there*, applied to the day in question only, or the present in general. Therefore, there were a large number of Past Simple *I never went there* responses.

Secondly, it revealed another area for potential investigation. As this study focused on the representation of past to present time, representations of future time were not treated in the cognitive analysis. The substantial number of errors made on item 19: *I..... (call) you*, which seem to reflect L1 influence, point to this as a further area of investigation. In Italian, the Presente Semplice is used to express the concept of *immediate decision taken at the moment of speaking*, where in English *will + bare infinitive* is used. *Will* is a modal verb and in this case is used to express an immediate intention to make the call. It would be interesting to look at modality for future temporal meanings in English as well as other constructions used to express future temporal concepts in English such as the Present Progressive and *going to* in comparison with the Italian system. English has no future tense, where Italian does, *Il Futuro Semplice*, and this together with the fact that a number of future concepts are covered by the Presente Semplice in Italian would make for an interesting conceptual comparison leading to new target concepts for investigation.

Thirdly, the NCD items also revealed some inter-L1-heterogeneity between the Italian L1 and Maltese L1 responses in English. The Maltese L1 speakers often use the Past

Perfect in English for *resultative past* or *past and finished* concepts where the Present Perfect of Past Simple are used in English, respectively. This is thought to be influence from L1 which was confirmed in a personal communication by Prof. Ray Fabri of the University of Malta (2014) (Chapter 4).

As mentioned above, *think aloud* reports and a cognitive analysis of the third language control tense and aspect system would help to shed light on such examples ensuring that they are of the type that are most likely to reveal theoretically robust inter-language heterogeneity within a much wider study.

Whole tense system involvement in temporal anchoring and temporal perception.

This study also reveals a role for the tense and aspect system working as a whole with regard to temporal anchoring and perception of temporal concepts in a narrative context, where the temporal organisation of concepts may tend to differ cross-linguistically. This is an area which warrants further investigation using a test which targets temporal anchoring in a narrative discourse context in relation to the organisation of the representation temporal concepts cross-linguistically in the minds of different language speakers, and elicits qualitative data revealing potential contrasts in the relevant cognitive processes cross-linguistically.

6.4 Conclusions

This study represents a new and innovative approach to the study of L1 conceptual transfer which has a strong theoretical and methodological base. It has been instrumental in identifying examples of conceptual transfer and further distinguishing concept and conceptualisation transfer in the errors made by Italian L1 learners of English L2 as they express distinct temporal concepts, as well as delineating the cognitive processes involved. As discussed above, it contributes significantly to the current state of the art of conceptual transfer research to date both in terms of what has been shown and the methodology used to do so. Looking to the future, the next steps would involve exploring the possibilities of the approach further through an expansion of the analysis to reveal further areas of cross-linguistic conceptual difference and the comparison of *think aloud* reports between language groups for a more fine-grained analysis of the cognitive processes that underlie concept and conceptualisation transfer in interlanguage.

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1 contains six semantic maps.

Semantic Map 1 shows the representation of present time concepts in English.

Semantic Map 2 shows the representation of present time concepts in Italian.

Semantic Map 3 shows areas of conceptual divergence with regard to the expression of present time concepts in English and Italian.

Semantic Map 4 shows the representation of past time and past to present time concepts in English.

Semantic Map 5 shows the representation of past time and past to present time concepts in Italian.

Semantic Map 6 shows areas of conceptual divergence with regards to the expression of past to present time concepts in English and Italian.

English Present Progressive

Core semantics: present, limited duration, incomplete, stativising

14) Sporadic repetition over time
She's always dropping things

13) Repetition of events of limited duration
At 1.30pm he's usually eating lunch.

11) Persistent or continuous activity
At the moment the builders are working hard because they want to finish the flats before summer.

10) Temporary state.
He's feeling unwell.

16) Ongoing process
The weather is changing.

15) Change in state/situation
House prices are going up

8) Repetition of a single punctual event
She's knocking on the door.

9) Temporary situations of happenings at the time of speaking.
Giulio is sleeping.

7) Active cognition
I'm thinking about emigrating

6) Active perception
I'm tasting the soup.

12) Temporary habit over a limited period
I'm taking Spanish lessons at the moment.

English Present Simple. Core semantics: present, complete, stativising

1) Instantaneous use (commentaries)
And he scores!

2) Performative use
I accept your terms.

3) Permanent states
I like pasta

4) Eternal truths.
Hydrogen is the lightest element.

5) Habitual use
She walks to work.

17) State up to the present time
I have known him since he was a boy.

18) Event up to present time
I have watched you for hours.

19) Habit leading up to the present
Kat has sung in a choir for years.

English Present Perfect

Core semantics: indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising.

23) Temporary situation up to present
I have been living in Cardiff for 3 years.

24) Temporary habit up to the present
I have been eating a lot of chocolate lately.

25) Temporary activity up to the present
They have been widening the road.

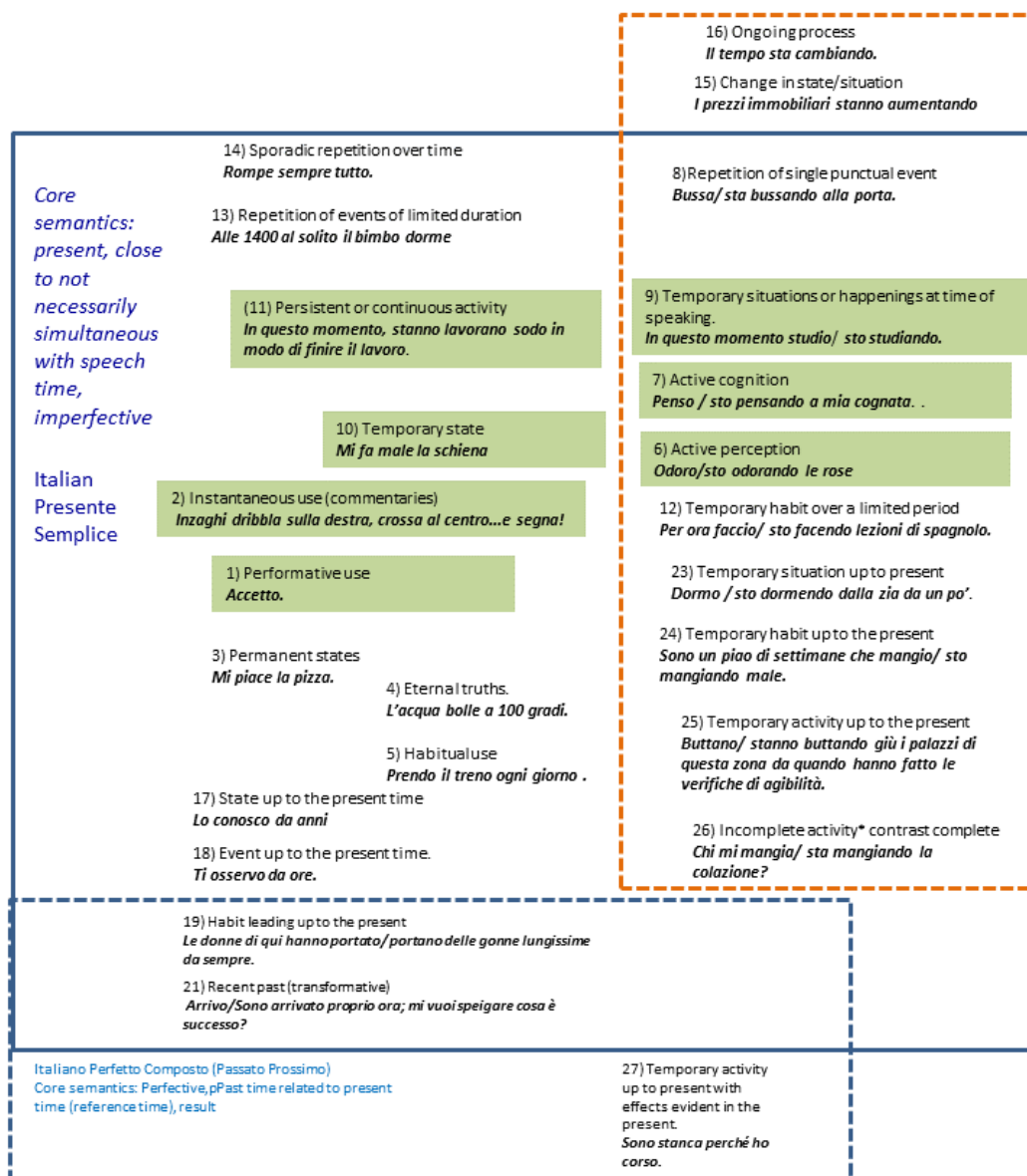
26) Incomplete activity* contrast complete
Who has been eating my breakfast?

27) Activity up to present with result.
I am tired because I have been running.

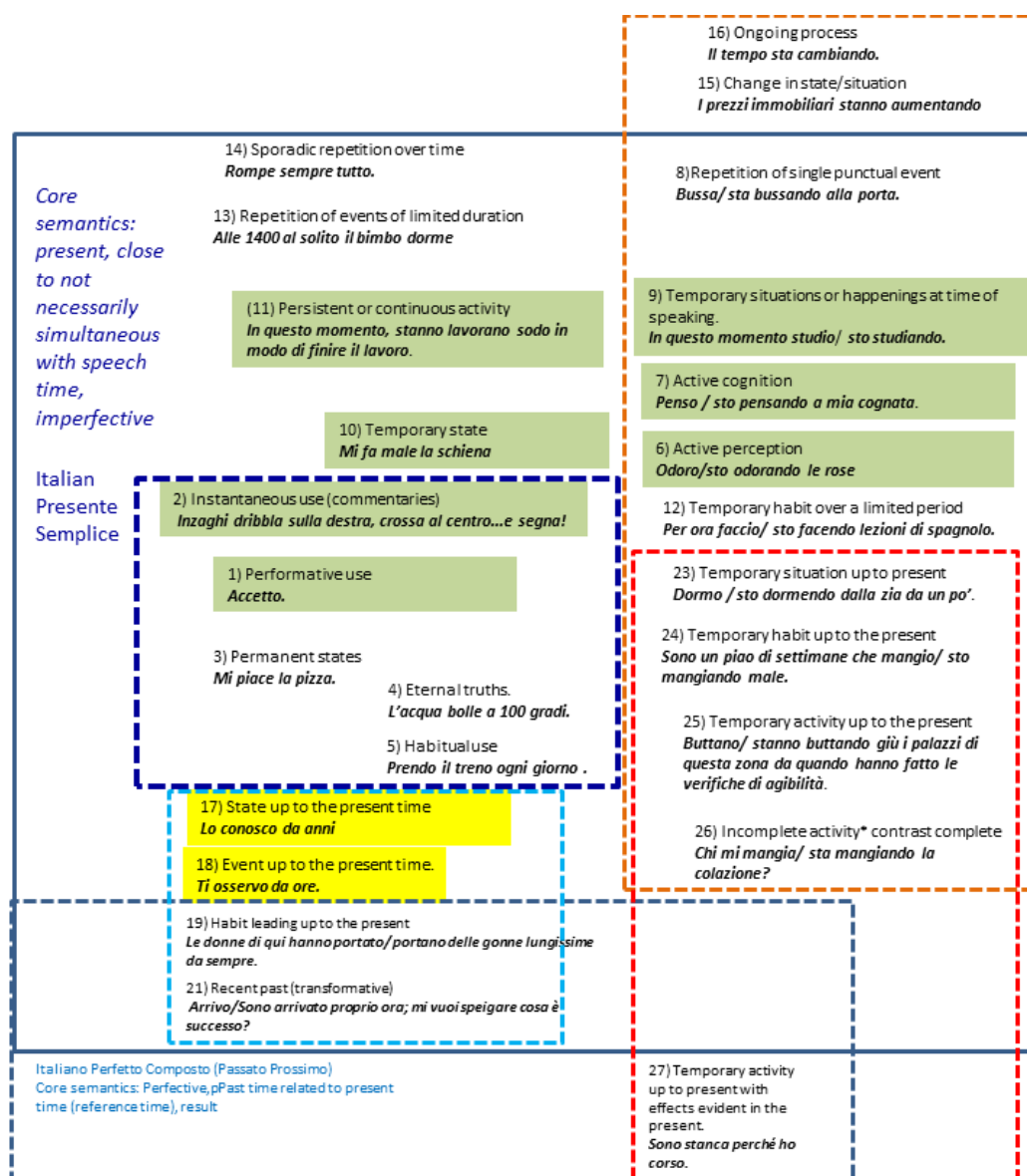
English Present Perfect Progressive

Core semantics: limited duration, continues up to present or recent past, current relevance, incomplete, stativising

Semantic Map 1: Expression of Present Time concepts in English, showing the English Present Simple, Present Progressive, Present Perfect and Present Perfect Progressive. Core category members are highlighted in green according to Chapter 3.



•**Semantic Map 2:** Expression of Present time concepts in Italian, showing the Italian Presente Semplice, perifrasi progressiva where possible, and the Perfetto Composto where it applied to present time. The two functions 19 and 21 in the blue dashed box may also be covered by the Perfetto Composto, which is discussed in section 5.5. However, the functions in the red box are those for which the perifrasi progressiva (section 7) may be used to emphasise progressive aspect. Two functions 15 and 16 fall outside the boundary for the Presente Semplice as it appears that the perifrasi progressiva has recently become obligatory to express these concepts. Core category concepts are highlighted in green according to Chapter 3.



Functions covered by English Present Simple

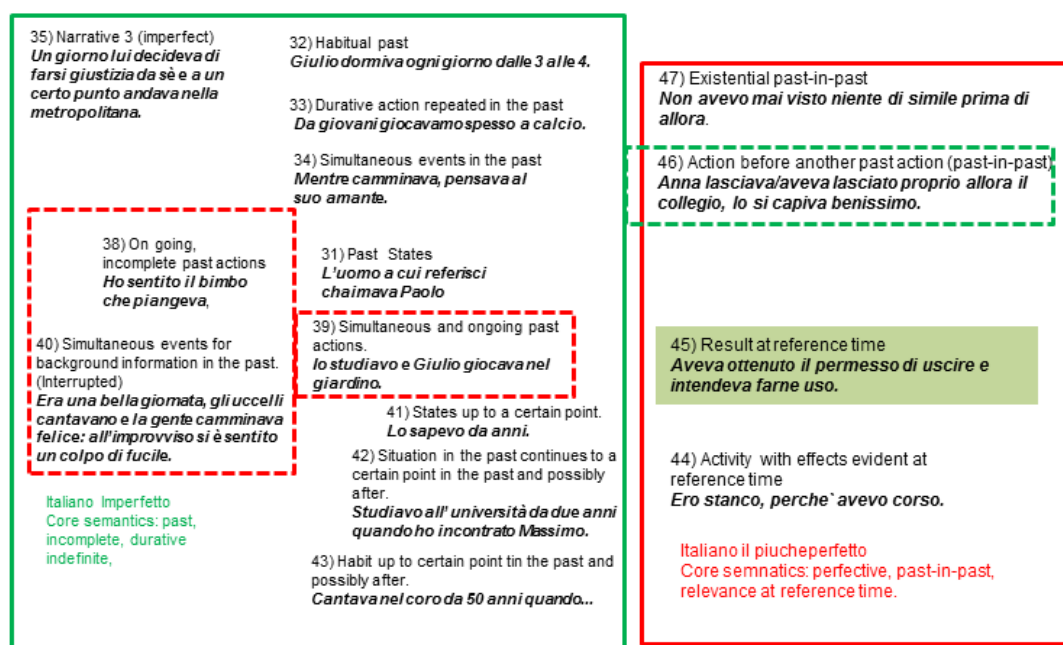
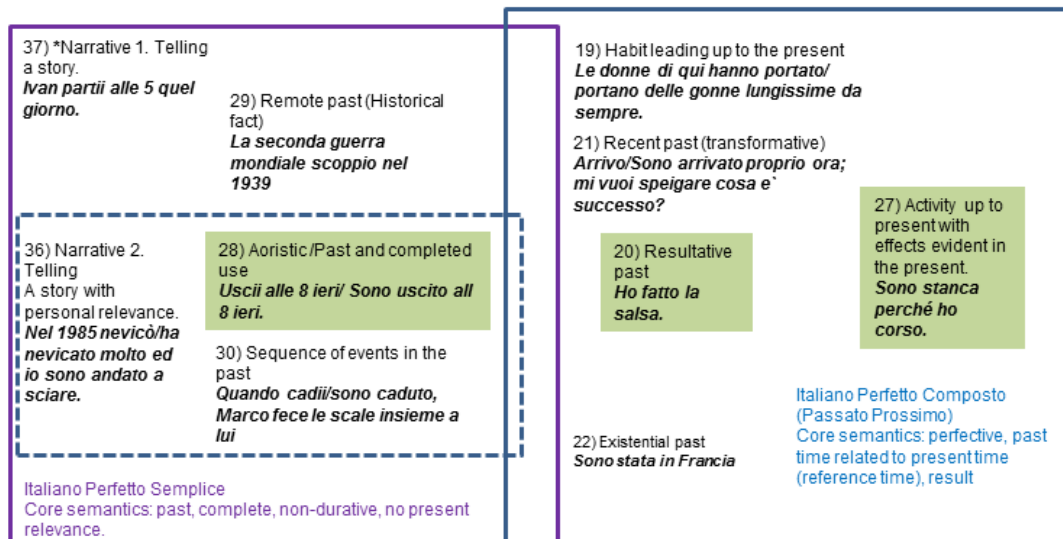


Functions covered by English Present Perfect



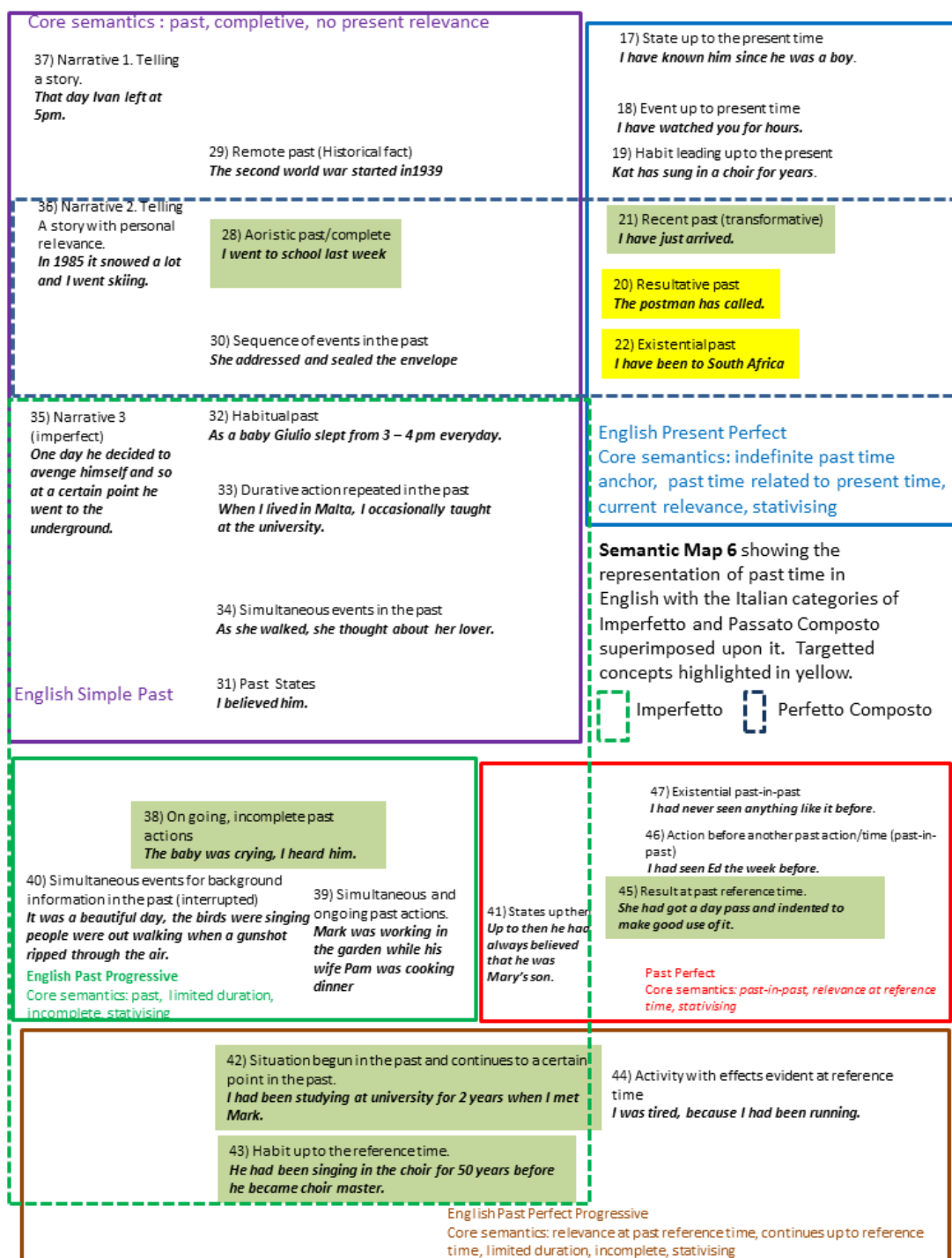
Functions covered by the English Present Perfect Progressive

Semantic Map 3 shows the map for present time representation for Italian with two English categories (Present Simple, Present Perfect and Present perfect Progressive) superimposed upon it. Areas of divergence are highlighted in yellow (functions 17 and 18).



Semantic Map 5: Expression of past time concepts in Italian, showing the Perfetto Composto, Passato Semplice, Imperfetto and Piucheperfetto. Core category members are highlighted in green according to the literature reviewed in Chapter 3.

 Functions which could be covered by perifrasi progressiva.



Appendix 2

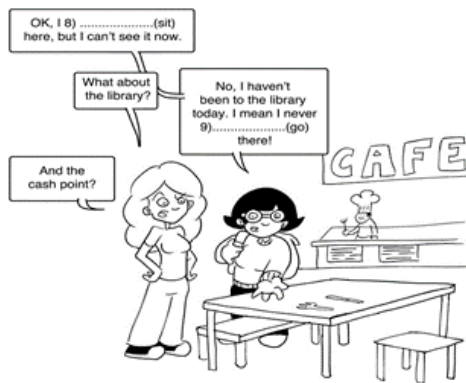
Age:

What language do you speak at home?

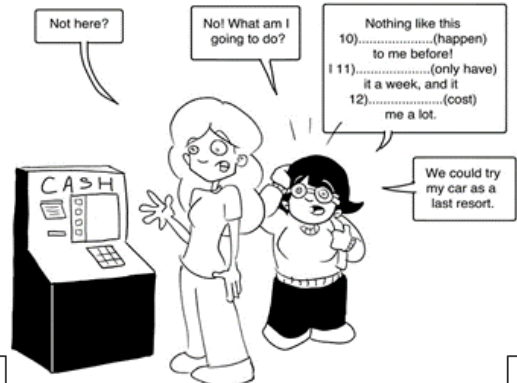
What is your highest qualification in English?

Do you speak any other languages?

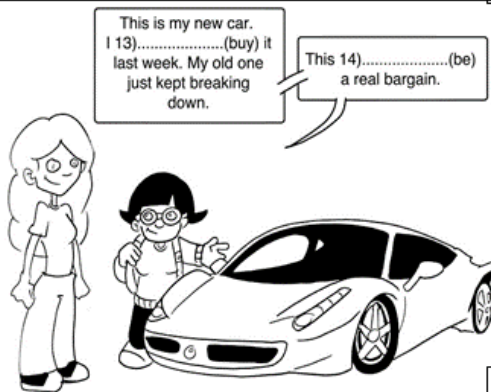
Complete the following cartoon text giving the correct form of the verb in brackets.



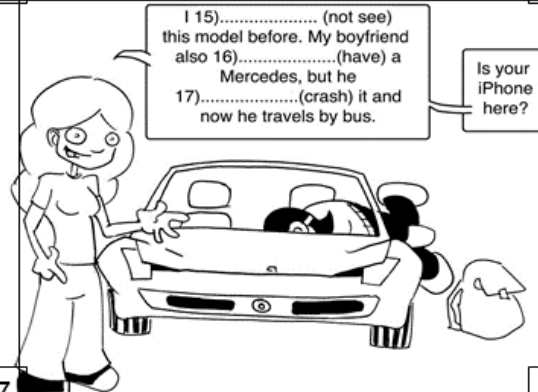
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Cartoons by Cian O'Launaigh

Appendix 3

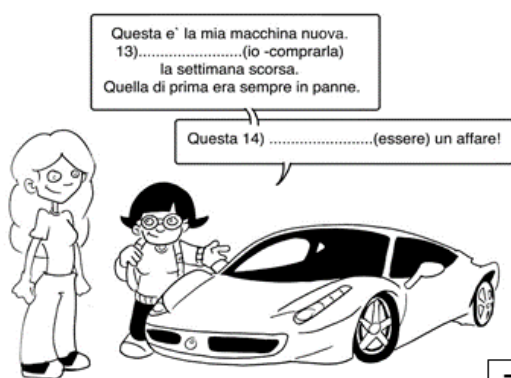




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Cartoons by Cian O'Luanaigh

Appendix 4


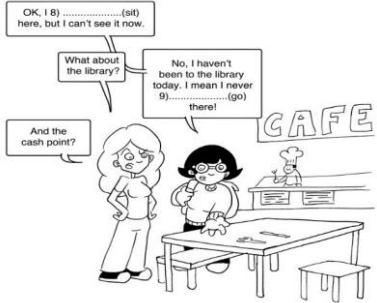
Table 2 provides an overview of the semantic and conceptual content targeted by the cloze test. Each cloze test item is explained in terms of the function/temporal concept created, the grammatical form used to cover it in both English and Italian, the core semantics of that structure and the hypothesised L1 constrained conceptualisation/conceptual structure. The conceptualisation/conceptual structure has been developed through scrutiny of the interaction of the core semantics of the structure used to cover each function in both languages, and the temporal concept that it represents, together with a consideration of the predicted errors of the experimental group.

Cartoon Context	Universal temporal concept	Grammatical Form	Core Semantics of Structure	Conceptualisation/ Conceptual Structure (interaction of semantics and concept)	Hypothesis Predicts error (in experimental group)
 <p>Cues: Ann looks upset and is looking at her watch. Lucy is sweating, running and out of breath.</p>	<p>1. Concept 2. <i>temporary activity up to present</i></p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to wait</i> ACTIVITY</p>	<p>English: Present Perfect Continuous. <i>I have been waiting</i></p>	<p>past event which continues up to present or recent past, limited duration, current relevance, incomplete, stativising</p>	<p>past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath</p>	<p>I wait I am waiting</p>

		Italian: Presente Semplice <i>Ti aspetto</i>	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	present oriented, imperfective.	
 <p>Cues: Lucy is panicking, waving her hand around, clearly upset because she no longer has her phone.</p>	2. Concept 3 <i>resultative past</i>. Verb Class: <i>to lose</i> ACHEIVEMENT	English: Present Perfect <i>I have lost</i>	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past to present time span, state of aftermath	I lost
		Italian: Perfetto Composto <i>Ho perso</i>	perfective, past time related to present time, result	perfective, past.	
	3. Concept 2 <i>temporary activity up to the present</i> Verb Class: <i>to look</i> ACTIVITY	English: Present Perfect Continuous. <i>I have been looking</i>	past event which continues up to present or recent past, limited duration, current relevance,	past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath	I look for/I am looking for


			incomplete, stativising		
		Italian: Presente Semplice Lo <i>cerco</i>	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	present oriented, imperfective,	
 <p>Cues: 4. Lucy looks like she doesn't know what to do next.</p>	<p>4. Concept 3 <i>resultative past.</i></p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to ask</i> ACHEIVEMENT</p>	<p>4. English: Present Perfect. <i>I have asked.</i></p>	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past to present time span, with current relevance, result state.	I asked
	<p>5. Non Test Item. Present habit.</p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to work</i></p>	<p>Italian: Perfetto Composto <i>Ho chiesto</i></p> <p>5. English: Present Simple. <i>He works.</i></p>	perfective, past time related to present time, result	perfective, past	
			present, true at present time, completive	true in the present, completive	He works

	ACTIVITY				
		Italian: Presente Semplice. <i>Lavora</i>	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	true in the present, imperfective	
	6. Concept 1 <i>state up to the present.</i> Verb Class: <i>to know</i> STATE	6. English: Present Perfect. <i>I have known</i> him for years. Italian: Presente Semplice <i>Lo conosco</i> da anni.	past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath present oriented, imperfective	I know him
	7. Concept 1 <i>state up to the present.</i> Verb Class: <i>to be</i>	7. English: Present Perfect <i>I have been</i> here	past time related to present time, current	past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath	I am here/ I was here


 <p>Cues: Danny is lazing under a tree. He doesn't look like he can move.</p>	STATE		relevance, stativising		
		Italian: Presente Semplice. <i>Sono</i> qui da tutta la mattina.	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	present oriented, imperfective	
 <p>Cues: Lucy is indicating where she was sitting.</p>	8. Non test item. Temporary past activity. Verb Class: <i>to sit</i> ACTIVITY	English: Past Progressive. <i>I was sitting.</i>	Past, ongoing, limited duration, possibly incomplete.	ongoing, temporary past	I was sitting
		Italian: Il Piuccheperfetto <i>Ero seduta</i>	Perfective, past time related to past time (reference time) result.	temporally perfective, past-in-past	
	9. Non test item Present habit Verb Class: <i>to go there</i> ACCOMPLISHMENT	English: Present Simple. <i>I never go there.</i>	present, true at present time, completive	true in the present, completive	I never go


		Italian: Presente Semplice. Non ci <i>vado</i> mai.	present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective	true in the present, imperfective	
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	<p>10. Concept 4 <i>experiential past</i> <i>/Existential Past</i> <i>Michaelis (2004:24)</i></p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to happen to me</i> ACHEIVEMENT</p>	English: Present Perfect <i>has</i> <i>happened to</i> me.	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past to present time span, with current relevance, intermediate state.	happened
	<p>11. Concept 1. <i>state up to the present.</i></p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to have</i> STATE</p>	Italian Perfetto Composto <i>e` mai</i> <i>successo</i>	perfective, past time related to present time, result	perfective, past	
		English: Present Perfect. <i>I have had</i> for only a week	past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising	past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath	I have it
		Italian: Presente Semplice	present, close to or simultaneous with present	present oriented, imperfective	

		Ce l'ho da solo una settimana.	time, imperfective		
	12. Non test item. Past and completed action. Verb Class: <i>to cost</i> ACHEIVEMENT	English Past Simple. It <i>cost</i> me a lot.	definite past, completed, no present relevance.	past, complete, no present result/relevance.	It cost.
		Italian Perfetto Composto. Mi è <i>costato</i> caro.	perfective, past time related to present time, result	past, perfective,	
	13. Non test item. Past and completed action. Verb Class: <i>to buy</i> ACHEIVEMENT	English: Past Simple. I <i>bought</i> it last week.	definite past, completed, no present relevance.	past, complete, no present result/relevance.	I bought.
		Italian Perfetto Composto. <i>L'ho comprata</i> la settimana scorsa.	perfective, past time related to present time, result	past, perfective,	
	15) Concept 4. <i>experiential past</i> Verb Class: <i>to see</i>	English: Present Perfect	Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time,	past to present time span, with current relevance, intermediate state.	I never saw

	ACTIVITY		<i>I have never seen</i>	current relevance, stativising		
			Italian Perfetto Composto Non l'ho mai visto	perfective, past time related to present time, result	past, perfective,	
	16) Non test item. Past state. Verb Class: <i>to have</i> STATE	English Simple Past. My boyfriend <i>had</i> a Mercedes.	definite past, completed, no present relevance.	past, complete, no present result/relevance.	My boyfriend <i>had</i> a Mercedes.	
		Italian: Imperfetto.	Incomplete, durative, indefinite, past	past, incomplete		
	17. Non test item Past and completed action. Verb Class: <i>to crash</i> ACHEIVEMENT	English: Simple Past. He <i>crashed</i> it.	definite past, completed, no present relevance.	past, complete, no present result/relevance.	He crashed it.	
		Italian: Perfetto Composto. <i>Ha avuto</i> un'incidente.	perfective, past time related to present time, result	past, perfective,		

	<p>18. Concept 3. <i>resultative past</i></p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to find</i> ACHEIVEMENT</p>	<p>English: Present Perfect. Maybe someone <i>has found</i> it by now.</p>	<p>Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising</p>	<p>past to present time span, with current relevance, result state.</p>	<p>Maybe someone found it by now.</p>
		<p>Italian: Perfetto Composto.</p>	<p>perfective, past time related to present time, result</p>	<p>past, perfective,</p>	
	<p>19. Non test item. Decision taken at moment of speaking.</p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to call</i> ACTIVITY</p>	<p>English: modal <i>will</i> for future <i>I'll call</i> you and see if someone answers.</p>	<p>volition, decision taken at the moment of speaking</p>	<p>volition, immediate future</p>	<p>I'll call you.</p>
		<p>Italian: Presente Semplice. Ti <i>chiamo</i> e vediamo se...</p>	<p>present, close to or simultaneous with present time, imperfective</p>	<p>close to the present, imperfective</p>	

	<p>20. Non test item. <i>state up to the present</i></p> <p>Verb Class: <i>to be</i> STATE</p>	<p>English: Present Perfect. It <i>has been</i> in my bag all the time.</p>	<p>Indefinite past time anchor, past time related to present time, current relevance, stativising</p>	<p>past time related to present time, current relevance, state of aftermath</p>	<p>It was/has been in my bag all the time.</p>
		<p>Italian: Perfetto Composto. <i>È stato</i> sempre nella mia borsa.</p>	<p>perfective, past time related to present time, result</p>	<p>perfective, past, physical result</p>	

Appendix 5

Think Aloud – Informed Consent Document

Information for all participants

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete a cartoon cloze test which will take between 10 and 15 minutes to complete. While you are completing the cloze test, you will be asked to think your thoughts out loud and your voice will be recorded. These recordings will help me to better understand how students use the English tense system.

No personal information will be stored or published together with the transcripts or the voice recordings. Anonymous quotes may be used in published papers.

Participants' anonymity is guaranteed.

You may withdraw or ask questions at any time.

Your voice recording will be transcribed and analysed as part of research into use of the English tense system by students whose native language is not English.

Please sign to say you consent to participate in the study.

Signed:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. If you require any further information, please contact me by e-mail on: austensc1@cf.ac.uk

Appendix 6

Warm up.

“I will ask you to THINK ALOUD as you do the test. *Think aloud* means that I want you to say out loud everything that you would say to yourself silently while you think. Act as if you were in the room alone speaking to yourself. Don’t try to explain your thoughts.”

Before we start the test, I’d like you to do a warm up exercise. It is a verbal problem solving task I’d like you to *think aloud* while you perform the task. After the warm up please feel free to ask any questions about the procedure.

Warm up task:

Arrange the words given below into a meaningful sequence:

- 1) lock 2) room 3) key 4) door 5) switch on

Appendix 7

Sophia is meeting her friend Carol at the airport. Carol has come on holiday to visit Sophia and she has a lot to tell her friend.

Complete the gaps in the text with an appropriate form of the verb in brackets.

Sophia: Hi, 1) I (wait) for you for ages, why are you late? How are you?

Carol: Oh, terrible!

Sophia: What? What is the problem?

Carol: Well I 2) (collect) my luggage, so 3) I (put) my bag down on the chair, when I turned around it was gone! So, I 4)(lose) my passport, my ticket home and my cell phone.

Sophia: Ok, so we can do something about the passport and the ticket.

Carol: No, but I 5) (to be) really worried about my phone.

Sophia: Why?

Carol: Oh Sam, I 6) (meet) the love of my life, he's handsome and kind and even though I 7) (know) him for only a week, I just know he is the one for me! I 8) (not feel) this happy before. I only have his mobile number, and it's in my phone!

Sophia: Listen, don't worry. I am sure we can do something.

Carol: OK, but we have to get it back. I 9) (think) about him from the moment we said good-bye and now I can't text him to say that 10)(arrive)

Sophia: But who is he?

Carol: His name is Marco, and he's a student like me.

Sophia: Where is he from?

Carol: 11) (live) in Oxford all his life like me, but he was born in Italy.

Sophia: Oh so he's Italian?

Carol: Well, his mother is, but his father is English and but he only really 12)(speak) English, he 13) (be) Italy once only. You see Marco's mother 14) (come) from Rome and she lived there until she 15) (move) to Oxford to work. She 16) (have) an apartment in Rome, which belonged to her father, but after he died they 17) (sell) it and they 18)(not go) back there anymore.

Sophia: Oh that's a pity; it's a beautiful city.

Carol: Yes, I know. I 19) (go) a few years ago. But Marco is just perfect. He likes to all the same things as me. He likes swimming and running and last year he 20) (win) a national swimming competition. He supports Juventus and he 21) (see) them play twice in London and once in Spain. Actually, he 22)(travel) all over the world and he 23) (visit) so many different countries, he is so interesting to talk to. You'd really like him.

Sophia: I'm sure.

Carol: We 24) (to dance) at a party when we first 25)
..... (see) each he says he 26)
(to want) a girlfriend like me all his life. Oh I am so happy!

Sophia: But what are we going to do about your phone? Is it in your pocket?

Carol: Maybe. Wait a minute, what's this? (Carol looks in her pockets). I 27)
..... (to find) it!

Sophia: Good, now you can text him.

Carol: Yes, Oh no....wait a minute.... He 28)(send) me
a text message. He says he has got back together with his ex-girlfriend and they 29)
.....(meet) by chance in a bar and have fallen in love again.

Sophia: Oh I'm sorry.

Carol: It doesn't matter, I don't like his hair anyway; you know I 30)
.....(prefer) blondes!

Appendix 8

Pilot Test Answer Sheet (English) – Native Speakers Results.

ITEM	KA	L	SC	HYT	HC	CA	LR	ITEM	KA	L	SC	HYT	HC	CA	LR
1	have been waiting	have been waiting	have waited	have been waiting	waited	have been waiting	waited	11	have only had	have only had	have only had	have only had	have only had	have only had	had
2	lost	have lost	lost	have lost	have lost	have lost	lost	12	cost	cost	had cost	cost	cost	cost	cost
3	have been looking	have been looking	looked	have looked	looked	have been looking	looked	13	bought	bought	bought	bought	bought	bought	bought
4	have asked	asked	asked	asked	asked	have asked	asked	14	was	was	was	was	was	was	was
5	works	is working	worked	works	works	works	works	15	haven't seen / have never seen	have not seen	haven't seen	haven't seen	have not seen	have not seen	have not seen
6	have known	have known	knew	have known	have known	have known	have known	16	had	has	had	has	has	had	has
7	have been	have been	have been	have been	have been	have been	was	17	crashed	crashed	crashed	crashed	crashed	crashed	crashed
8	was sitting	sat	sat	was sitting	was sitting	was sitting	sat	18	has found	has found	has found	has found	has found	has found	found
9	go	go	went	went	go	went	go	19	will call	will call	will call	will call	will call	will call	will call
10	has happened	happened	has happened	has happened	has happened	has happened	happened	20	was	has been	was	was	was	was/has been	was

1. 5/7 native speakers see past to present (use of perfect) 4/7 also use continuous form. (Possible to place Lucy further back in the picture showing that she has not yet arrived? Might emphasise current waiting)

2. 4/7 native speakers use Present Perfect indicating that they perceive a result state here. (Consider adding to text. I.....(lose) my iPhone, *I am so upset.*)
3. 5/7 native speakers used a perfect construction indicating past to present relevance. 4/7 also used a continuous form. (Consider adding to text. I(look) for it all morning, and I still haven't found it." Emphasise continuity of the action?)
4. 5/7 Preferred Past Simple to Present Perfect. Consider adding reference to state of mind of Lucy? "I just don't know what to do, I(ask) the security guards, the caretaker, and all my friends, but nobody has seen it."
6. 6/7 native speakers used Present Perfect for past to present state. SC's answer would appear an anomaly.
7. 6/7 native speakers used Present Perfect for past to present state.
10. 5/7 native speakers used Present Perfect for experiential past.
11. 6/7 native speakers used Present Perfect for past to present possession (state).
15. 7/7 native speakers used Present Perfect for experiential past.
18. 6/7 native speakers used Present Perfect for resultative past.
20. Situation can be read as either past and finished (was) or past to present state with result (has been). 5/7 for past and 2/7 for past to present state.

Appendix 9

Table showing the Italian L1 group pilot results.

Item	MP	R	M	MS	GDG	Item	MP	R	M	MS	GDG
1	sto aspettando/ aspetto	aspetto	sto aspettando	aspetto	aspetto	11	l'avevo	avevo	l'avevo	l'avevo	l'avevo
2	ho perso	ho perso	ho perso	ho perso	ho perso	12	è costato	è costato	è costato	è costato	è costato
3	sto cercando	cerco	cerco	cerco	cerco	13	l'ho comprata	la comprai	l'ho comprata	l'ho comprato o	l'ho comprato
4	ho chiesto	ho chiesto	ho chiesto	ho chiesto	ho chiesto	14	è stato	era	è	è	è
	lui lavora	lavora	lavora	lavora	lavora	15	non l'ho mai visto	non l'avevo mai visto	non l'avevo	non l'avevo	non l'avevo
6	conosco	conosco	conosco	conosco	conosco	16	aveva	aveva	aveva	aveva	aveva
7	sono	sono	sono	sono	sono	17	ha fatto	fece	ha fatto	ha fatto	ha fatto
8	ero seduta	ero seduta	sono stata seduta	ero seduta	ero seduta	18	lo ha già trovato	l'ha già trovato	l'ha già trovato	l'ha già trovato	l'ha già trovato
9	vado	vado	vado	vado	vado	19	chiamo	chiamo	chiamo	chiamo	chiamo

10	è mai successo	è mai sUCCESSA	è mai successa	è mai successa	è mai successa	20	è sempre stato	è sempre stato	è stato sempre	è sempre stato	è sempre stato
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Appendix 10.

Table showing the results of pilot Italian L1 group working in English L2.

Item	MP	AM	Item	MP	AM
1	I've been waiting	I wait	11	only had	only have
2	lost	lost	12	costed	costed
3	I've been looking	I have looked	13	bought	bought
4	asked	asked	14	was	was
5	works	works	15	have not seen	didn't see
6	I've known	I know	16	had	had
7	I've been	I've been	17	crashed	crashed
8	sat	Sat	18	has found	Found
9	go	go	19	call	call
10	happened	happened	20	was	was

Appendix 11.

Figure 1 shows the temporal perspective task as presented to participants at the start of the test. The experimenter explained the following:

This is Mark, he lives on this road, over the last few years there have been a few changes. A new block of flats has been built, for example. Show the passing of time by moving either Ben or the background.

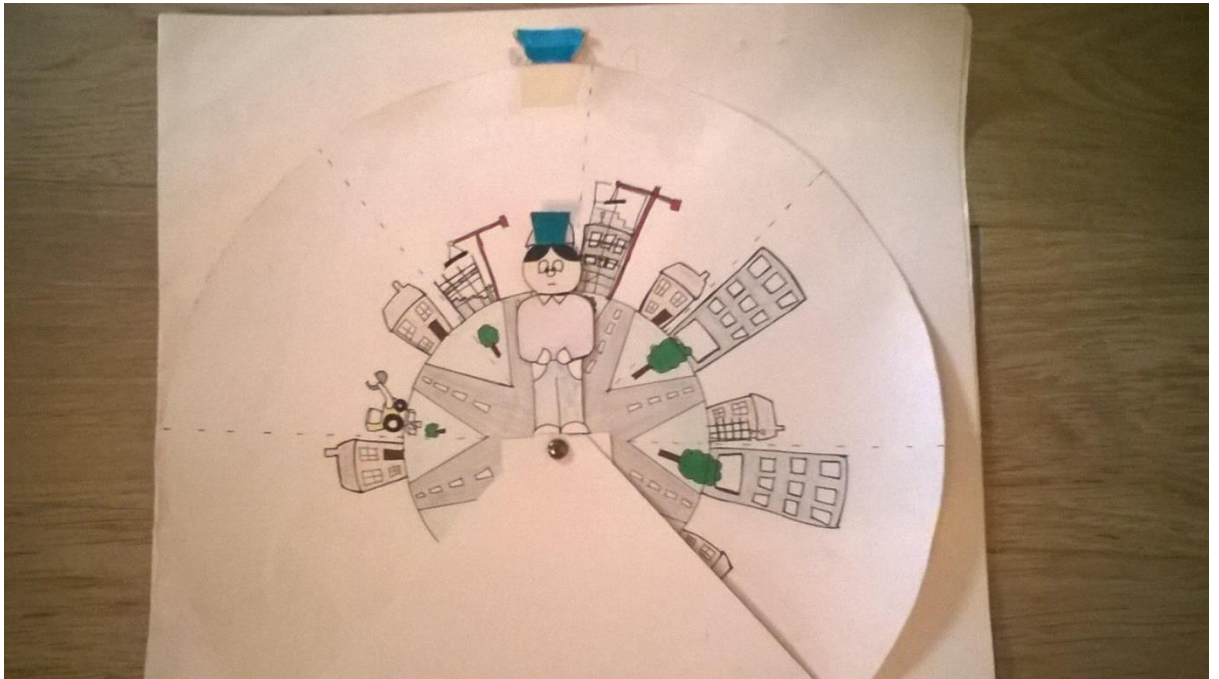


Figure 1. Temporal Perspective Task

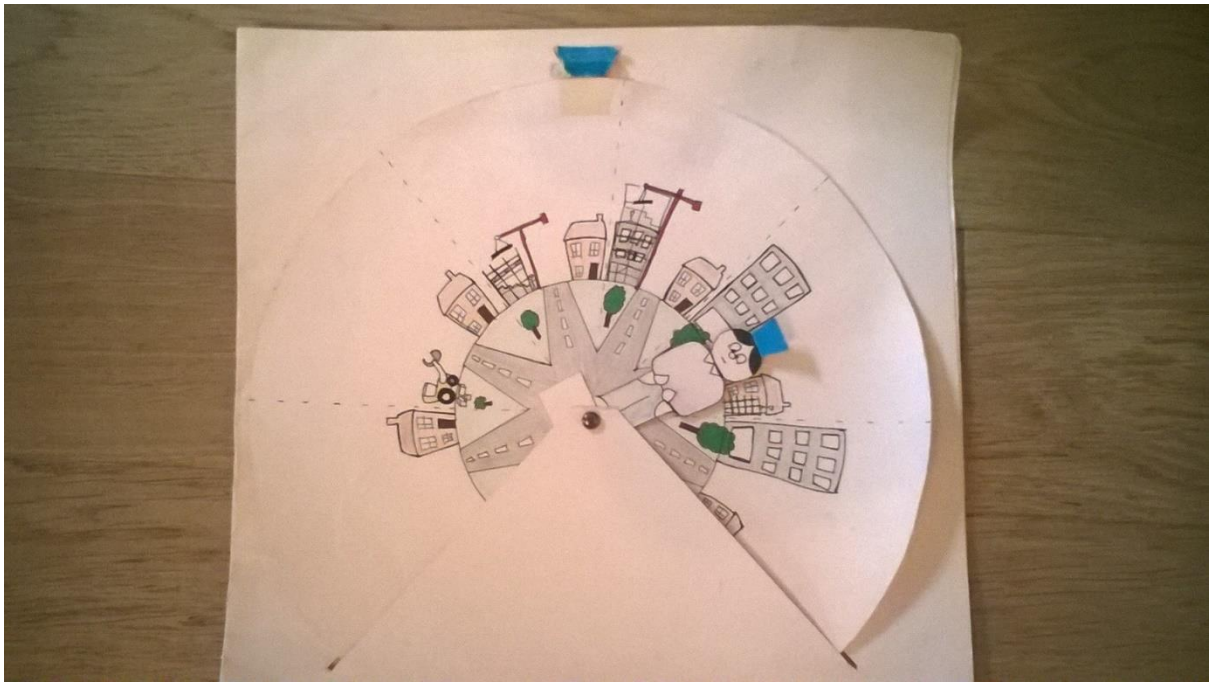


Figure 2. The temporal perspective task with movement of the figure.

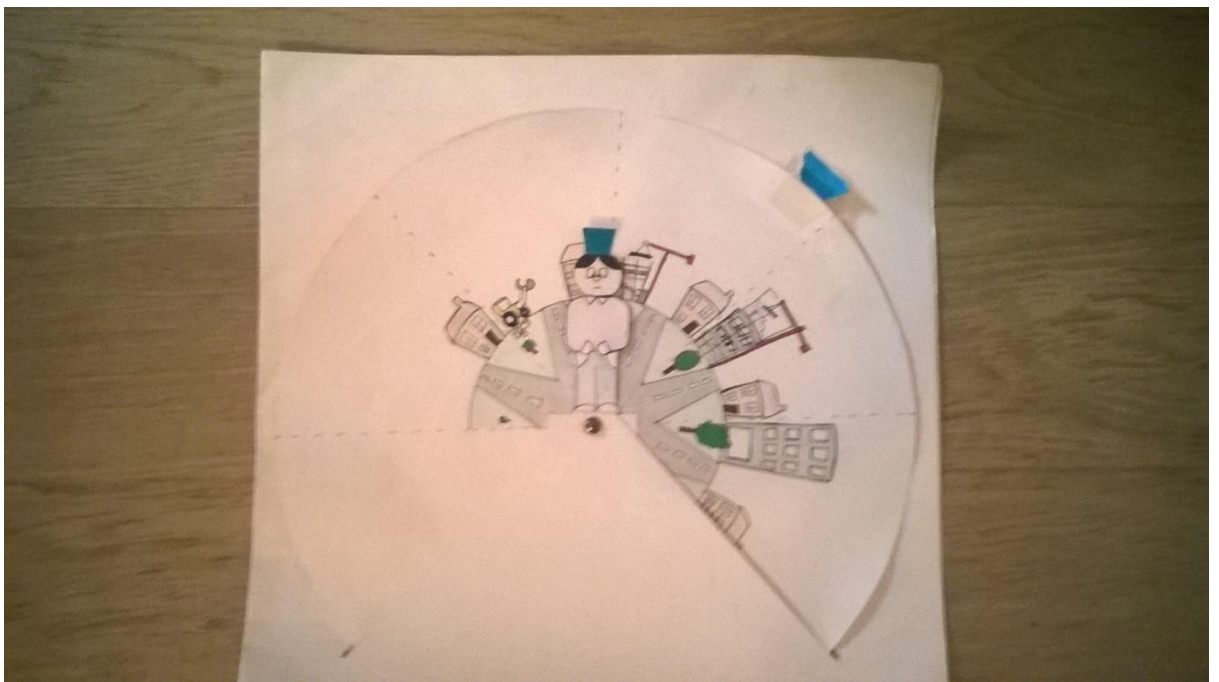


Figure 3. The temporal perspective task with movement of the background.

Appendix 12.

Think Aloud Coding Categories

Reads text aloud. “I ask the security guards... and all my friends, but nobody has seen it.”

Inserts bare form of the verb (when there is not conjugation of the verb or any tense marker, and as an initial verbalisation). “I *ask* the security guards... and all my friends, but nobody has seen it.”

Translates text into L1. “I *ask* the security guards, Ho chiesto alla sicurezza ai guardiani.”

Verbalises choice of L1 structure. “Ho chiesto a tutti, err ho chiesto a tutti”

Verbalises choice of structure in L1 and translates to L2. “Ho chiesto alla sicurezza ai guardiani alla security erm quindi *I asked*”

Verbalises choice of structure in L2 in full sentence. “Allora qui penso *I have waited* for ages.”

Verbalises choice of structure in L2: I have wait.

Verbalises tense choice: “Sto usando il Present Continuous/ I am using the Present Continuous.”

Gives a temporal reference. “Parla sempre del passato/ He is still speaking about the past.”

Refers to a past/present tense. “Quindi era un passato c’è diciamo *happened* era al passato che secondo me era da mettere/ So it was a past, that is, we say *happened* it was in the past, in my opinion that was what to put.

Refers to aspectual properties of the action: “siccome è un tempo verbale ancora non concluso/ because it is an unfinished action”

Gives reason for tense choice based on present or past conditions/truths. “Sto usando il Present Continuous perché non è ancora arrivata/ I’m using the Present Continuous because she still hasn’t arrived.”

Uses L1 to prompt L2 form choice: “Non mi è mai successo prima....quindi *has happened*. It has never happened to me before....so *has happened*.”

Describes action in L1: “quindi sta aspettando da tanto tempo quindi penso che/ therefore she *wait* (PRESPROG) for a long time so I think that...”

Refers to lexical cues in text. “I have been here in the shade all morning credo perche` l’indicazione mi da *all morning*, ho speso tutta la mattina qui. Ok/I have been here in the shade all morning, I think because, all morning gives me a clue, I spend (PerfCOMP) all morning here. OK.”

Describes what is happening in the story. “Vanno nei luoghi dove era la ragazza per vedere se trovano il telefono/ They go to all the places that the girl has been in to see if they find the telephone.”

Shows he/she is thinking about the question : “Errrrmmmm.” “Qui penso/Here I think”

Shows comprehension: “OK”

Shows he/she doesn’t understand: “Non ho capito/I don’t understand.”

Asks for clarification: “Che significa/what does it mean?”

Describes own strategy: “Cerco di guardare tutto, la frase complete... poi faccio una breve traduzione quindi/ I try to look at everything, the whole sentence... then I do a brief translation”

Gives a grammatical explanation: “quindi siccome è un tempo verbale irregolare *I lost*./ so because it is an irregular past tense *I lost*.”

Shows doubt: “Non lo so/I don’t know”

Does not remember the form/structure: “Io non mi ricordo com’ è la forma/ I don’t remember the form.”

Appendix 13

Appendix 13 provides the full analysis of congruence for CD items between the Italian L1 experimental group working in English and the Italian L1 control group working in Italian. Results are shown numerically in figures below and full explanations are given for each CD item. For each item there are two figures, one showing the results for the experimental group and one showing the results of the Italian L1 control group. The graphs pertaining to the Italian L1 control groups are those which also appear in Chapter 5 and are numbered according to their appearance in chapter 5. The other graphs continue in the numerical order of the thesis.

Item 1 - Figures 16 and 39

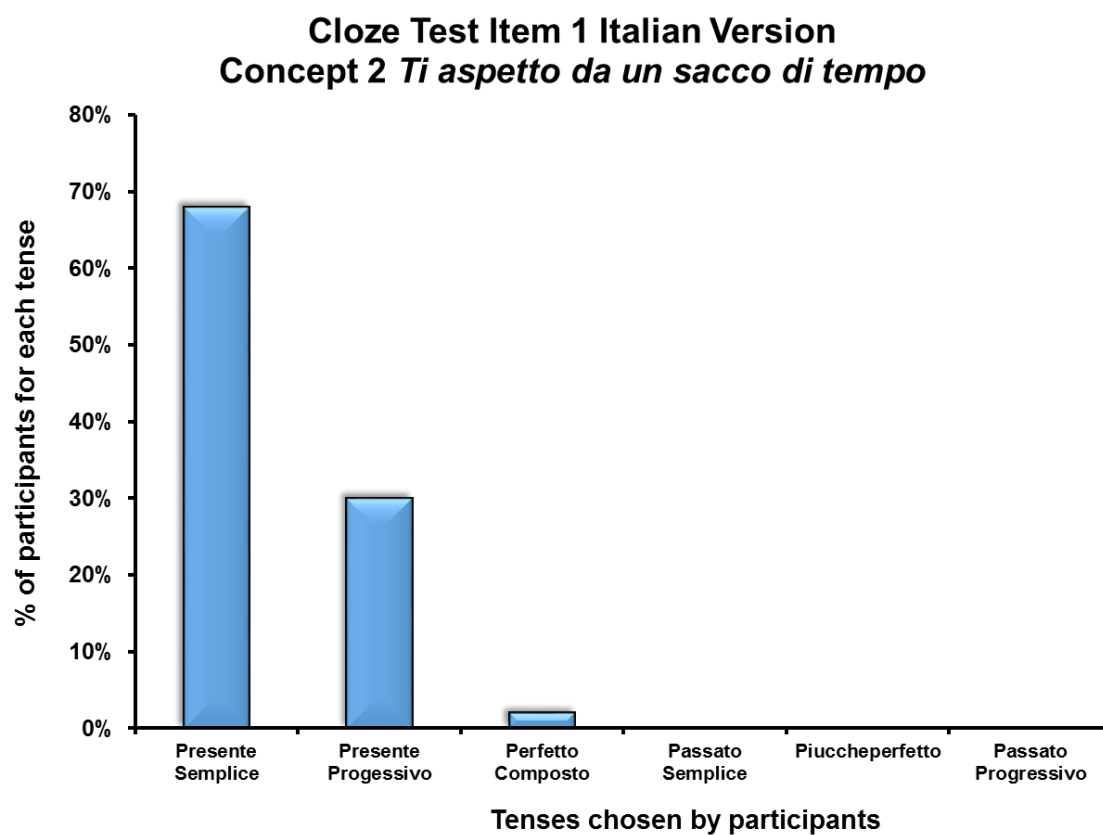


Figure 16. The responses given by the Italian L1 control group in Italian for Item 1.

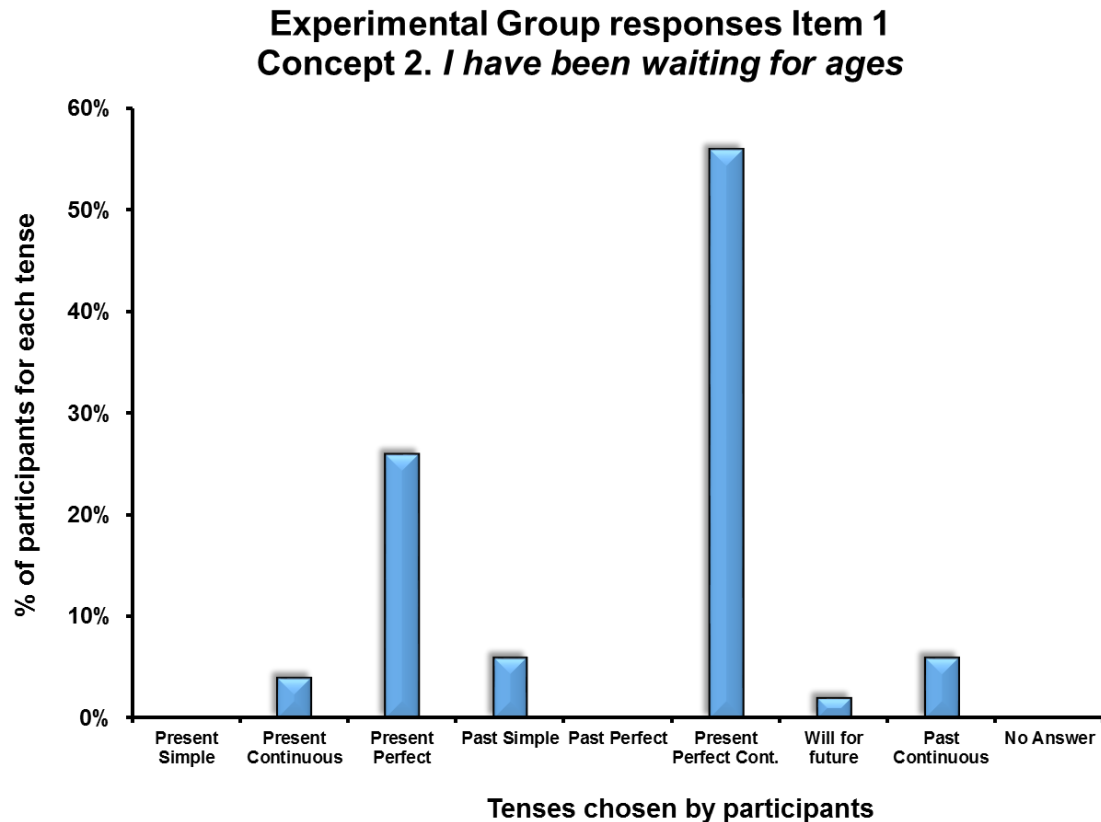


Figure 39. The experimental group responses to item 1.

Figure 16 shows the responses given by the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 1. The concept being tested is Concept 2: *temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present - I have been waiting for ages*. Responses given in Italian are as expected, the majority chose the Presente Semplice 68%, followed by the Presente Progressivo 30% and 2% the Perfetto Composto.

Figure 39 shows the responses given by the experimental group for the same concept in English. Hypothesis 4 predicts that the experimental group, working in English, will use the equivalent L2 form to the form used in L1; in this case either the Present Simple

of Present Continuous. This does not appear to be the case for this sample. Only 4% of the sample erred using the Present Continuous, otherwise results were principally split between the Present Perfect Continuous 56%, the Present Perfect 26%. Thus, the responses given by the two groups would not appear to be congruent for this item.

Item 2 - Figures 18 and 40.

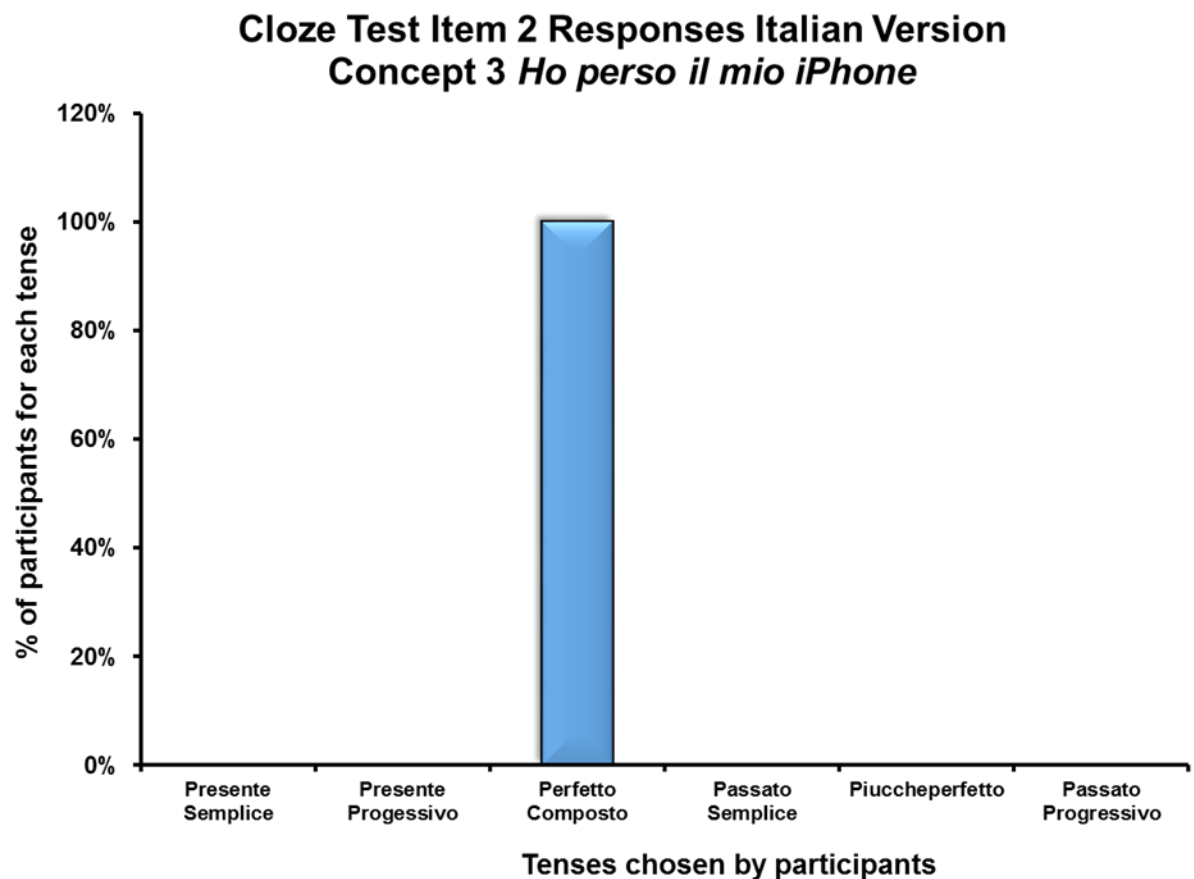


Figure 18. The responses of the Italian L1 control group in Italian for Item 2.

**Experimental groups responses item 2.
Concept 3: *I have lost my iPhone***

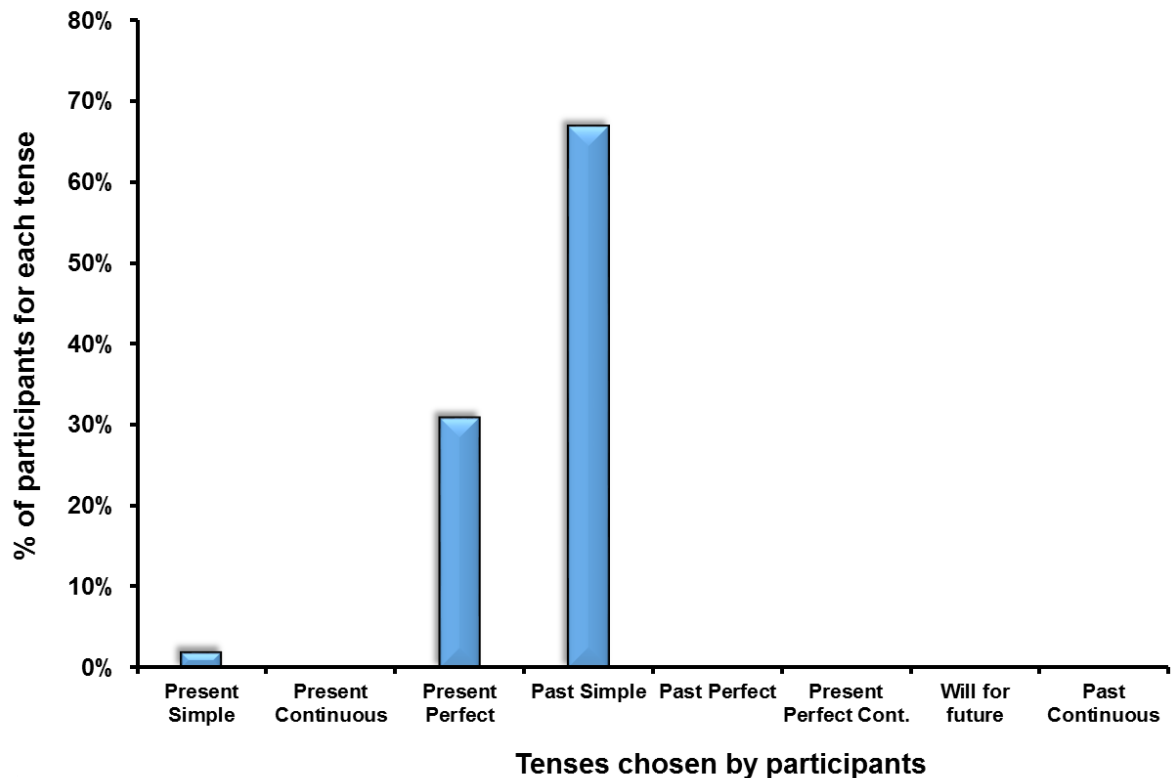


Figure 40. Figure shows the experimental groups responses to item 2.

Figure 18 shows the responses given by the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for item 2. The concept being tested in Concept 3: *Resultative Past - I have lost my iPhone*. This group responds as expected with 100% of the sample using the *Perfetto Composto*.

In contrast, figure 40 details the results for the experimental group for the same item working in English. Results are principally split between the Past Simple (67%) and the Present Perfect (31%). 2% used the Present Simple. Hypothesis 4 predicts the use of an equivalent structure in L2, to that used in L1. The issue here is deciding on an equivalent for the *Perfetto Composto* in English. The *Perfetto Composto* covers

functions which in English may be expressed using both the Past Simple and Present Perfect; however, if we consider the prevailing perfective nature of the Perfetto Composto, the Past Simple may be considered its closest equivalent in English. If this is the case, then we can see some congruity between L1 and L2 where the Past Simple is used here in 67% of responses. The correct English form would be the Present Perfect entailing a result state. Instead, the perfective reading given to situations usually covered by the Perfetto Composto in Italian and potentially transferred here resulting in the use of the English Past Simple is highlighted in the *think aloud* data in section 5.2.

Item 3 - Figures 20 and 41

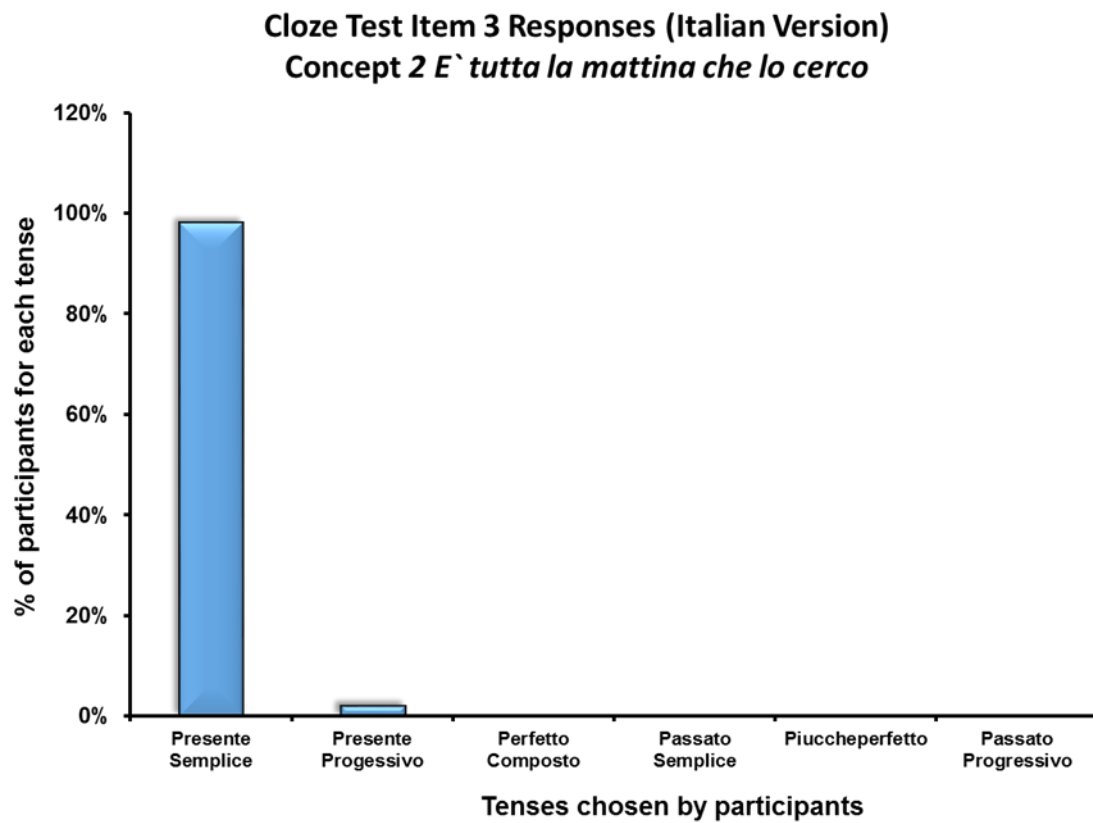


Figure 20. The results of the Italian L1 control group performing in Italian for Item 3.

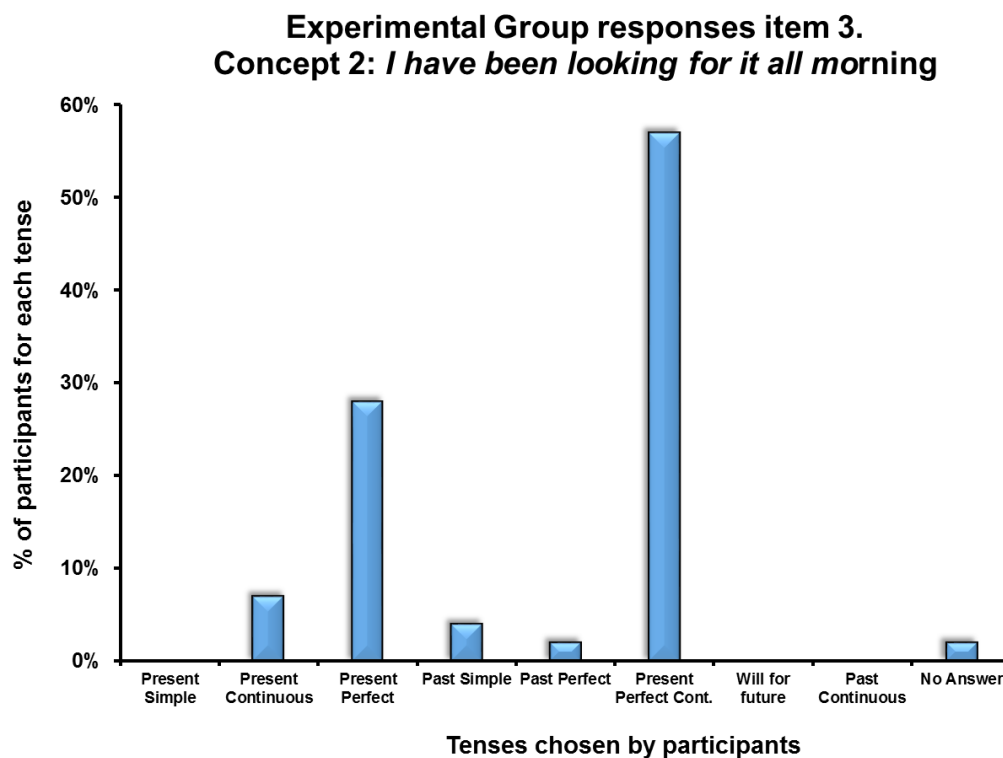


Figure 41. Figure shows experimental group responses for Item 3.

Figure 20 shows the responses for the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 3. Item 3 represents concept 2: *temporary activity up to the recent past with effects evident in the present – I have been looking for it all morning*. The groups responded as predicted with 98% using the Presente Semplice. 2% also chose the Presente Progressivo.

Figure 41 details the results of the experimental group, Italian L1 speakers working in English L2. Of this group 7 % erred using the Present Progressive in English L2 as predicted by the hypothesis. 57% chose the required form, the Present Perfect Progressive, and 28% the Present Perfect. Other errors included the use of the Past

Simple 4% and Past Perfect 2%. Therefore, it cannot be stated that responses in this case are congruent with L1 use of the Presente Semplice. On the contrary, the experimental group participants overwhelmingly chose constructions with perfect aspect (Present Perfect or Present Perfect Progressive) which hold as part of their meaning a past to present time frame which is qualitatively different to the imperfective aspect held by the Italian Presente Semplice (Chapter 3).

Item 4 - Figures 22 and 42

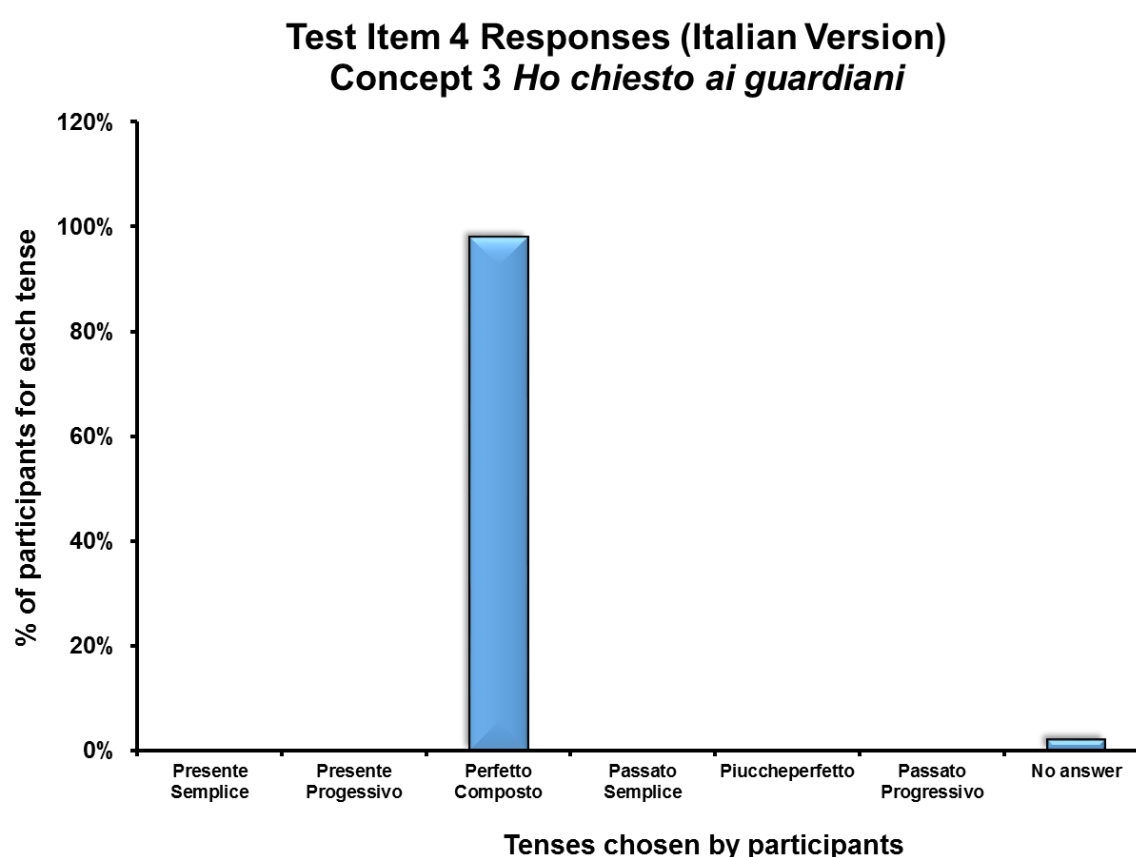


Figure 22. The responses given by the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 4.

**Experimental groups responses item 4.
Concept 3: *I have asked the security guards***

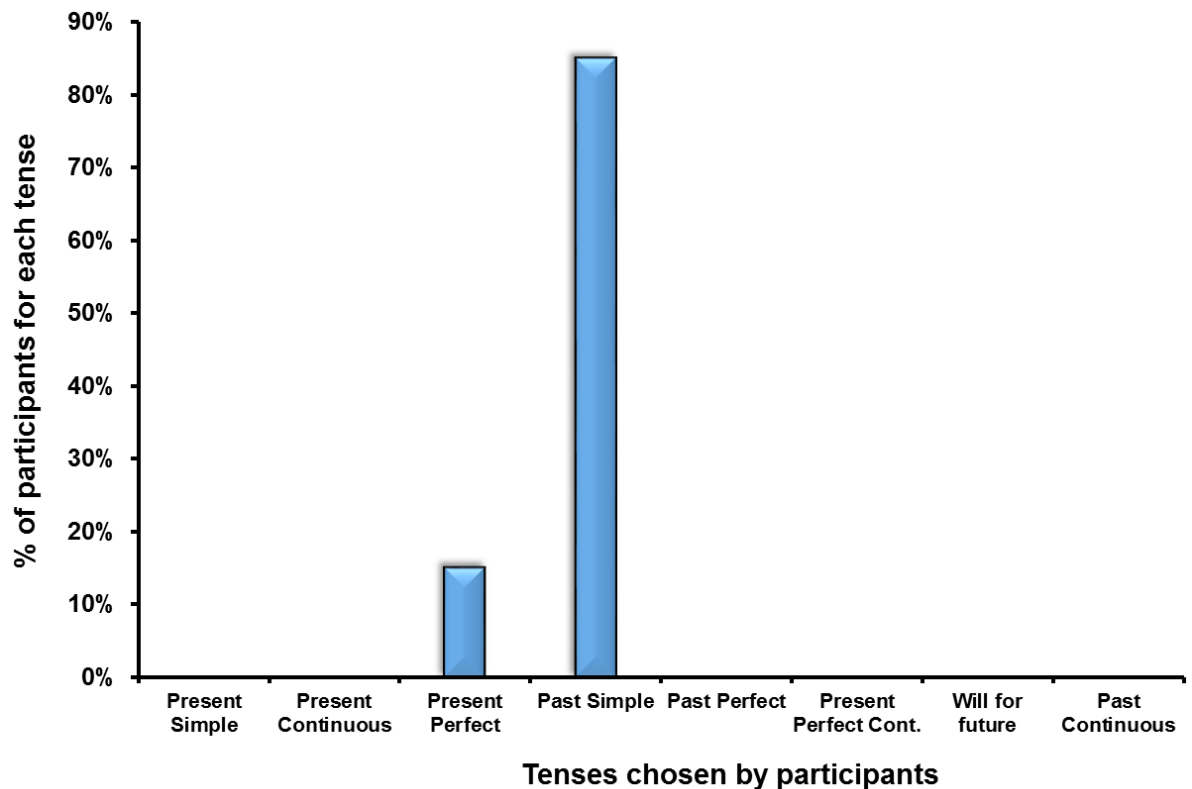


Figure 42. The experimental group responses for Item 4.

In Figure 22, the results for the Italian L1 control working in Italian for Item 4 are given. The concept represented in Item 4 is concept 3: *resultative past* – *I have asked the security guards*. The sample perform as expected, with 98% using the Perfetto Composto, 2% do not answer.

Figure 42 shows the results for the same item for the experimental groups of Italian L1 speakers performing in English. 85% use the Past Simple, and 15% the Present Perfect which is the required form in English. If we consider, as above, the perfective nature of the Italian Perfetto Composto, the English Past Simple may be considered

its nearest semantic equivalent in L2. In this case, the congruence between L1 and L2 is high with 85% of the experimental group using the English Past Simple.

Item 6 - Figures 24 and 43

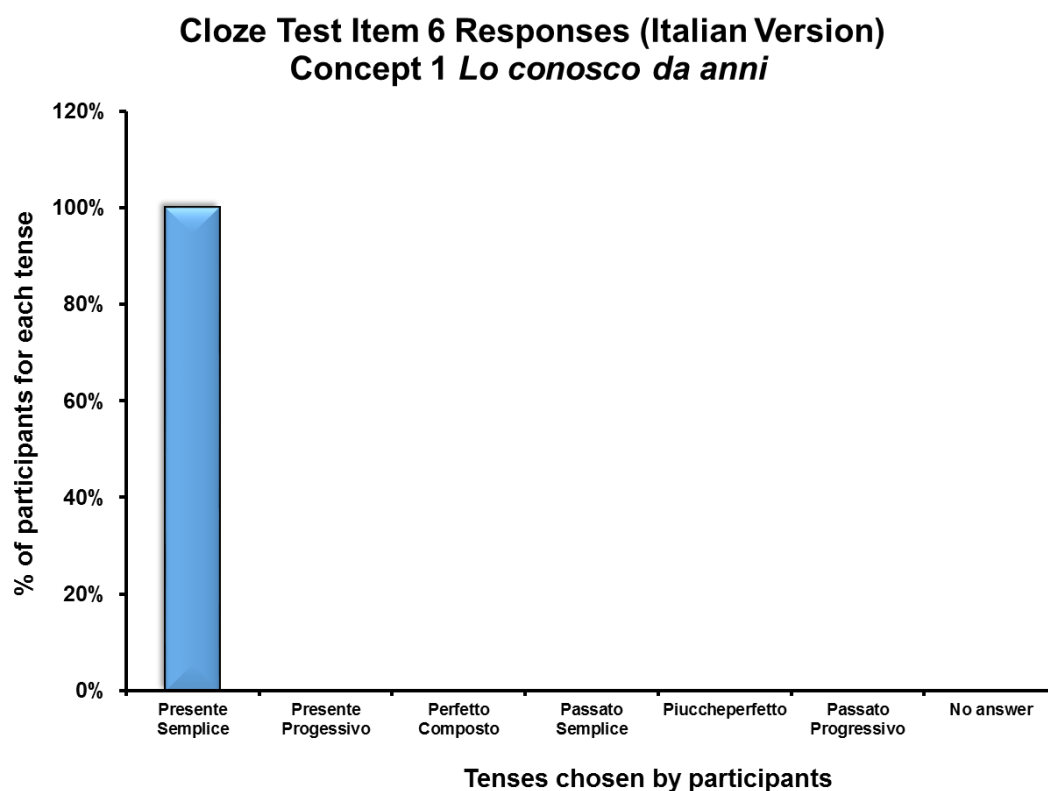


Figure 24. The responses given by the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 6.

Experimental Group responses Item 6.
Concept 1: *I have known him for years*

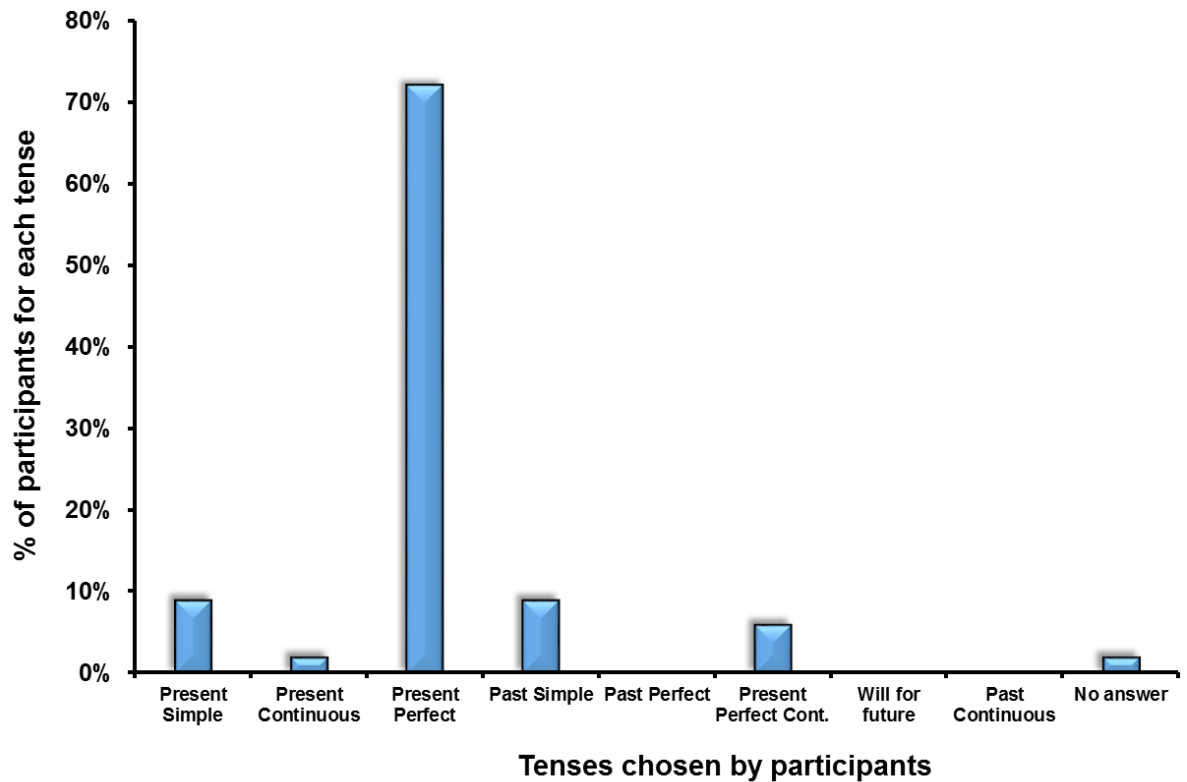


Figure 43. The experimental group's responses for Item 6.

Figure 24 shows the results for the Italian L1 control group working in L1 for Item 6. Item 6 represents Concept 1: *state up to the present – I have known him for years*. As is evident in Figure 6, all of the respondents chose the Presente Semplice for this function, as described in Chapter 3.

Figure 43, in contrast, represents the results for the experimental L1 Italian group working in English. While the majority (72%) give the required Present Perfect, the erroneous responses are split between the Present Simple (9%), Past Simple (9%), Present Perfect Continuous (6%) and the Present Continuous (2%). Thus, there does not appear to be much congruence between the two groups with regard to responses

for this item. 100% of the Italian L1 control group used the Presente Semplice, whereas only 9% of the experimental group used the Present Simple.

Item 7 - Figures 26 and 44

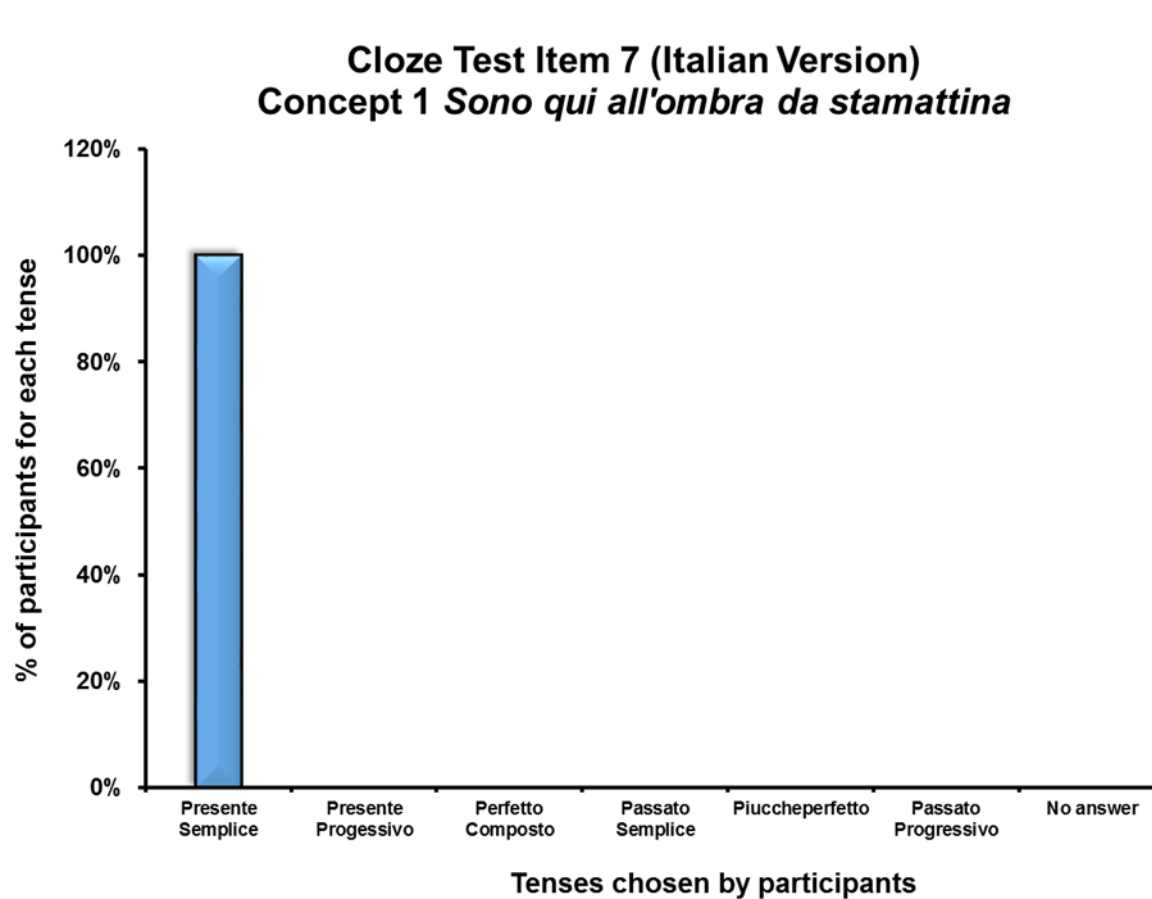


Figure 26. The results for the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 7.

Experimental group responses to Item 7.
Concept 1: *I have been here in the shade all morning*

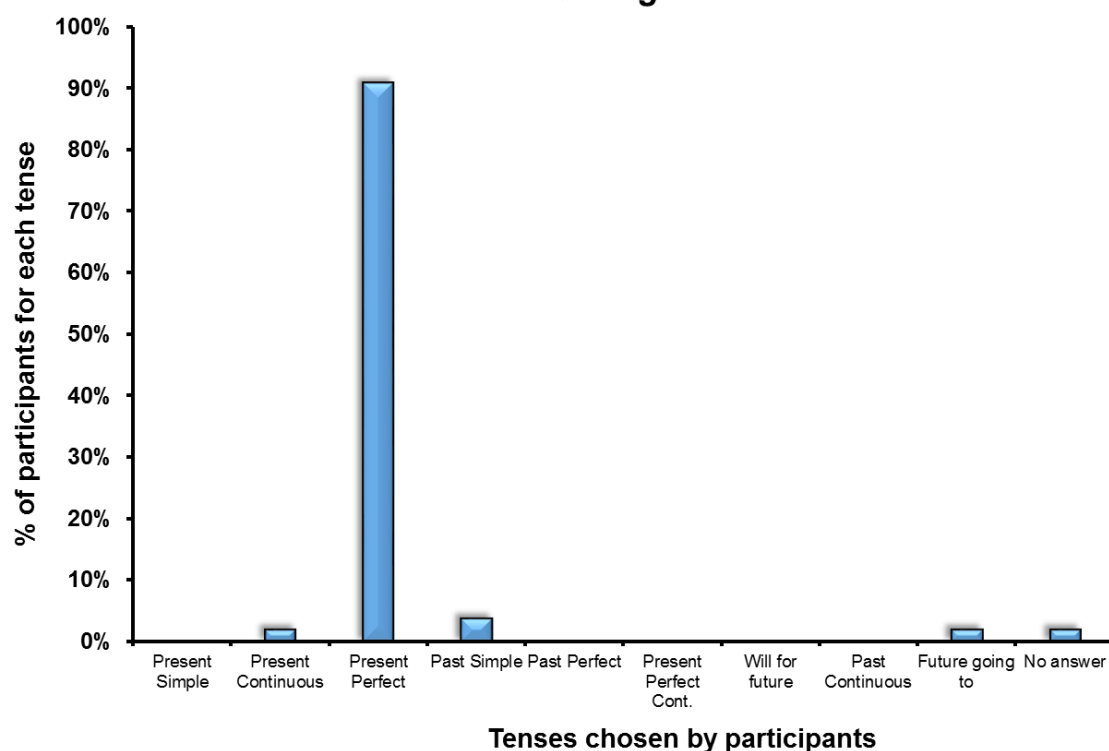


Figure 44. The experimental group's responses to Item 7.

The responses of the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 7 are given in Figure 26. This item represents concept 1: *state up to the present – I have been here in the shade all morning*. The entire sample are consistent in choosing the Presente Semplice for this concept.

Figure 44 shows the responses given by the experimental Italian L1 group working in English. 91% of the group use the required Present Perfect form. The Past Simple is used by 4% of the sample, the Present Continuous by 2% and the future with *going to* by a further 2%. This data does not reveal any real congruence between L1 and L2

usage for this item for these groups. The think *aloud data* in section 2 does however, reveal how L1 may impact upon L2 in this context.

Item 10 - Figures 28 and 45.

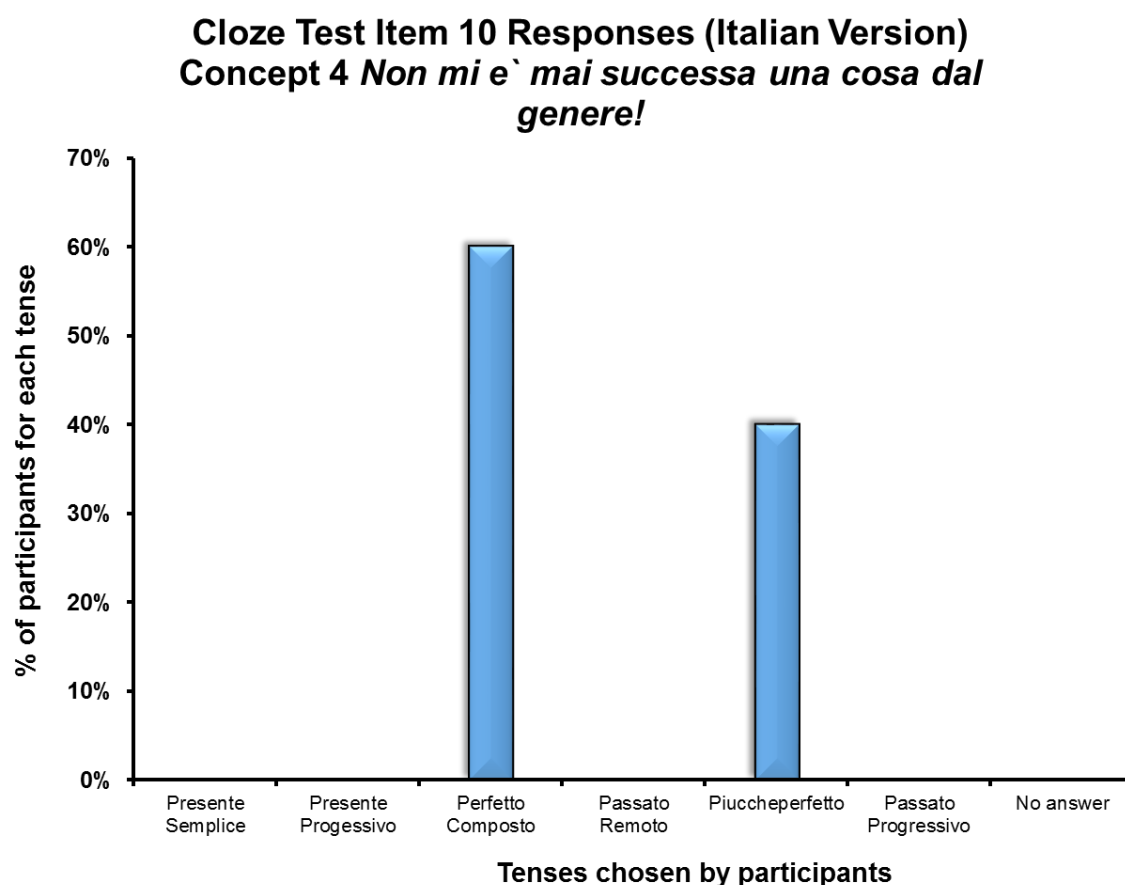


Figure 28. The responses for the Italian L1 control performing in Italian for Item 10.

Experimental Group responses to item 10
Concept 4: *Nothing like this has happened to me before*

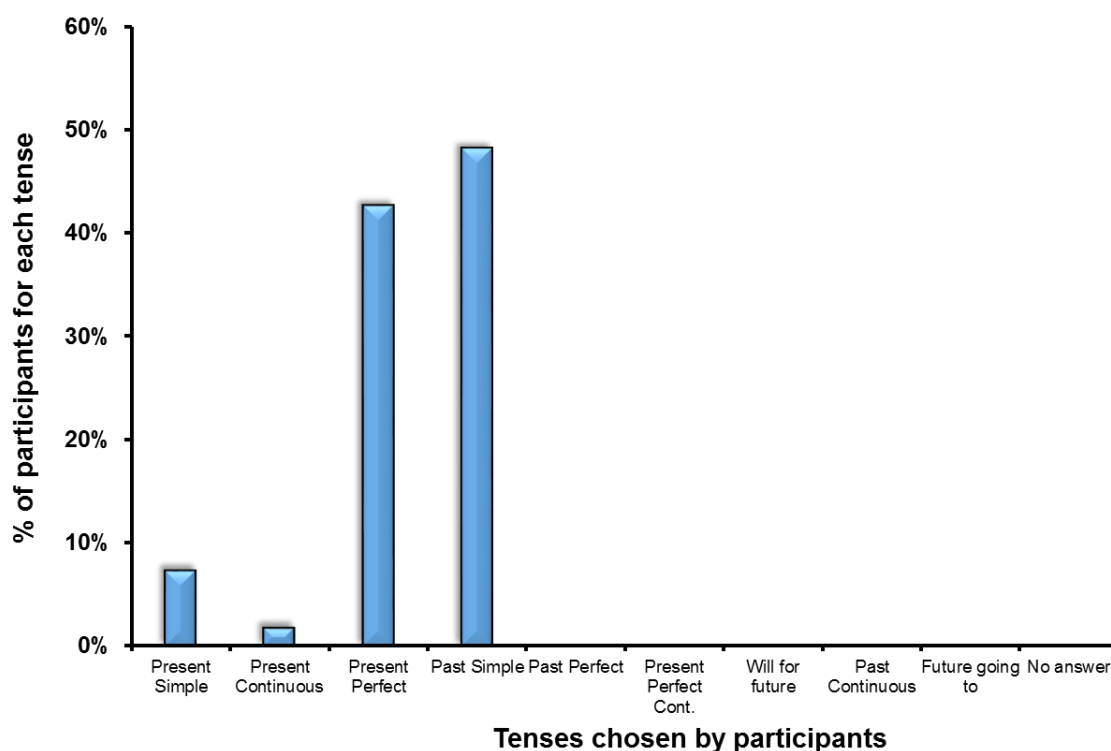


Figure 45. The experimental group responses to Item 10.

Figures 28 and 45 detail the results for the Italian L1 control group (Figure 28) and the experimental group (Figure 45) for item 10. The concept represented is number 4: *existential past- nothing like this has happened to me before*. The results for the Italian L1 control group are split between the Perfetto Composto (60%) and the Trapassato Prossimo (40%). The experimental group responses in contrast are principally split between the Present Perfect (42%) and Past Simple (48%). With regards to congruence between L1 and L2, slightly more respondents use the erroneous Past Simple than the Present Perfect, in line with the use of Perfetto Composto for a past and finished action

in L1 but not with its inclusive/result meaning. However, from this data, congruence between L1 and L2 would appear to be limited.

It is interesting, however, to consider the *think aloud* data here and the light that it sheds of the use of the Trapassato Prossimo by the Italian L1 control group for this concept. This is further explored in section 5.2.

Item 11 - Figures 30 and 46.

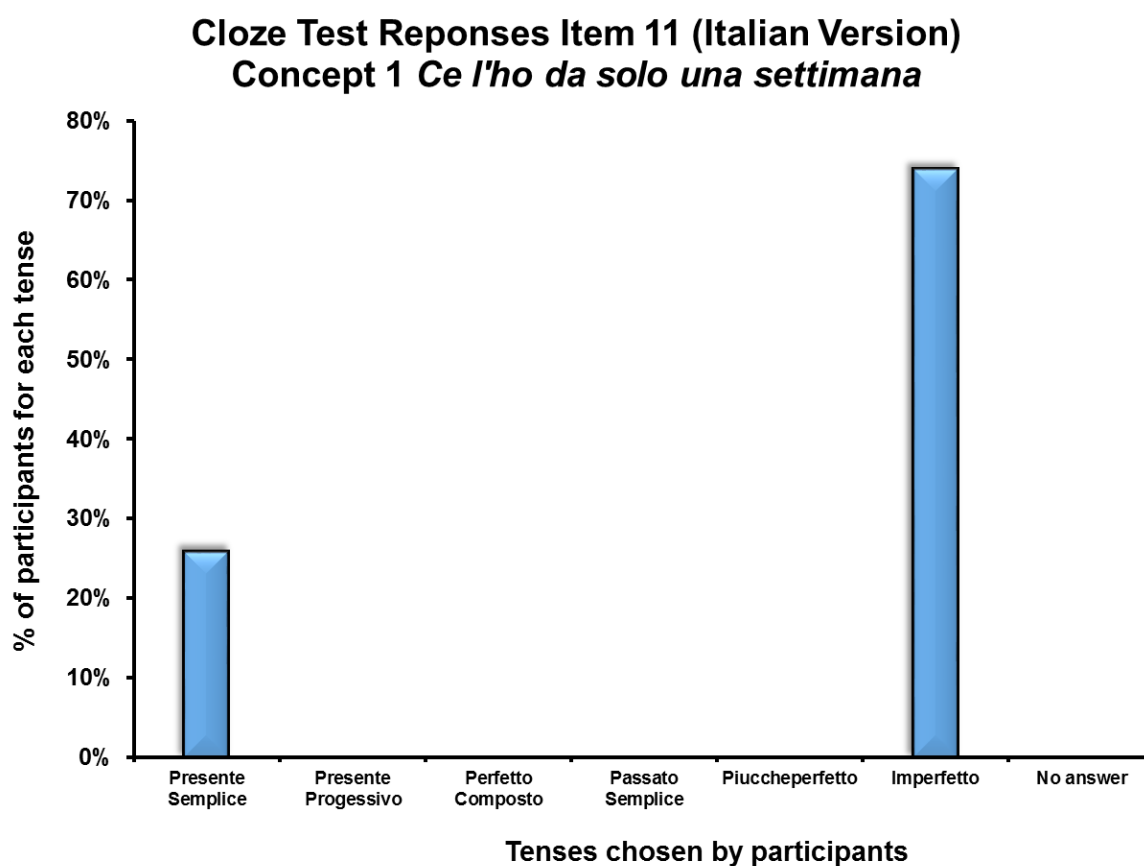


Figure 30. The results for the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 11.

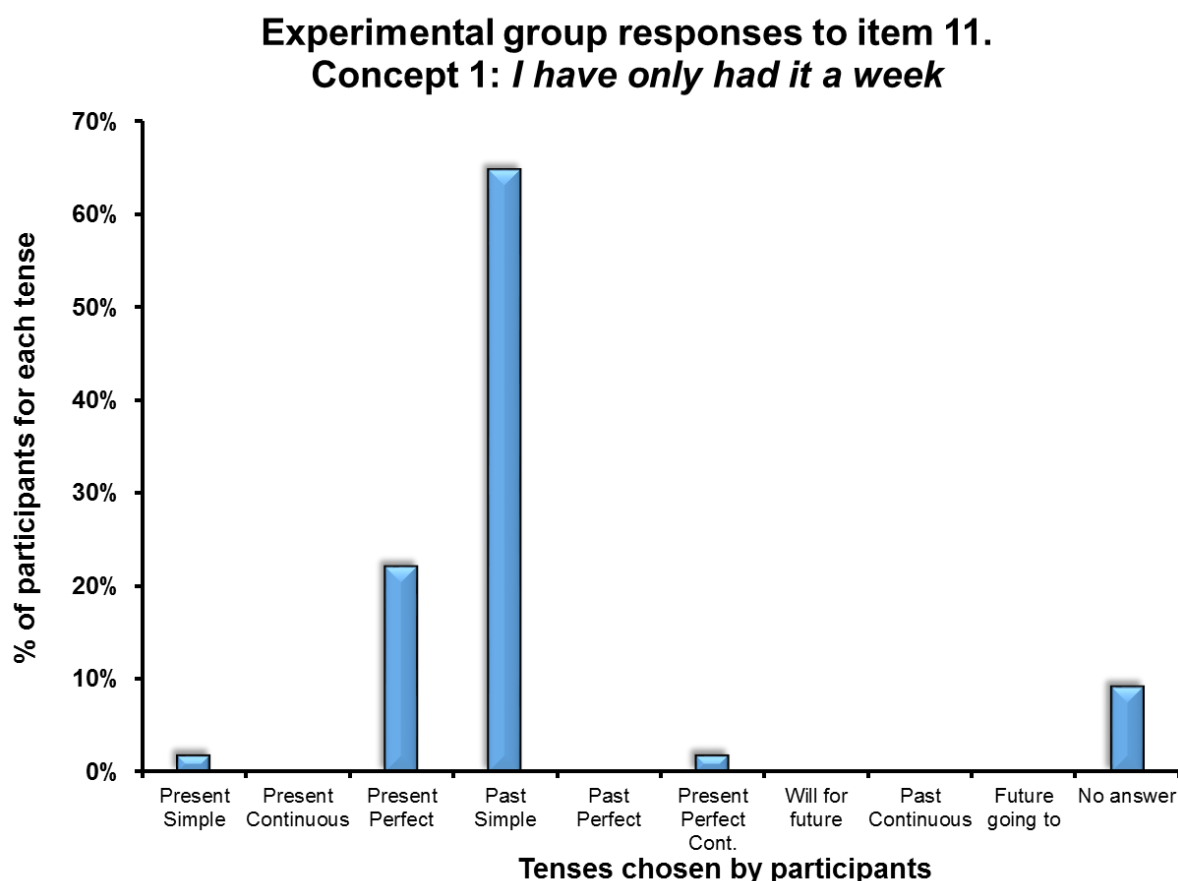


Figure 46. The experimental group responses to Item 11.

Figure 30 shows the results for the Italian L1 control group working in Italian for Item 11. The concept is concept 1: *state up to the present - I have only had it a week*. Responses are split between the Italian Presente Semplice (26%) and Imperfetto (74%). As discussed in section 2 this is a result of either a present or past orientation to the concept of *having the iPhone* when competing conceptualisations are available: the state may be read as either past and finished (Imperfetto) or ongoing in the present (Presente Semplice). Responses from the experimental group working in English are given in Figure 45. 64% of the group use the English Past Simple, where 22 % of the group use the Present Perfect. Considering that the English Past Simple is used to

denote a past and finished state, like the Imperfetto in Italian, we can claim some congruence here between responses in L1 and L2. 74% of the Italian L1 control group used the Imperfetto and 64% of the experimental group using the Past Simple.

Item 15 - Figures 32 and 47.

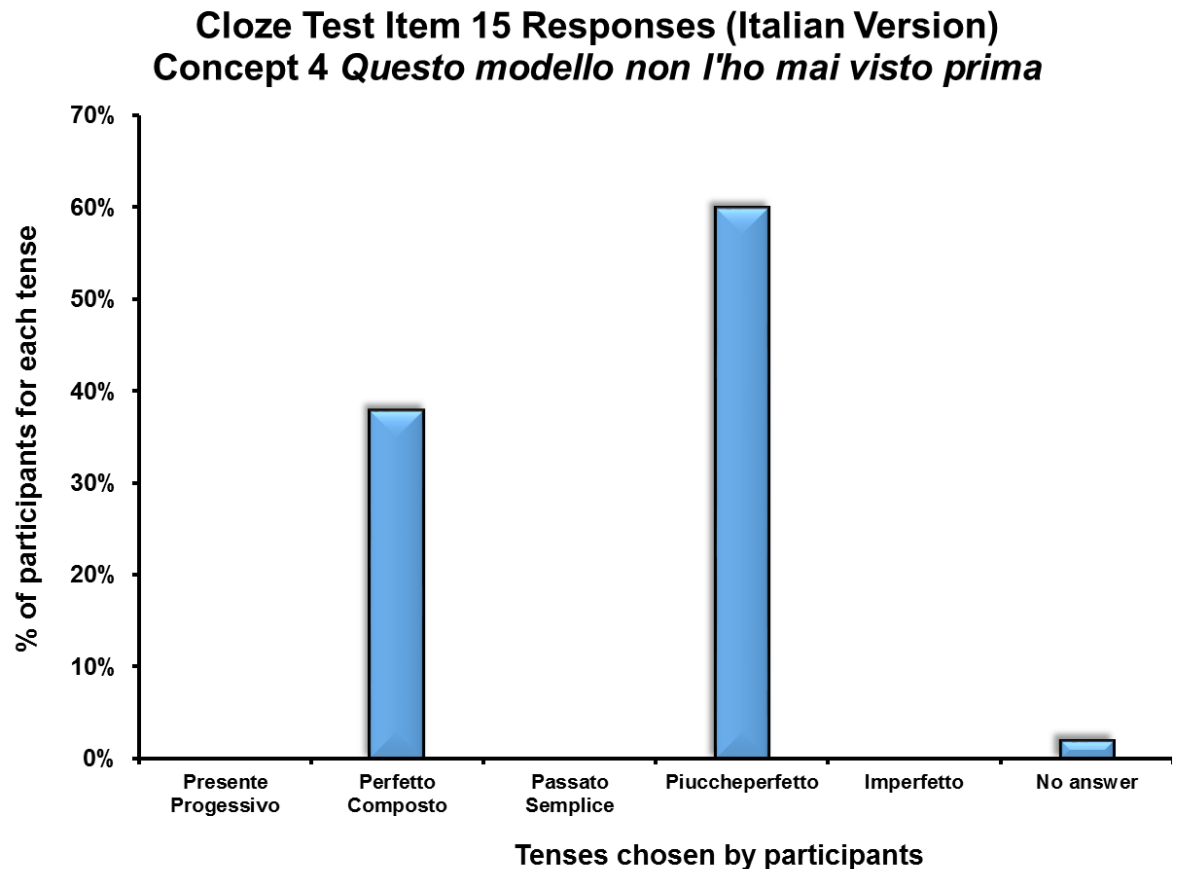


Figure 32. Figure details the responses given by the Italian L1 control working in Italian for Item 15.

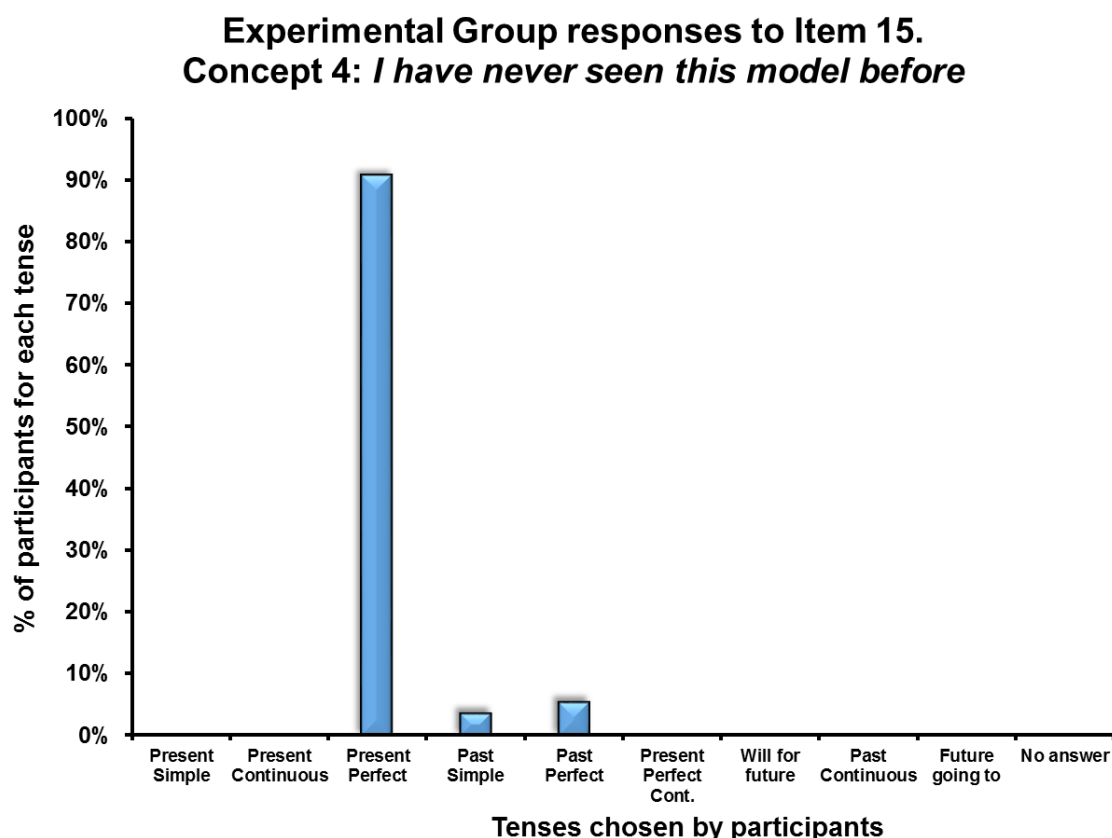


Figure 47. The experimental group's responses to Item 15.

Figure 32 shows the results for Item 15, concept 4: *existential past- I have never seen this model before*, for the Italian L1 control group working in Italian L1. The results are principally split between the Perfetto Composto (38%) and the Trapassato Prossimo (60%). Figure 46 details the experimental group's responses for the same item in English. A large percentage (90%) gave the required Present Perfect form, the remaining responses are split between the Past Perfect (6%) and Past Simple (4%). Thus, there does not seem to be any significant congruence between the responses of the two groups for this item.

Item 18 - Figures 35 and 48.

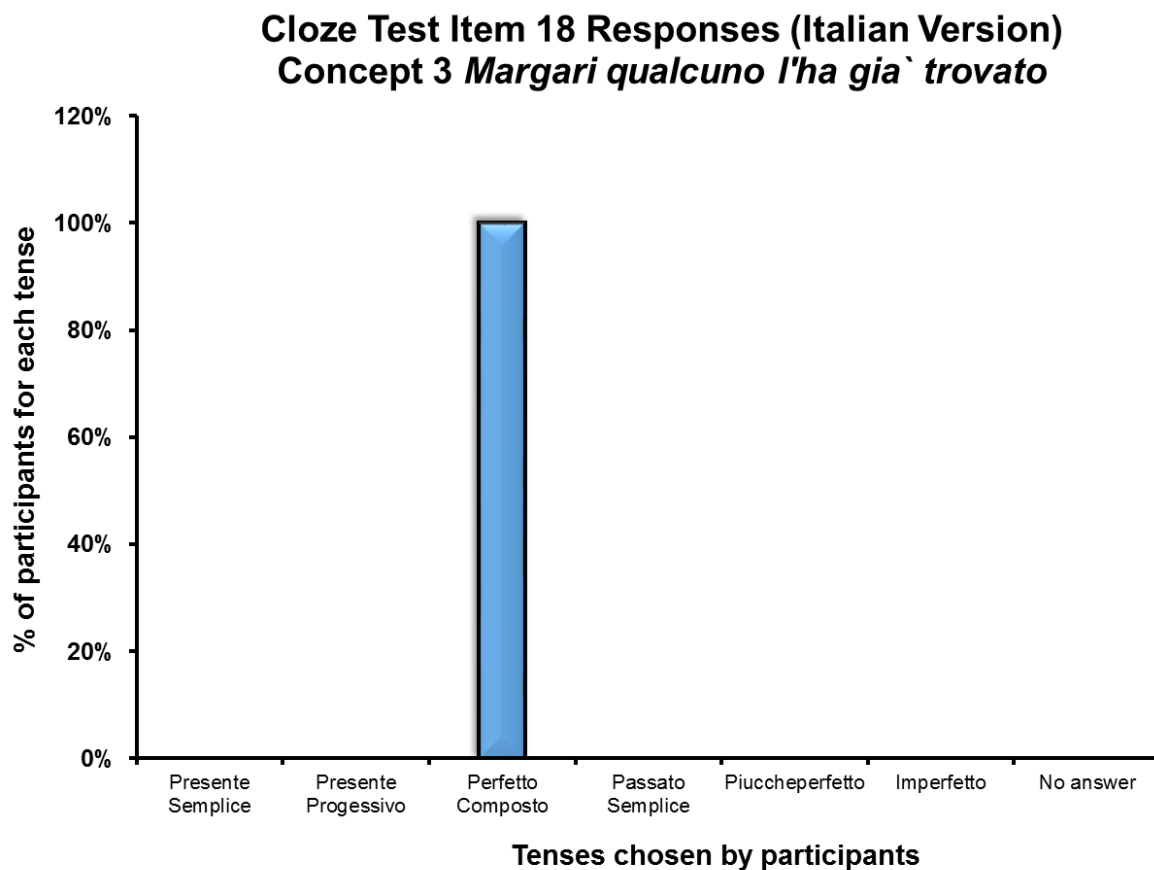


Figure 35 The results for the Italian L1 control group for Item 18.

Experimental group responses to item 18.
Concept 3: *Maybe someone has already found it*

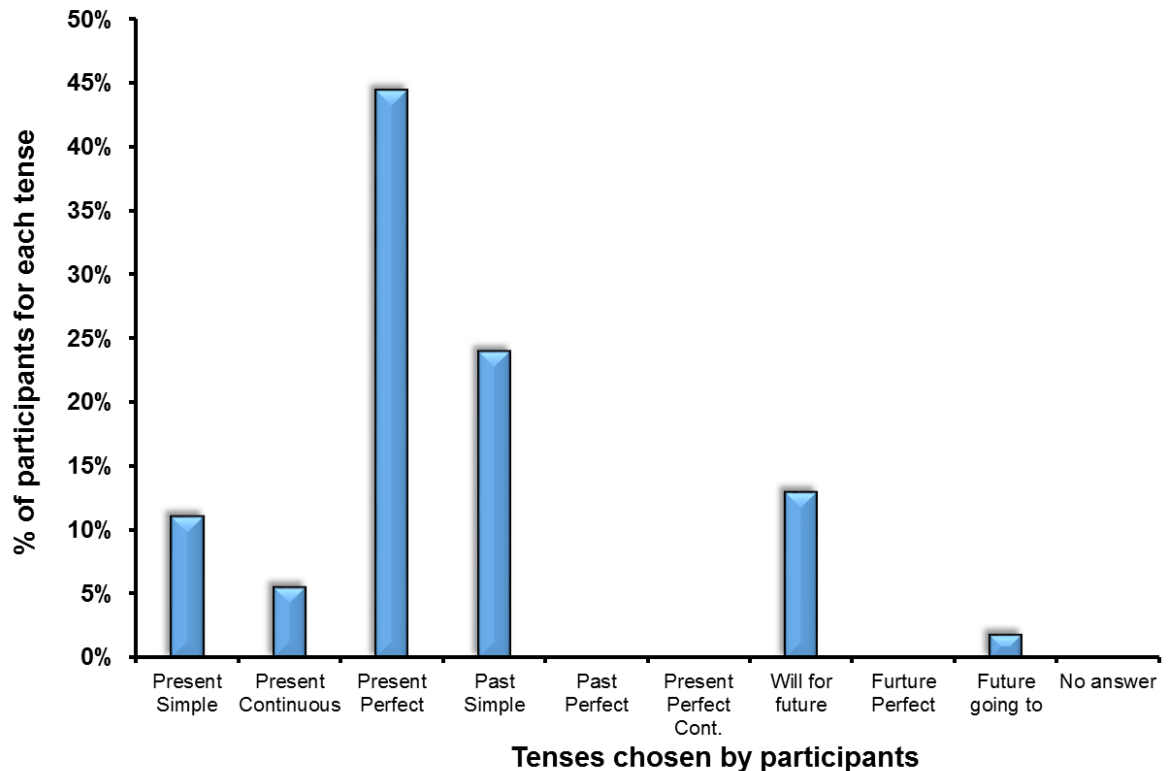


Figure 48. The experimental group's responses for Item 18.

The results for the Italian L1 control group and the experimental group for the final item, number 18, are given in figures 35 (Italian L1 control) and 47 (Experimental group). Item 18 represents concept 3: *resultative past: maybe someone has already found it*. 100% of the Italian L1 control group use the *Perfetto Composto*, as predicted. The picture for the experimental group for this item is somewhat mixed. 44% use the Present Perfect, 24% the Past Simple, 11% the Present Simple, 5% the Present Continuous, 13% *will* for future and 2% *going to* for future.

Thus, congruence between L1 and L2 represented by an increased number of respondents in the experimental group using the Past Simple in L2 is not evident from this data.

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Appendix 14

Tables 1 and 2 show the raw data (error rates) collected on the cloze tests, for groups 1 and 4.

Table 3 shows the average length of verbalisation for each item on the cloze test.

Table 1. The errors made by each participant in Group 1 on CD, NCD, CDT, CDT items and total number of errors made on the cloze test.

Participant	CD errors	NCD errors	Error Total	CDT errors	CDR errors
1	9	8	17	5	4
2	4	8	12	2	2
3	8	6	14	4	4
4	6	6	12	4	2
5	7	10	17	5	2
6	5	6	11	2	3
7	4	6	10	3	1
8	1	5	5	1	0
9	4	9	13	3	1
10	3	5	8	2	1
11	1	5	6	0	1
12	6	9	15	3	3
13	4	8	12	2	2
14	6	7	13	4	2
15	3	5	8	2	1
16	8	6	14	4	4
17	7	6	13	4	3
18	8	8	16	4	4
19	5	8	13	3	2
20	4	6	10	3	1
21	3	8	11	1	2
22	2	7	9	1	1
23	5	5	10	3	2
24	6	7	13	4	2
25	7	7	14	5	2
26	6	8	14	3	3
27	2	7	9	1	1
28	6	8	14	4	2
29	6	9	15	3	3
30	6	7	13	4	2
31	3	6	9	2	1

32	5	7	12	4	1
33	4	7	11	1	3
34	5	9	14	4	1
35	5	9	14	4	1
36	4	7	11	2	2
37	7	7	14	4	3
38	3	8	11	3	0
39	8	7	15	4	4
40	7	7	14	4	3
41	5	9	14	4	1
42	4	5	9	3	1
43	7	7	14	4	3
44	5	7	12	3	2
45	7	9	16	3	4
46	7	9	16	3	4
47	5	9	14	3	2
48	7	8	15	4	3
49	7	10	17	4	3
50	10	10	20	5	5
51	7	7	14	4	3
52	3	8	11	2	1
53	4	7	11	1	3
54	7	9	16	3	4

Table 2.

The errors made by each participant in Group 4 on CD, NCD, CDT, CDT items and total number of errors made on the cloze test.

Participant	CD errors	NCD errors	Error Total	CDT errors	CDR errors
1	5	8	13	4	1
2	0	5	5	0	0
3	4	9	13	3	2
4	6	5	11	4	2
5	4	9	13	3	1
6	0	4	4	0	0
7	7	8	15	4	3
8	6	8	14	4	2
9	5	8	13	3	2
10	2	7	9	0	2
11	6	9	15	4	2
12	5	9	14	4	1
13	4	9	13	4	0
14	8	4	12	5	3
15	4	7	11	3	1
16	8	8	16	4	4
17	6	9	15	5	1
18	3	8	11	2	1
19	6	8	14	4	2
20	5	9	14	4	1
21	8	8	16	4	4
22	8	8	16	5	3
23	4	8	12	3	1
24	5	9	14	4	1
25	7	9	16	5	2
26	5	10	15	4	1
27	7	9	16	4	3
28	5	8	13	4	1
29	7	9	16	4	3
30	4	10	14	3	1
31	9	10	19	5	4
32	5	9	14	4	1
33	9	8	17	5	4
34	7	7	14	4	3
35	10	8	18	5	5
36	6	8	14	5	1

37	9	7	16	5	4
38	7	7	14	4	3
39	8	10	18	5	3
40	3	10	13	3	0

Table 3.

The average length of verbalisations in seconds on conceptual difference (CD) and non-conceptual difference (NCD) for the participants on the *think aloud* reports.

CD items	Average length of verbalisation (seconds)	NCD items	Average length of verbalisation (seconds)
Item 1	29	5	6
Item 2	12	8	15
Item 3	29	9	13
Item 4	15	12	5
Item 6	14	13	5
Item 7	19	14	11
Item 10	9	16	9
Item 11	29	17	9
Item 15	18	19	7
Item 18	14	20	9

Appendix 15.

A group of 27 native speakers of English completed an online version of the test post-hoc. This online version is available at:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/create/survey/preview?r=true&sm=i2jpHSmAvQH eTnE_2B5gBZTYFxAPvcsnjMIUGi0B7IKkbdULkmvM9OpCPOOdvbecnQ

They were asked to choose which of four forms they considered most appropriate in questions 1 – 5 of the test. The results are given in table 1 below.

Table 1. The number of responses per construction chosen per question for items 1 – 5 on the cloze test.

Column1	Column2
Question 1	Number of responses
I have waited for ages.	1
I waited for ages.	1
I have been waiting for ages.	24
I had waited for ages.	0
No answer	1
Total	27
Question 2	
I lost my iphone.	8
I have lost my iphone.	17
I lose my iphone.	0
I will lose my iphone.	0
No answer	2
Total	27
Question 3	
I looked for it all morning.	2
I have looked for it all morning.	1
I have been looking for it all morning.	22
I had looked for it all morning.	0
No answer	2
Total	27
Question 4	
I asked the security guards.	12
I have asked the security guards.	13
I have been asking the security guards.	0
I had asked the security guards.	0
No answer	2
Total	27
Question 5	
He is working for security.	1

He works for security.	23
He has worked for security.	1
He worked for security.	0
No answer	2
Total	27