

**THE LEXICO-GRAMMATICAL COMPLEXIFICATION LEVEL OF THE
INTERLANGUAGE OF BRAZILIAN INTERMEDIATE EFL STUDENTS: AN
EXPLORATORY STUDY USING SYSTEMIC-FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR**

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RESUMO

Este trabalho é o segundo de uma série de três estudos-piloto transversais desenvolvidos com o objetivo geral de verificar – para os níveis principiante, intermediário e avançado de aprendizagem de inglês como língua estrangeira – a adequação do uso da Gramática Sistemico-Funcional (GSF), proposta por Halliday (1994), como modelo de categorização de dados, destinada a evidenciar o nível de complexificação léxico-gramatical de interlíngua. O objetivo pontual do presente estudo, portanto, é investigar o nível de ocorrência da estratégia de complexificação léxico-gramatical na interlíngua português-inglês de aprendizes intermediários. Cinco rapazes e cinco moças foram os sujeitos que produziram, de improviso, narrativas orais e escritas sobre uma experiência pessoal marcante. Com base na GSF, as narrativas foram segmentadas em orações hierarquizadas e sub-hierarquizadas, as quais, por sua vez, foram analisadas quanto aos papéis funcionais que realizam os sistemas de transitividade e modo. Os resultados indicam que (1) as narrativas orais e escritas, tanto separada como conjuntamente, apresentam níveis de ocorrência da estratégia de complexificação léxico-gramatical precariamente moderados, pois são fronteiriços com relação aos níveis elevados de ocorrência; (2) as narrativas escritas, relativamente às orais, apresentam um nível de ocorrência da estratégia de complexificação léxico-gramatical somente um pouco mais elevado, da ordem de 1,39%. Foi arbitrado, como critério de nível de ocorrência moderado da estratégia de complexificação léxico-gramatical, que o número (expresso em índice de frequência simples transformado em percentagem) de orações hierarquizadas completas (presença simultânea de todos os papéis funcionais de transitividade e modo), nas narrativas, situe-se no intervalo de 50% (exclusive) a 80% (inclusive) do total de orações hierarquizadas.

INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on research designed to investigate the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the interlanguage (IL) of intermediate English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) learners. The IL samples consist of spoken and written narratives, and the EFL learners have been chosen among those Brazilians enrolled in the *Inglês 6* stage of the *UFSC Extracurricular Program*.

The objectives of the study are: 1) to identify the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the subjects' spoken and written narratives; 2) to find out how much higher the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy is in the subjects' written narratives as compared to their spoken ones.

Derived from the objectives, the following questions are proposed: 1) What is the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the subjects' spoken and written narratives, considered both separately and together?; 2) Taking into account the assumption that the writer has more time than the speaker to elaborate on his/her presentation, how much higher is the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the subjects' written narratives as compared to their spoken ones?

The answers to these questions will help in the attainment of a superordinate objective that is to carry out an evaluation of the adequateness of Systemic-Functional Grammar (SFG) as a data categorization framework in investigations aimed at studying the simplification-towards-complexification process of the Portuguese-English IL rendered by Brazilian students. The suitability of SFG for this type of investigation had never been examined until I proposed answering the same questions as regards Brazilian advanced EFL learners in a previous cross-sectional pilot-study (Study 1, hereafter), where this broader objective was first set. In fact, the present study is the second in a series of three cross-sectional pilot-studies: the third (this volume) deals with Brazilian beginning EFL learners. The ultimate purpose of the three studies is to inform, methodologically, a bigger project of mine, which is to investigate the IL simplification-complexification continuum longitudinally.

Since the broader objective is methodology-oriented, issues such as IL variability, L1 transfer, other strategies like avoidance, borrowing, paraphrase, circumlocution are outside the scope of this study.

1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IL CONCEPT

Even though the term interlanguage (IL) was first coined by Selinker¹ (1974/1972)², the concept was developed almost simultaneously, yet independently, by Selinker himself, Corder (1974/1971)³, and Nemser (1974/1971)⁴. The latter two researchers made use of the terms idiosyncratic dialect/transitional competence and approximative systems, respectively, which did not find their way into the specialized Second Language Acquisition (SLA)⁵ literature, as IL did, due to theoretical inadequacies⁶.

¹ However, James (1980: 4) refers to Mel'chuk (1963) as the first scholar to have used the term *interlingua* in relation to translation studies.

² Richards (1974) informs that Selinker's article 'Interlanguage' was first published in the 10/3 issue of *IRAL*, in 1972.

³ Richards (1974) informs that Corder's article 'Idiosyncratic dialects and error analysis' was first published in the 9/2 issue of *IRAL*, in 1971.

⁴ Richards (1974) informs that Nemser's article 'Approximative systems of foreign language learners' was first published in the 9/2 issue of *IRAL*, in 1971.

⁵ Along with Ellis (1994: 11-12), I make the distinction between "Second Language" and "Foreign Language"; however, in this paper, "Second Language Acquisition" is used as an umbrella term that refers to the field of study that encompasses investigations into both SL and FL development, which is in accordance with Ellis's own recommendation: "There is a need for a neutral and superordinate term to cover both types of learning [...] in line with common usage, the term 'second language acquisition' will be used for this purpose" (1994: 12) (He makes the same point in Ellis [1985: 5; 221]). By the same token, L2 is here used as an umbrella abbreviation for "Target Language", regardless of its being a SL or a FL.

Before approaching the development of the IL concept, it is necessary that I turn to its definition, as proposed by Selinker (1974, 1992)⁷: IL is the language produced by a second language (L2) learner, who is a native speaker of a given first language (L1), when he/she is attempting to communicate by means of that L2. It is crucial to note that the definition begins with the statement that IL is language, a notion whose outcome is the fact that the L2 learner, in his/her attempts to communicate in the L2, produces a new language, which differs from both his/her L1 and the L2 he/she is trying to learn. The learner language, the IL, is, thus, a third language⁸, that is, an autonomous system in the Saussurian sense, containing its own internal structure. Selinker (1992: 222), citing Lightbown (1984), admits “[...] that one of the most important accomplishments in SLA has been that we have shown that learner language does in fact have structure”.

Selinker (1974, 1992) postulates that what makes it possible for the learner to destabilize the L1 and L2 systems, aiming at the emergence of the IL, is the L1-L2 interlingual identifications he/she makes: that which is similar across the two languages can be considered the same by the learner. It was the concept of interlingual identifications that opened the way to the proposal of the IL concept.

In order to be able to propose interlingual identifications as the starting of IL, Selinker (1974, 1992) stated that he resorted to studies in three areas: bilingualism, contrastive analysis (CA), and error analysis (EA). The studies on bilingualism were his primary source of inspiration as interlingual identifications are a theoretical construct originally proposed by Weinreich (1953), to account for the cross linguistic influences between the languages spoken by his bilingual subjects. However, Selinker (1992) said he was convinced that the IL concept began its actual development with the classical CA proposal by Fries (1945) and Lado (1957).

It is true that Fries (1945) and Lado (1957) aimed, with their CA Hypothesis, essentially at the design of more effective pedagogical materials, based on the theoretical comparison, for differences (learning problems) and similarities (non-problems), between the L1 and L2 at the levels of phonology, grammar, lexis, the writing systems, and the cultures (Lado, 1957: ix). On the other hand, Lado, back in the 50's, already indicated that “the list of problems resulting from the comparison of the foreign language with the native language [...] *must be considered a list of hypothetical problems* until final validation is achieved by *checking it against the actual speech of students* (1957: 72) (emphases are mine). It was precisely the italicized parts of this quotation that led Selinker to consider CA as the start on the IL concept, despite its focus on only the L1 and L2 systems.

Moreover, it was the CA researchers who, for some decades, kept searching for linguistic units of interlingual identifications, in accordance with Weinreich's proposal, to serve as a criterion for conducting the comparison between L1 and L2. James (1980: 63-65;166-178), years later, renamed such interlingual identifications as *tertium comparationis* (TC-comparison criterion) and proposed the International Phonetic Alphabet as TC for phonological CA,

⁶ These will be developed further later.

⁷ Although the time span between 1974 and 1992 is quite long, it does not result in differences as for the definition of IL; rather, the differences have to do with other aspects of the IL theory.

⁸ Since IL is language, it is not a dialect. That is why Corder's (1974) “idiosyncratic dialect” is theoretically inappropriate.

semantic components as TC for lexical CA, and either the surface structure, the deep structure, or translation equivalence as TC for grammatical CA.

After the bilingualism and the CA studies, it was the EA ones that extrapolated the limits of the L1-L2 domain of analysis and began examining learner language as well, but still only its erroneous subset. The next step forward was the encompassing of the complementary non-erroneous subset of learner language into Interlanguage Theory (ILT).

For Selinker (1974), ILT is a construct that attempts to describe and explain the phenomenon of L2 acquisition⁹, by postulating the existence, within the brain, of a latent psychological structure that is “[...] activated whenever an adult attempts to produce meaning [...] in a second language” (Selinker, 1974: 33). It is this latent psychological structure that is responsible, when the learner gets in touch with L2 input, for the interlingual identifications, which, in turn, will lead to the breaking of the notion of system in relation to the L1 and L2. At the end, this breaking of the notion of system allows for the emergence of IL as a third autonomous linguistic system.

The latent psychological structure, unlike Chomsky’s Language Acquisition Device (LAD), guarantees neither the initiation nor the success of L2 acquisition. This implies that IL might, at any time, go through a process of fossilization. An empirical evidence for fossilization is the fact that “fossilized forms may sometimes seem to disappear but are always likely to reappear in productive language use, a phenomenon known as *backsliding*” (Ellis, 1994: 353) (emphasis is the author’s).

The fossilization process, in turn, is brought about by the psycholinguistic processes which are themselves responsible for the L2 acquisition. The main ones are: language transfer (fossilization is due to L1 influence); transfer of training (fossilization is due to certain features found in the instruction); strategies of second language learning (fossilization is due to some

⁹ Acquisition is here being used interchangeably with learning, following Ellis (1985: 6; 1994: 14). The learning/acquisition dichotomy (the non-interface position) is mainly attributed to Krashen’s (1981) “Monitor Model” of L2 acquisition, which has been severely criticized by several scholars, Ellis (1985: 232-234; 1988: 161-167) being one of them, who classifies Krashen’s proposal as a “Dual Competence Model” (1988: 161). In contrast, Ellis defends an interface position between learning and acquisition, which led him to propose his “Variable Competence Model” (1988: 167-186), whereby the learner has free access to both communicative data (result of exposure ⇒ implicit/non-analytic knowledge) and modeled data (result of instruction ⇒ explicit/analytic knowledge), depending on whether he/she is engaged in unplanned or planned discourse. Since the unplanned/planned difference makes up a continuum of multiple types of discourse, most of them present both in naturalistic and classroom settings, the learner has to be always drawing on implicit and explicit knowledge, the latter being able to turn into the former by means of practice. Theoretically speaking, I go along with Ellis’s position. However, I do not find this discussion relevant for the present study because, rather than being a longitudinal/developmental study, it is a cross-sectional one, in which my interest is to have a “frozen picture” of the current occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the IL of Brazilian EFL intermediate learners. Therefore, for the time being, it does not matter whether the subjects have reached their current competence through acquisition or learning or a mixture of both. I dare to say that, once the elicited data are located more towards the unplanned end of the discourse continuum, it is likely that the subjects drew more heavily on their communicative/implicit knowledge and to a much lesser extent on their modeled/explicit knowledge. What really matters for this study is the fact that the subjects are “pure classroom” learners, in the sense that they are “[...] totally dependent on instruction” (Ellis, 1988: 2), with no or almost no exposure to English outside the Language Center (at the most limited to another classroom in Fundamental and/or Middle School). Besides, Ellis (1985: 224/229/242; 1988: 155) claims that the empirical evidence to date is indicative that formal grammar teaching is likely to influence only the rate and success of acquisition, leaving the its route untouched.

approach adopted by the learner to the acquisition of L2 material); strategies of second language communication (fossilization is due to some approach adopted by the learner when communicating with L2 native speakers); overgeneralization (fossilization is due to the use of an L2 rule in contexts where it is not required).

Another aspect of ILT is that, throughout the acquisition process, the learner develops a series of ILs that make up a developmental continuum. Such continuum, as a result of the fossilization process, is interrupted, for 95% of the learners (Selinker, 1974: 34), closer to or farther from the most perfect IL, which would be the L2 itself¹⁰.

Still another aspect of ILT, but one that was incorporated only later, concerns the fact that IL is variable, in the Labovian sense, like any other natural language. Gass, Madden, Preston & Selinker (1989) refer to the works of Tarone *et al.* (1976) and Ellis (1985), in which they demonstrate, respectively, that IL varies both systematically and nonsystematically (free variation).

Within the developmental stream of the IL concept, Ellis (1982), claiming that Selinker's (1974) latent psychological structure and interlingual identifications are not enough to account for the emergence of the first IL stage along the continuum, proposes the following hypotheses as for the origin of IL:

Hypothesis 1:

The L2 learner utilizes his knowledge of the conceptual organization of events and simplifies their representation in the L2 according to principles of informativeness. He operates a strategy of semantic simplification.

Hypothesis 2:

The L2 learner knows that language is syntactic. He operates with the assumption that word order is meaningful if this is also true for his L1.

Hypothesis 3:

The L2 learner knows that language realizes modality elements as well as propositional elements and actively seeks out how to express those modal meanings that he considers communicatively useful.

Hypothesis 4:

The L2 learner utilizes his capacity to learn, store, and reproduce verbal information to search for 'formulas' that will be communicatively useful to him (Ellis, 1982: 214-215; 216; 218).

Selinker (1992) updates his 1974 original formulation as follows: 1) IL is a partly separate linguistic system; 2) L1 is used selectively according to context in language transfer processes; 3) fossilization takes place selectively, in accordance with linguistic level and discourse domain; 4) the term "stable plateau" is also used for IL stage; 5) the creation of IL is related to simplification and complexification strategies (this is indicative that Selinker might have agreed with Ellis's [1982] criticism). Eubank, Selinker and Sharwood Smith (1995) do not add anything new.

Still under the vein of development, Moita Lopes (1996) also gives his contribution to the updating of ILT. He proposes an extension of the theory so that it can account not only for the IL of separate individuals, but also for the IL of groups of people. After having

¹⁰ Since fossilization almost always happens at some point before the full acquisition of the L2, Corder's term "transitional competence" and Nemser's term "approximative systems" are also theoretically inappropriate as there will be, in most cases, no such things as full transition or complete approximation to the L2.

demonstrated that IL does have the same characteristics of natural languages, he argues that his claim is feasible when the group of people shares the same L1 dialect, the same IL competence, the same social experience, and the same motivation (Moita Lopes, 1996: 118). This is almost always true for a group of learners sharing the same L1 and learning the same L2 in a given class, at a given Language Center, which justifies my methodological decision to treat the subjects in this study as a group of speakers of the same Portuguese-English IL (the results are related to the group, not to each subject separately).

It seems that, after Moita Lopes's (1996) contribution, the central IL concept has not developed further. The fact that McLaughling (1987) and Ellis (1985, 1994, 1997) do not bring any new piece of information, except for Ellis's (1997) also adopting the term "mental grammar" for IL stage, corroborates such a claim.

2. THE STRATEGIES OF IL SIMPLIFICATION AND COMPLEXIFICATION

This historical overview of the evolution of the IL concept evidences that it was Ellis (1982), before Selinker (1992), who introduced, within the domain of ILT, the strategies of simplification and complexification. Besides the four initial IL hypotheses, Ellis (1982: 220) postulates that classroom IL development is composed of three overlapping stages: 1) semantic simplification and formulas (it consists mainly of lexical items that can go into slots in structures of semantic functions and of communicative relevant formulas, i.e., "[...] incorporated chunks of language which learners lift from the linguistic environment"); 2) semantic implementation and acquisition of some modality elements (it consists of longer and more complex structures of semantic functions as the learner becomes abler to fill out more slots, and of the first modality elements (polarity, progressive, tense, etc); 3) acquisition of more modality¹¹ elements (it consists of an increase in the number of modality elements). Furthermore, it is claimed that not all learners move up to stage 3 (when their communication needs are met at stage 2, they tend to remain there unless there is extra motivation for going any further) and that there might be drawbacks to a previous stage when difficulties arise. These claims are in tune with Selinker's (1974; 1992) fossilization and backsliding, respectively.

According to this view, then, simplification, on the one hand, is the encoding of the learner's world knowledge, at the first IL "stable plateau", by means of utterances that contain only very few semantic functions and some formulas. On the other hand, complexification is the implementation, throughout subsequent IL "stable plateaus", of the simplified initial utterances as a result of the acquisition of modality elements and more semantic functions.

Ellis (1994), however, when describing the early developmental stages of learners' IL in naturalistic settings (as opposed to classroom settings), proposes the following: a silent period, formulaic speech, and structural and semantic simplification. The first stage,

¹¹ For Ellis (1988: 172-173), based on Fillmore (1968), modality is the part of grammar that conveys, by means of bound and free morphemes, meanings like tense, aspect, number, gender, definiteness. Halliday (1994), on the other hand, postulates that modality is a system whose initial terms are modalization – degrees of probability and usuality – and modulation – degrees of obligation and inclination.

as I see it, can hardly be found in L2 classrooms, as students are usually stimulated to speak. As for the other two stages, they are common to Ellis's (1982) proposal for classroom L2 learning, except for the presence of structural simplification. However, a more careful examination of Ellis's (1982) hypotheses for the origin of classroom IL reveals that not all of them are restricted to the level of semantics: the second is based on the assumption that the learner knows that the syntactic principle of word order is relevant; the third claims that the learner makes use of modality/grammatical elements (cf. Footnote 11), but only those that can enhance his/her communicative power. If the classroom L2 learner, from the very beginning, resorts to grammar in a limited way, it means that structural simplification also applies to the classroom setting. Moreover, Ellis (1994: 89), when exemplifying structural and semantic simplified IL, furnishes two instances of **classroom IL**, extracted from his own data¹². Hence, I have made the theoretical decision to add structural simplification to the classroom developmental framework.

Within the classroom setting, Ellis (1988) conducted an investigation in order to describe, for three subjects learning English as L2 in the UK, the stage of semantic simplification and formulas. Methodologically speaking, Ellis (1988) used as theoretical criterion for data categorization, a model, Fillmore's (1968) Case Grammar, which is meant to account for the elements of the semantic deep structure in order to evidence the semantic functions of surface structure utterances. Since IL is "performance" (surface structure), which is only a reflection of "competence" (deep structure), I find it more suitable to use a model – Halliday's (1994) SFG – that has originally been designed to account for surface-structure semantic and grammatical categories or roles of the clauses within the spoken and written texts produced by real speakers of both L1s and ILs. Furthermore, SFG postulates that 1) structure is composed of lexis and syntax¹³, which, together, constitute the lexico-grammatical linguistic level; 2) the borderline between grammar and semantics is very weak, almost non-existent, as it is the latter that activates and determines the former¹⁴. Thus, Ellis's (1994) structural and semantic simplification can be renamed as lexico-grammatical simplification in Hallidayan terms¹⁵. This reasoning made me hold the position that SFG is better suited than Case Grammar as a model to be utilized in order to categorize the present study's data.

Accordingly, the definitions of simplification and complexification strategies must be SFG-based: the strategy of lexico-grammatical complexification is at work when the subjects produce ranking clauses, in their spoken and written narratives, which have all the structural slots filled in by the functional roles that realize the systems of transitivity and mood as proposed by Halliday (1994); on the contrary, the strategy of lexico-grammatical

¹² The examples are: "me no blue (= I don't have a blue crayon)" / "eating at school (= She eats meat at school)" (Ellis, 1994: 89).

¹³ For SFG, lexis is the most delicate manifestation of syntax/grammar.

¹⁴ For SFG, the lexico-grammar is natural and motivated: it is as it is due to the meanings it has had to convey diachronically.

¹⁵ Ellis states that "structural simplification can be described by means of the traditional categories of a descriptive grammar. Semantic simplification is best accounted for in terms of the descriptive categories provided by case grammar [...]" (1994: 89). It is my claim that structural and semantic simplification can be best described through a single linguistic model – SFG – that has been designed to account for semantics and grammar together and simultaneously.

simplification is used when there is the occurrence, in the subjects' narratives, of ranking clauses whose functional roles, for the same two systems, are not all simultaneously present.

Examples of complete and incomplete ranking clauses from the data are found in Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4:

	ah	Φ	was	very nice	
TRANSITIVITY	X	Carrier lacking	Process: Relational	Attribute	
MOOD	X		Past	be	
	X	Subject lacking	Finite	Predicator	Complement
	X	incomplete Mood		Residue	

Figure 1: Incomplete spoken ranking clause (Spoken Narrative 05/Clause 1)

	When	I	went	to japan	
TRANSITIVITY	Circumstance	Actor	Process: Material	Circumstance	
MOOD			past	go	
	Adjunct	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Adjunct
	Resi...	Mood		...due	

Figure 2: Complete spoken ranking clause (Spoken Narrative 05/ Clause 2)

	and	Today	I	Φ	still	knowing	myself
TRANSITIVITY	X	Circumstance	Senser	incom...	modal Adjunct	plete Process: Mental	Phenomenon
MOOD	X			Φ	Still	knowing	
	X	Adjunct	Subject	Finite	Modal Adjunct	Predicator	Complement
	X	Resi...	Mood			...due	

Figure 3: Incomplete written ranking clause (Written Narrative 10/Clause 30)

	I	learned	lots of things	with her	
TRANSITIVITY	Senser	Process: Mental	Phenomenon	Circumstance	
MOOD		past	learn		
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
	Mood		Residue		

Figure 4: Complete written ranking clause (Written Narrative 10/ Clause 23)

3. THE RELEVANT SFG CONCEPTS

3.1 Metafunctions of language and their respective realizational systems

Halliday (1994), Halliday and Hasan (1989), and Hasan and Perrett (1994)¹⁶ postulate that language is a multi-strata system. It starts out in the extra-linguistic realm of the context of situation (register, with its variables of: field, tenor, and mode) and goes through the intra-linguistic strata of meanings (semantics, with its metafunctional components: ideational, interpersonal, and textual), forms/wordings (lexico-grammar, with its metafunctional-related systems: transitivity, mood and modality, and theme), and expression¹⁷ (phonology, with its units: tone-group, foot, syllable, and phoneme; and graphology, with its units: paragraph, orthographic sentence, sub-sentence, phrase, orthographic word, and letter) [Berry, 1976: 83/98].

The strata are related to one another by means of bidirectional realization relationships, i.e., by an activation/construal type of relationship. These relationships are mediated by the metafunctional theoretical construct, as can be seen in Figure 5. Briefly, its contents mean that: 1) the register variable 'field' of the context of situation is realized by/activates the semantic component 'ideational metafunction', which, in turn, is realized by/activates the lexicogrammatical 'transitivity system', whose choices are realized by/activate a spoken or written medium of expression; 2) the register variable of the context of situation 'tenor' is realized by/activates the semantic component 'interpersonal metafunction', which, in turn, is realized by/activates the lexicogrammatical 'mood and modality systems', whose choices are realized by/activate a spoken or written medium of expression; 3) the register variable 'mode' of the context of situation is realized by/activates the semantic component 'textual metafunction', which, in turn, is realized by/activates the lexicogrammatical 'theme system', whose choices are realized by/activate a spoken or written medium of expression. It is necessary to point out that the linguistic output – the spoken or written expression medium – is a result of the simultaneous choices made within the systems of transitivity, mood and modality, and theme.

The following two sub-sections are dedicated to the descriptions of the configurational realization of the transitivity and mood systems. The theme system will be left out as it is not relevant to the analysis of the data.

3.2 The transitivity system and its configurational realization

At the level of the transitivity system, the clause is analyzed for its potential to represent both the outer and the inner worlds of human beings. The representation of reality is achieved by means of a set of processes, along with their participants, and the circumstances in which they unfold.

¹⁶ For a more detailed description of the SFG concepts, the reader should also refer to Berry (1975), Eggins (1994), Bloor and Bloor (1995), Butt *et al.* (1995), Lock (1996), Thompson (1996), Martin *et al.* (1997).

¹⁷ No further explanations as for the expression stratum will be provided since it is outside the scope of this study.

The functional configurational realization of the transitivity system, in its most canonical format, is presented in Figure 6.

TRANSITIVITY CONSTITUENTS	Participant	Process	(Participant) ¹⁸	(Circumstance)
CLASSES THAT INSTANTIATE CONSTITUENTS	Nominal Group	Verbal Group	Nominal Group	Adverbial Group or Prepositional Phrase

Figure 6: Configurational realization of transitivity

An example from the data, the 9th ranking clause of the 10th written narrative (WN10), is in Figure 7:

I	discovered	new feelings	inside me
Participant	Process	Participant	Circumstance
Nominal Group	Verbal Group	Nominal Group	Prepositional Phrase

Figure 7: Ranking clause analyzed for transitivity

There are six process types: material, mental (cognition, perception, affection), relational, behavioral¹⁹, verbal, and existential. The participants related to each are: Material → Actor (obligatory), Goal (optional); Mental → Senser, Phenomenon (both are always potentially present; either may, however, be implicit); Relational → Attributive type: Carrier, Attribute OR Identifying type → Identifier, Identified; Behavioral → Behavior; Verbal → Sayer, Verbiage, Receiver, Target; Existential → Existent.

¹⁸ The parentheses indicate that the constituent is optional.

¹⁹ Occurrences of behavioral processes in the data were categorized as material, mental, or verbal processes due to the tenuous borderline between the former and the other three.

3.3 The mood system and its configurational realization

At the level of the mood system, the clause is analyzed for its potential to make possible the exchanges/interactions in which the human beings get themselves involved within society. The verbal exchanges among the social interactants are carried out through the manipulation of two clausal constituents – the Subject and the Finite, which make up the Mood of the clause. The remaining of the clause is the Residue, which, in turn, has these constituents: Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct.

The functional configurational actualization of the mood system is shown in Figure 8.

MOOD CONSTITUENTS	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
CLASSES THAT INSTANTIATE CONSTITUENTS	Nominal Group	Temporal or Modal Operator	Lexical Verb	Nominal Group	Adverbial Group or Prepositional Phrase

Figure 8: Configurational realization of mood

The same ranking clause from the data is used to exemplify, in Figure 9, the lexico-grammatical configuration of the mood system.

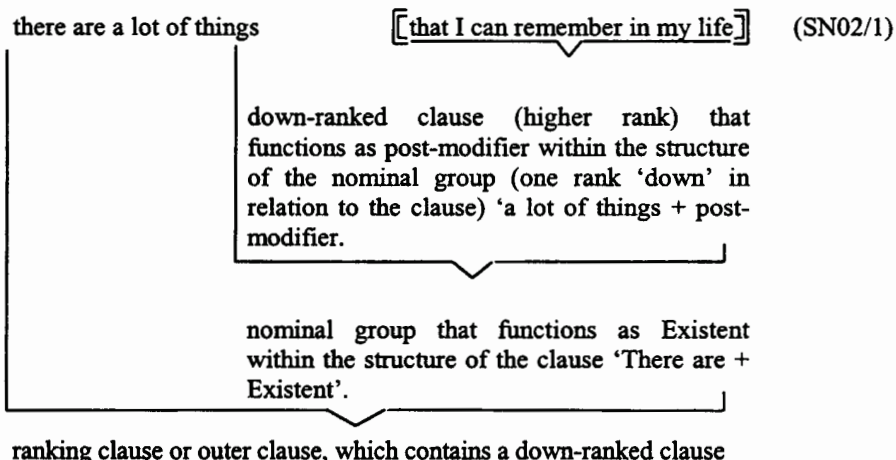
I	'past'	'discover'	new feelings	inside me
Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
Nominal Group	Temporal Operator	Lexical Verb	Nominal Group	Prepositional Phrase
Mood		Residue		

Figure 9: Ranking clause analyzed for mood

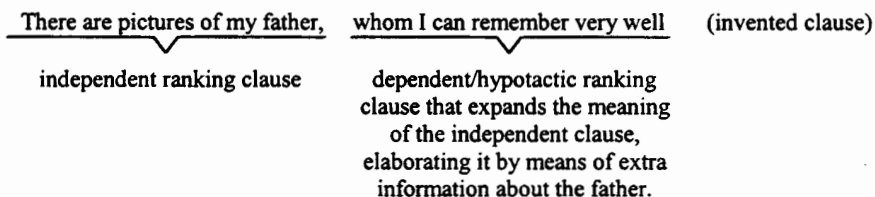
3.4 Ranking and down-ranked clauses

Ranking clauses are those that relate, through the interdependency (parataxis and hypotaxis) and the logico-semantic (expansion and projection) types of relationship, only to same-rank grammatical units, i.e., other clauses. Down-ranked (rankshifted, embedded) clauses, on the other hand, are those that function as constituents or parts of constituents within the structure of the group, which is the grammatical unit that comes one rank below. Whereas double "... vertical strokes ..." () are the identifying notation for ranking clauses, the down-ranked ones are identified by double square brackets ([[]]) (Halliday, 1989: 66/71). One example is the 1st ranking clause of the 2nd spoken narrative (SN02):

- One ranking clause:



- Two ranking clauses:



Down-ranked clauses occur in the following contexts: 1) the down-ranked clause occupies the position of post-modifier of the Head of a nominal group → the Head of the nominal group is a noun (the characteristic type of clause in this context is the defining relative clause) / the Head of the nominal group is an adjective functioning as Attribute or Identifier or Identified in relational process clauses; 2) the down-ranked clause is a type of nominalization which functions directly within the structure of the ranking clause (outer clause) that contains it, where it has one of the following functional roles → Subject of any process type, including the Subject anticipated by the 'dummy it' / Complement of relational processes / Complement of mental processes of perception / Complement of mental processes of affection, when the clausal complement is a proposition (statements and questions), not proposals (offers and commands); 3) the down-ranked clause occupies the position of post-modifier of the Head of an adverbial group.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Subjects

Ten Brazilian EFL students from the *Extracurricular* Program offered by the Federal University of Santa Catarina-UFSC, in Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, participated in the study. The candidates were supposed to meet the following minimum conditions: (1) age range – from 20 to 35; (2) level of instruction – to be at higher education²⁰; (3) level of English proficiency – intermediate.

In order to control for the level-of-English-proficiency variable, I adopted the traditional three-level criterion of proficiency classification (beginning, intermediate, advanced). The result of this classification as applied to the stage structure²¹ of the *UFSC Extracurricular* Program is as follows:

STAGES OF THE <i>UFSC EXTRACURRICULAR</i> PROGRAM		
1 ST THIRD	2 ND THIRD	3 RD THIRD
<i>Inglês 1</i> <i>Inglês 2</i> <i>Inglês 3</i>	<i>Inglês 4</i> <i>Inglês 5</i> <i>Inglês 6</i>	<i>Inglês 7</i> <i>Inglês 8</i> <i>Avançado 1 & 2</i>
BEGINNING	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
PROFICIENCY LEVELS		

Figure 10: Classification of the *UFSC-Extracurricular-Program* stages per proficiency level

From this perspective, *Inglês 6* is the last stage of the intermediate level. Accordingly, the potential subjects were those enrolled in this stage, at data collection time – November/2001.

The ten subjects were randomly chosen. When the data were collected, the *UFSC Extracurricular* Program had six *Inglês 6* classes, taking place at different times. As a first step, one of the classes was randomly eliminated. The second step consisted of my going, immediately before data collection, into each of the remaining five classes and asking for two volunteers who were university students at the age of 20 or over.

4.2 Corpus

The corpus is made up of ten pairs of spoken / written texts that were rendered, in an impromptu manner, by each of the subjects within the narrative rhetorical mode.

²⁰ The justification for conditions (1) and (2) as well as for the total number of subjects – 10 – derives from a personal interest to make the results of the present study comparable with those of Study 1, with advanced EFL students. The 10 students who were available to be the subjects of the latter study happened to hold the characteristics expressed in (1) and (2).

²¹ Each stage lasts for one academic semester, and the adopted series of books is *New interchange* (Richards *et al.*, 1998).

Both the spoken and the written narratives belong to the genre of remarkable personal experiences.

4.3 Data collection procedures

Each data-collection session lasted, on the average, for 20 minutes. In the data-collection room, the subject and myself would sit at opposite sides of a table. I then started out a conversation, in English, about his/her daily routines and kept on with the dialog until I could ask him/her to tell me, in a monologic way²², a remarkable experience, positive or negative, he/she had lived through. Before the subject began speaking, I asked him/her whether I would have the permission to audio tape the monologic narrative (all of the 10 subjects granted the permission for the recording). The subject was allowed to speak for as long as he/she wanted. When the subject had finished, he/she was given a sheet of paper, a pencil, and an eraser and was requested to tell, in writing, the same remarkable experience. The writing time was not controlled either.

The data-collection conditions made it possible for the narratives to be rendered in an impromptu manner as all of the subjects walked into the data-collection room without knowing any information about what the tasks were like. The subjects had very little planning time for the production of the two narratives.

4.4 Data categorization procedures and data analysis criteria

The first categorization procedure was the transcription, into orthographic script, of the spoken narratives. There are, however, some differences between the orthographic script adopted and the regular orthographic script utilized in the graphic linguistic channel: the former lacks paragraph indentation, capital letters, and punctuation marks. The reason for this lies in the fact that supra-segmental phonological aspects are outside the scope of the present study.

The 20 narratives were segmented into both ranking and down-ranked clauses (cf. the Appendix for samples of transcribed and categorized narratives). In Study 1, I segmented the texts only into ranking clauses, claiming that there was no need to take the down-ranked ones into consideration because, by definition, they are either whole constituents or part of constituents of the ranking or outer clause in which they are embedded. In the present study, I decided to include the down-ranked clauses for the following reason: the structural incompleteness of a down-ranked clause makes the ranking clause of which it is a constituent also incomplete. The structural constituents of the ranking and the down-ranked clauses were categorized as for Halliday's (1994) semantic roles that realize the systems of transitivity (that instantiates the ideational metafunction) and mood (that actualizes the interpersonal metafunction).

²² The subjects were notified that, from the point of the conversation when I made the request for the personal experience, no questions could be asked and that they had to act as if I were not in the room. Since my aim was to examine their spoken and written IL for the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy, I would interfere with the results if I answered their questions for vocabulary and/or structure. I asked them to pretend that I was not in the room because I wanted to make them feel more at ease, as my intention was to elicit natural and unplanned IL samples.

The ranking clauses, with and without down-ranked clauses embedded in them, were quantified separately for the spoken and written narratives. The complete ranking clauses for transitivity and mood and the incomplete ones for transitivity or mood were also quantified per medium. As the narratives have different lengths, in order to overcome this problem, the absolute numbers that resulted from these countings were changed into simple frequency indices²³ (SFI), as proposed by Beaman (1984). The SFI were, in turn, transformed into percentages.

The determination of the occurrence level (low, moderate, or high) of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the subjects' IL, as represented by their narratives, was based on the following *a priori* criteria: up to 50% of completeness = low complexification level; from 50% (exclusive) to 80% (inclusive) of completeness = moderate complexification level; greater than 80% of completeness = high complexification level.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

The changing of the absolute numbers resulting from the quantifications needed for the analysis depends on the quantification, per medium, of the words in the narratives. The results of this first quantification can be found in Table 1.

	Spoken Narratives	Written Narratives
Total Numbers of Words	2,266	1,166

Table 1: Total numbers of words in the narratives per medium

In Study 1, I incorporated Ellis's (1994) concepts of "Language Acquisition Processes" and "Language Production Processes" to the definition of simplification strategy. The motivation for such an incorporation resulted from the following claim:

Both structural and semantic simplification may occur either because learners have not yet acquired the necessary linguistic forms or because they are unable to access them in the production of specific utterances. In other words, they may reflect processes of language acquisition or of language production (Ellis, 1994: 89).

I considered the two processes as a typological classification of the structural and semantic (lexico-grammatical) simplification strategy. However, I proposed an adaptation aimed at including, within the classificatory framework, spoken-language-specific features. The resulting typology was thus formulated:

²³ Numbers of occurrences of a given grammatical feature per every 1,000 words of text.

<p>SIMPLIFICATION DUE TO "LANGUAGE ACQUISITION PROCESSES" (LAP) – LAP SIMPLIFICATION/INCOMPLETE NESS</p>	<p>Simplification is a result of the fact that "[...] learners have not yet acquired the necessary linguistic forms [...]" (Ellis, 1994: 89). Simplified/incomplete ranking clauses are those produced without resorting to corrections and hesitations. They are the actual simplifications/incompletenesses.</p>
<p>SIMPLIFICATION DUE TO "LANGUAGE PRODUCTION PROCESSES" (LPP) – LPP SIMPLIFICATION/INCOMPLETE NESS</p>	<p>Simplification is a result of naturally occurring pauses in spoken language for discourse planning as a consequence of the necessity for correction (message adjustment) or as a consequence of hesitation (Praxedes Filho, 1996: 149-150), or as a consequence of the inability "... to access them [the necessary linguistic forms] in the production of specific utterances" (Ellis, 1994: 89). Simplified/incomplete ranking clauses are those produced as a result of corrections and hesitations. Since these clauses are idiosyncratically characteristic of spoken discourse for both native and non-native speakers, they are considered as pseudo-simplifications/incompletenesses.</p>

Figure 11: A typological classification of the lexico-grammatical simplification strategy

Since the incorporation of the classificatory framework outlined above proved productive in Study 1, the present analysis will make use of the LAP and LPP types of simplification/incompleteness from the very beginning.

The research questions will be answered under two perspectives: not incorporating the LAP and LPP incomplete ranking clauses whose incompletenesses are located within a down-ranked clause embedded in them, and incorporating them. Whereas the first perspective follows what I did in Study 1, the second is an innovation.

5.1 Question 1:

- Perspective 1:

Table 2 brings the results for the spoken and written narratives separately.

	Complete + LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses (pseudo-incompletenesses)	LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses	Total Ranking Clauses
Spoken Narratives	136.80 (80.52%)	33.10 (19.48%)	169.90 (100%)
Written Narratives	123.50 (83.24%)	24.87 (16.76%)	148.37 (100%)

Table 2: Simple frequency indices and respective percentages for (complete + LPP incomplete), LAP incomplete, and total ranking clauses in the spoken & written narratives separately

As can be seen in Table 2, the spoken narratives bear around 4 times as many complete and pseudo-incomplete ranking clauses as incomplete ranking clauses. For the spoken medium, this means a complexification level of 80.52% and a simplification level of 19.48%. The written narratives, on the other hand, have around 5 times as many

complete and pseudo-incomplete ranking clauses as incomplete ranking clauses. For the written medium, this means a complexification level of 83.24% and a simplification level of 16.76%.

The results for the spoken and written narratives together are shown in Table 3.

	Complete + LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses (pseudo-	LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses	Total Ranking Clauses
Spoken & Written Narratives	260.30 (81.78%)	57.97 (18.22%)	318.27 (100%)

Table 3: Simple frequency indices and respective percentages for (complete + LPP incomplete), LAP incomplete, and total ranking clauses in the spoken & written narratives together

It is evidenced in Table 3 that the spoken and written narratives, when considered together, present around 4.5 times as many complete and pseudo-incomplete ranking clauses as incomplete ranking clauses, which means, independently of the medium, a complexification level of 81.78% and a simplification level of 18.22%.

Inasmuch as Perspective 1 is concerned, the percentage answers indicate that the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the subjects' spoken and written narratives, both separately and together, falls within the high range of the *a priori* criteria set in Sub-Section 5.4. Since the subjects are intermediate learners, my expectation was that it would be within the moderate range. However, this result seems not to have been relevant due to the small scope of the entrance of the percentages into the high range: the separate spoken narratives are not moderately complexified by 0.52%; the separate written narratives, by 3.24%; the spoken and written narratives together, by 1.78%.

- Perspective 2:

Before the presentation of the results, some examples will be furnished of LAP and LPP incomplete ranking clauses whose incompletenesses are in a down-ranked clause embedded in them:

- LAP Incomplete Ranking Clause (down-ranked-clause-related incompletenesses): Written Narrative 07 – Clause 5 **because I (Senser/Subject) could learn (Process: Mental/Finite & Predicator) a lot** [[**about drive** (incomplete down-ranked clause: nominal bound morpheme lacking in Complement of preposition) (LAP)]] (Phenomenon/Complement) (Incomplete Clause-part of Qualifier in nominal group-Phenomenon/Complement lacking) (LAP).
- LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses (down-ranked-clause-related incompletenesses): Spoken Narrative 10 – Clause 33 **and << well (Discourse Marker) >> there (Subject) is (Process: Existential/Finite & Predicator) another change (Existent) in my life (Circumstance/Adjunct) [[that came right after I come (down-ranked incomplete clause: Circumstance/Adjunct lacking) (LPP) I came to to florianoópolis]]** (continuation of Existent) (Incomplete Clause-part of Qualifier in nominal group-Existent temporarily lacking) (LPP).

Table 4 adds, separately per medium, the results for the LPP and LAP incomplete ranking clauses whose incompletenesses are located within a down-ranked clause embedded in them.

	Complete + [LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related] [pseudo-incompletenesses]	LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related	Total Ranking Clauses
Spoken Narratives	134.15 (78.96%)	35.75 (21.04%)	169.90 (100%)
Written Narratives	119.21 (80.35%)	29.16 (19.65%)	148.37 (100%)

Table 4: Simple frequency indices and respective percentages for (complete + LPP incomplete + LPP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related), (LAP incomplete + LAP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related), and total ranking clauses in the spoken & written narratives separately

As evidenced in Table 4, the spoken narratives contain 3.75 times as many complete and total pseudo-incomplete ranking clauses as total incomplete ranking clauses, which signifies, for the spoken medium, a complexification level of 78.96% and a simplification level of 21.04%. The written narratives, in turn, contain around 4 times as many complete and total pseudo-incomplete ranking clauses as total incomplete ranking clauses, which signifies, for the written medium, a complexification level of 80.35% and a simplification level of 19.65%.

The addition, for the two media together, of the results for the LPP and LAP incomplete ranking clauses whose incompletenesses are located within a down-ranked clause embedded in them is found in Table 5.

	Complete + [LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related] [pseudo-incompletenesses]	LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related	Total Ranking Clauses
Spoken & Written Narratives	253.36 (79.61%)	64.91 (20.39%)	318.27 (100%)

Table 5: Simple frequency indices and respective percentages for (complete + LPP incomplete + LPP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related), (LAP incomplete + LAP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related), and total ranking clauses in the spoken & written narratives together

Table 5 shows that, together, the spoken and written narratives encompass around 4 times as many complete and total pseudo-incomplete ranking clauses as total incomplete ranking clauses. This means complexification and simplification levels, regardless of medium, of 79.61% and 20.39%, respectively.

As regards Perspective 2, the quantitative findings show that whereas the separate spoken narratives and the spoken narratives together with the written ones are moderately complexified as for the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy, the separate written narratives are still within the high range of occurrence. However, the

entrance scope dropped from 3.24% to 0.35%, which is a seemingly irrelevant margin. So small a difference in relation to the *a priori* criteria might allow for the claim that the subjects' spoken and written narratives, separately and together, are moderately complexified as a whole.

5.2 Question 2

- Perspective 1:

According to Table 2, the occurrence levels of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the spoken and written narratives are 80.52% and 83.24%, respectively. The difference between the two figures demonstrate that the subjects' written narratives are 2.72% more complexified than their spoken narratives, insofar as Perspective 1 is concerned.

- Perspective 2:

Table 4 displays an occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy of 78.96% in the spoken narratives and of 80.35% in the written ones. In relation to Perspective 2, then, the subjects' written narratives are 1.39% more complexified than the respective spoken narratives.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 Analysis-related aspects

Despite the fact that the research questions were answered from the viewpoint of the two perspectives, I currently claim that it is Perspective 2 alone that should be considered as the valid one since it is able to supply a closer-to-the-reality diagnosis of the occurrence level of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in EFL students' IL. The inclusion of Perspective 1 in the analysis reported on in Section 6 is justified by the need to be consistent, as much as possible, with Study 1, for comparative purposes. A question that naturally results from this new theoretical-and-methodological positioning is: would a Perspective2 analysis of the data in Study 1 invalidate its results? Provided that the Perspective1 analysis led to lexico-grammatical complexification levels over 95% for the spoken and written narratives (separately and together), the new approach might not cause any relevant change concerning the *a priori* criteria, which were the same. Furthermore, if those advanced students' ranking clauses were mostly complete, their down-ranked clauses must bear the same levels of completeness.

The Perspective2 analysis made in the present study led to a rather unexpected result solely as for the separate written narratives, whose occurrence level of the complexification strategy (80.35%) entered the high complexification range. I do not think such an outcome is surprising; it would have been thoroughly unexpected had it happened to the spoken narratives instead. This can be explained by means of the assumption part of

Question 2: the writer has more time than the speaker to elaborate on his/her presentation. On the other hand, the complexification levels for the separate spoken narratives and for the spoken and written narratives together (78.96% and 79.61%, respectively) are very close to that of the separate written narratives – within the range 78%-81%, which means that the subjects' IL, in general, might be on the verge of becoming highly complexified. This may have been so because the chosen stage (*Inglês 6*) is the last within the intermediate level (taking into account the classification adopted in this study). It is likely that the *Inglês 6* students can be considered as 'false-advanced'. For a cross-sectional study such as this, it seems that the choice of the middle intermediate stage – *Inglês 5* – would have been more appropriate as regards a more accurate 'frozen picture' of the intermediate level.

The superiority of the written narratives regarding the occurrence level of the complexification strategy by so small a margin like 1.39% is intriguing, especially because a similar result was obtained in Study 1. These results might be an indication that the lexico-grammatical complexification paces are nearly the same for both the spoken and the written IL media. Such a claim, however, can only be tested in a longitudinal study.

While I was categorizing the data, I felt the necessity, in relation to Study 1, to create two other categories: deviant complete clauses (DCC) and simplified deviant complete clauses (SDCC). Both are complete clauses (all the transitivity and mood roles are present) that contain deviations²⁴ in relation to the English language norm adopted in the *New Interchange* series – educated American English. Whereas in the latter case the deviations are characterized by an attempt on the part of the subjects to opt for simpler lexico-grammatical forms in order to instantiate the transitivity and mood roles, in the former case the deviations do not hold this simplifying feature. The SDCC category only, however, might be of interest to the IL lexico-grammatical simplification/complexification issue. Its incorporation would require a broadening of the definition of the lexico-grammatical simplification strategy to include not only the rendering of incomplete ranking clauses as for either transitivity or mood configurational constituents, but also deviant complete ranking clauses whose deviations can be classified as simplifications in terms of either the transitivity or the mood system. Figure 12 brings the types of simplified deviations found in the data per lexico-grammatical system, with respective examples.

Tables 6 and 7 show the occurrence level of the complexification strategy, with the SDCC category included.

²⁴ One of the many relevant contributions Corder made to IL studies was the claim that learners' errors are systematic and thus "[...] provide evidence of the system of the language that he is using (i.e. has learnt) at a particular point in the course [...]" (1981: 10). This inaugurated a positive approach to errors, definitively overriding the behaviorist view: they were not to be avoided any longer as they played an important, if not the most important, role in L2 development. This is the reason why I have opted to use, in this study, the term 'deviations' instead, with the aim of conveying this positive and inevitable contribution of errors.

	Complete + [LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related] [pseudo-incompletenesses]	LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related + SDCC	Total Ranking Clauses
Spoken Narratives	121.35 (71.42%)	48.55 (28.58%)	169.90 (100%)
Written Narratives	108.92 (73.41%)	39.45 (26.59%)	148.37 (100%)

Table 6: Simple frequency indices and respective percentages for (complete + LPP incomplete + LPP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related), (LAP incomplete + LAP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related + SDCC), and total ranking clauses in the spoken & written narratives separately

	Complete + [LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LPP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related] [pseudo-incompletenesses]	LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses + LAP Incomplete Ranking Clauses/down-ranked-clause-related + SDCC	Total Ranking Clauses
Spoken & Written Narratives	230.27 (72.35%)	88.00 (27.65%)	318.27 (100%)

Table 7: Simple frequency indices and respective percentages for (complete + LPP incomplete + LPP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related), (LAP incomplete + LAP incomplete/down-ranked-clause-related + SDCC), and total ranking clauses in the spoken & written narratives together

In case the SDCC category proves to be theoretically consistent with the original definition of IL simplification/complexification strategy both in Study 1 and in the present study, it can be said, based on Tables 6 and 7, that not only the subjects' separate spoken narratives and the spoken and written narratives together but also their separate written narratives bear a moderate occurrence level of the complexification strategy. As for the superiority of the written medium, it continues to be a small one – 1.99%, which might be another indication that the IL lexicogrammatical complexification pace is the same regardless of the medium.

SYSTEM	TRANSITIVITY	MOOD
TYPES OF SIMPLIFIED DEVIATIONS	1-nominative case of Participant for oblique case: I (Senser/Subject) miss (P: ML/Finite & Predicator) she. (Phenomenon/Complement: deviant nominative case) (WN04/9) ²⁵	3-simple past for present perfect: and stay (P: R/deviant Finite (form: 'have') & deviant Predicator (secondary tense)) here (Circumstance/Complement) for until now (deviant Circumstance/Adjunct: preposition 'for' unnecessary) (AEC) (SN01/7).
	2-Thing-Classifer word order for Classifier-Thing: I (Carrier/Subject) could have (P: R/Finite & Predicator) some contact (Attribute/Complement) with a kind of car racing [[called kart.]] (Circumstance/Adjunct - deviant nominal group {car racing} word order: Classifier {racing} + Thing {car}) (WN07/2).	4-simple present for simple past: I knew (ML) many people (CC) [...] they (Actor / Subject) teach (P: M/deviant Finite (primary tense) & Predicator) me (Beneficiary/Complement) a lot (Goal/Complement) (SN05/15&19).
		5-singular Subject-Finite concord for plural (no bound morpheme addition): I and my brother (Actor / Subject) was going (P: M/deviant Finite (number) & Predicator) to the practice [[that we are done in that time (deviant complete down-ranked clause: deviant primary tense {past} and deviant secondary tense {present})]] (Circumstance/Adjunct) (SN08/14).
		6-plural Subject-Finite concord for singular (with bound morpheme addition): and my brother study (P: M/deviant Finite (number) & Predicator) here too (SN01/34).
		7-interrogative mood for declarative mood in included questions: I can't remember (ML) (CC) what's <i>queimadura</i> (deviant interrogative Mood) in english (SN02/16-17).
		8-present Finite for past Finite in indirect speech: I thought (ML) (CC) that I will die (P: M/deviant Finite (primary tense) & Predicator) (SN02/23-24).
		9-earlier learned Finite for later learned Finite: and he wasn't call (P: M/deviant Finite (form) & Predicator) me (SN03/23).
		10-simple present for past perfect: in the last month (Circumstance/Adjunct) my grandmother (Actor/Subject) die (P: M/Predicator) (IC-past temporal Finite bound morpheme lacking) (LAP) but she take (P: R/deviant Finite (primary tense) & deviant Predicator (secondary tense and lexical choice)) a disease for a three years ago (SN04/1&3).
		11-neutral aspect of Predicator for perfective aspect: for us participated (P: M/deviant Predicator: deviant aspect) of the strike. (NFC) (WN06/2).
		12-'hadn't' for 'didn't have' ²⁶ : because I (Carrier / Subject) hadn't (P: R/deviant Finite (form) & Predicator) sponsors (Attribute/Complement) (WN07/8).

Figure 12: Types of simplified deviations per system and examples

²⁵ Before the dash: the medium and number of the narrative; after the dash: the clause number. The other abbreviations found in the figure are: P=Process; ML=Mental; R=Relational; M=Material; AEC=Anaphoric Elliptical Clause; CC=Complete Clause; IC=Incomplete Clause; NFC=Non-Finite clause.

²⁶ One of the teachers informed that they use the educated American English norm (following the norm encountered in the adopted textbook) when speaking to the students in the classroom (the four teachers whose students participated in the study are non-native speakers – Brazilians, who struggle to be consistent with the adopted norm) and that the subjects had already been taught the present perfect, included questions with declarative mood, and the past perfect. The avoidance of these structures by the subjects (numbers 3, 7, and 10 in Figure 12) means that, despite their having received the respective input via instruction, it is likely that they had not acquired/learned them yet and, hence, are still substituting them for simpler/less complex structures, namely the simple past, the interrogative mood (simpler because of the overgeneralization of the already acquired/learned interrogative mood in direct questions), and the simple present, respectively, producing simplified Mood deviations. It might be argued that the simplifications in 7 and 8 are acceptable because they were produced in the spoken medium, where they are acceptable for native speakers. However, the subjects are “pure classroom” learners (cf. Footnote 9), limited to input provided by the textbook and the teacher: the former, even being communicative, does not use the standard/educated norm for the written language and non-standard forms for the spoken language (medium differences are restricted to the lexicon, at the most). It might also be raised that the simplification in 12 is acceptable as it is a standard British form. Again we cannot disconsider the crucial fact that the subjects are “pure classroom” learners and are exposed to only the American national variety of English by means of the textbook and teachers whose formation has been within American English. Thus, in such a context, “hadn't” in place of “didn't have” is a simplified deviation due to overgeneralization of the way the negative is formed for “be” and the modal verbs presented to date.

6.2 Other aspects

The non-complexification or simplification/incompleteness was found to operate, for the intermediate students who were the subjects of this study, at both the clause level and the group/phrase level. Thirty-four different types of simplification/incompleteness were identified in the corpus (spoken and written narratives together), out of which fifteen are clause-level incompletenesses and nineteen, group/phrase-level incompletenesses. Figure 13 reveals the findings.

CLAUSE-LEVEL INCOMPLETENESSES	LACKING ELEMENTS
	FINITE (FREE MORPHEME)
	PREDICATOR
	ATTRIBUTE/COMPLEMENT
	PHENOMENON/COMPLEMENT
	PROCESS/FINITE & PREDICATOR
	RECEIVER/COMPLEMENT
	VERBIAGE
	CARRIER/SUBJECT
	ACTOR/SUBJECT
	SENDER/SUBJECT
	GOAL/COMPLEMENT
	DUMMY SUBJECT 'THERE'
	CIRCUMSTANCE/ADJUNCT
	IDENTIFIER/COMPLEMENT
DUMMY SUBJECT 'IT'	
GROUP/PHRASE-LEVEL INCOMPLETENESSES	IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT BOUND MORPHEME IN PREDICATOR ('ing')
	PAST TEMPORAL FINITE BOUND MORPHEME ('ed')
	PAST SECONDARY TENSE BOUND MORPHEME IN PREDICATOR
	THING IN NOMINAL GROUP
	DEFINITE DEICTIC IN NOMINAL GROUP
	NOMINAL GROUP COMPLEMENT OF PREPOSITION IN
	PARTICLE 'TO' → PERFECTIVENESS OF SECOND ELEMENT IN
	PREPOSITION BEFORE NOMINAL-GROUP COMPLEMENT IN
	DEMONSTRATIVE DEICTIC IN NOMINAL GROUP
	PARTICLE IN PHRASAL-VERB PREDICATOR
	SECOND ELEMENT IN PREPOSITION GROUP
	PARTICLE 'TO' INDICATIVE OF ELLIPTICAL PREDICATOR
	ADJECTIVE-FORMATION BOUND MORPHEME
	PARTICLE 'TO' INDICATIVE OF PERFECTIVENESS OF PREDICATOR
	PLURALITY BOUND MORPHEME OF THING IN NOMINAL GROUP
	NOUN-FORMATION BOUND MORPHEME
	PRESENT TEMPORAL FINITE BOUND MORPHEME
	EPITHET IN NOMINAL GROUP
	QUALIFIER IN NOMINAL GROUP

Figure 13: Types of simplification / incompleteness

The absolute numbers of the occurrence of the five most frequent lacking elements are in Table 8.

	Past temporal Finite bound morpheme ('ed')	Post-process participants (Attribute, Phenomenon, Receiver, Goal, Identifier) conflated with the Complement	Pre-process participants (Carrier, Actor, Sender) conflated with the Subject + dummy 'there' + dummy 'it'	Free-morpheme Finite	Preposition before a nominal-group Complement
Absolute Numbers of Occurrence	34	25	17	11	11 ²⁷

Table 8: Absolute numbers of occurrence of the most frequent lacking elements

It was observed that the five most frequent lacking elements seem to be in free variation with their presence. I wonder whether this is an indication of non-fossilization, i.e., of synchronic, non-systematic variation that leads to a change to the subsequent IL stage (cf. review in Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991: 81-88) or “stable plateau” or “mental grammar”. If so, would this be evidence to support the claim that the *Inglês 6* subjects are on the verge of becoming advanced students?

As for the past temporal Finite bound morpheme-‘ed’ in particular, the most frequent lacking element of all, its absence in simple-past-tense marking might not be indicative of non-complexification/simplification [e.g.: **because I went to with more two more three girls from brazil I practice there three months (SN05/10-11)**]. On the other hand, its absence, in free variation with ‘ed’ marking for the simple past tense, might be a result of the narrative rhetorical mode of the texts in the corpus. I wonder, then, whether the absence of the ‘ed’ morpheme is merely an expected use, on the part of the subjects, of the historical present (cf. Bardovi-Harlig’s [2000: 277-304] review on narrative theory and the historical present as related to IL).

In relation to the total spoken ranking clauses, while the advanced subjects in Study 1 produced 8.16% LPP spoken ranking clauses, the intermediate subjects in this study produced 21.04%. The definition of LPP adopted in both studies is very close to Tomiyama’s (2000: 316) definition of L2 fluency (“[...] fluency as measured by pauses, repetitions, and self-repairs [...]” ⇒ the more pauses, repetitions, and self-repairs, the less fluent the L2 discourse). It appears, thus, that these findings indicate that the quantification of the LPP ranking clauses in an L2 learner’s spoken output may be used as a criterion for determining his/her fluency level.

7. CONCLUSION

The way the analysis of the data and the discussion of the results were conducted allows me to assure that the objectives set for this investigation and stated in the Introduction were fully met. This implies that the superordinate objective – to test the appropriateness of SFG as a data categorization theoretical model for the intermediate level of EFL proficiency, stated as part of the relevance to this study, was also soundly reached.

The reaching of the objectives, however, was possible despite the fact that the occurrence levels of the lexico-grammatical complexification strategy in the subjects’ spoken and written

²⁷ All of the other lacking elements were absent fewer than 8 times.

narratives were only precariously moderate, which is very likely a consequence of the inadequate methodological choice of the top intermediate stage. Instead, the middle stage, supposedly more typical of the intermediate proficiency level, should have been chosen.

Insofar as the data categorization itself is concerned, in some dubious instances, I had to decide whether a subject's utterance was either incomplete or deviant. Such a methodological problem, as Selinker (1992: 54-55) observes, is common to bilingual and IL studies. The researcher is forced to work, for comparison purposes, with a "[...] hypothesized speech of the TL [L2]". I am now inclined to admit that he is in the right path as he suggests that data should be collected not only with the L2 learners but also with native speakers of the L2 (Selinker, 1992: 265-270).

Another difficulty encountered in the data categorization was that of interpretation, as posed by Corder (1981), of the subjects' L2 utterances. Resorting to their L1 (as suggested by Corder himself [1981: 33]) and to some information one of the teachers provided me with about whether the subjects had already been taught certain structures was of great help. The most helpful of all would have been asking the subjects what they really meant by the hard-of-understanding segments in their narratives.

The research now being reported on brought two contributions: 1) Perspective 2 was established as a more realistic analytical approach (working with intermediate learners made me realize that leaving the down-ranked clauses out means disconsidering the occurrence of much simplification; hence, it is recommended that they be included regardless of the proficiency level); 2) the SDCC category was created (what is still to be created is a set of objective criteria for simplified deviations, which can be extracted from the literature, if there is any, or developed by myself).

Pedagogically speaking, it is my opinion that the findings shown here bear relevance only to the *Inglês 6* teachers in the *UFSC Extracurricular Program*, as a diagnosis of problems that should be worked on more heavily so that their fossilization can be attenuated or luckily avoided. A way of generalizing the pedagogical benefits would be by encouraging EFL teachers to analyze their students' spoken and written texts lexico-grammatically in order to search for what simplification/complexification strategies they are making use of. This can only be accomplished if teachers are offered in-service trainings in the basics of SFG.

Further research should be carried out in order to attempt finding answers to the questions raised in the Discussion section. More importantly, however, is the conduction of a third cross-sectional pilot-study with beginning EFL learners, aiming at completing the testing of the appropriateness of SFG as a data categorization framework for a longitudinal IL simplification-complexification study. Only a longitudinal study will be able to discern, for instance, which the more adequate criterion is to determine whether a lexico-grammatical feature has already been acquired/learned: by means of first "emergence" (Bickerton, 1981 *apud* Ellis, 1994: 14) or "accurate use" (Dulay and Burt, 1980 *apud* Ellis, 1994: 14). My *a priori* theoretical preference is for the former, but not when the feature appears for the first time. Since I think this is a weak type of evidence, I hope I can propose, after the conclusion of my longitudinal-study project, the following: a lexico-grammatical feature can be said to have been acquired/learned when it has been used, for a certain (?) period of time, as a filler of the transitivity and mood structural slots it must occupy.

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APPENDIX

KEY FOR DATA CATEGORIZATION:

Processes: Material– M; Mental– ML; Relational– R; Verbal– V; Existential– E

Regularly incomplete clauses (those categorized as idiosyncratically incomplete in SFG): non-finite clauses– NFC; anaphoric elliptical clauses– AEC; exophoric elliptical clauses– EEC; verb-less clauses– VLC.

Clauses without structure (those categorized by SFG as unanalyzable as for Transitivity, Mood, or Theme): minor clauses– MC.

Discourse markers: DM (these will be disconsidered since they are irrelevant to the aims of this study).

Incomplete clauses as for Transitivity or Mood: IC

Complete clauses as for Transitivity and Mood: CC

Simplification-related erroneous complete clauses (simplification is error cause – criterion: from more complex to less complex): SECC

Erroneous complete clauses (simplification is not error cause): ECC

Language-acquisition-process type of incompleteness: LAP

Language-production-process type of incompleteness: LPP

Spoken narrative # 01,02,03... (rendered by Subject 1, 2, 3...): SN01, SN02, SN03, etc.

Written narrative # 01, 02, 03... (rendered by Subject 1, 2, 3...): WN01, WN02, WN03, etc.

Boundary indication for ranking clauses:

Boundary indication for rank-shifted clauses: [[]]

Boundary indication for inserted clauses: << >>

DATA CATEGORIZATION OF ‘SN04’ AND ‘WN04’:

SN04 (SUBJECT 4)

well

DISCOURSE MARKER

CLAUSE 1: in the last month my grandmother die (IC) (LAP)

	in the last month	my grandmother	die	
TRANSITIVITY	Circumstance	Actor	Process: Material	
MOOD			Φ	die
	Adjunct	Subject	past Finite lacking	Predicator
	Re...	incomplete Mood		...sidue

CLAUSE 2: she (IC) (LPP)

	She	Φ		Φ	Φ
TRANSITIVITY	Carrier	Process: Relational lacking		Attribute lacking	Circumstance lacking
MOOD		Φ	Φ		
	Subject	Finite lacking	Predicator lacking	Complement lacking	Adjunct lacking
	incomplete Mood		Residue lacking		

CLAUSE 3: but she take a disease for a three years ago (SECC)

	but	she	take		a disease	for a three years ago
TRANSITIVITY	X	Carrier	Process: Relational (erroneous lexical choice)		Attribute	erroneous Circumstance
MOOD			present	take		
	X	Subject	non-erroneous Finite: 'had'	non-erroneous Predicate: 'had'	Complement	erroneous Adjunct
		X	simplified Mood		Residue	

CLAUSE 4: and in the last three months she don't have a good health (SECC)

	and	In the last three months	she	don't have		a good health
TRANSITIVITY	X	Circumstance	Carrier	Process: Relational		Attribute
MOOD				do + negative polarity	have	
	X	Adjunct	Subject	non-erroneous Finite: 'had + negative polarity'	Non-erroneous Predicate: 'had'	Complement
	X	Re...	simplified Mood		...sidue	

CLAUSE 5: and stay very very very doente (AEC) (IC) (LAP)

	and		stay		very very very doente (Φ)
TRANSITIVITY	X	anaphoric elliptical Carrier: 'she'	Process: Relational		L2 Attribute lacking
MOOD			Φ	stay + Φ	
	X	anaphoric elliptical Subject: 'she'	Finite 'had' lacking	Predicate lacking 'ed' ending	L2 Complement lacking
	X	incomplete Mood		incomplete Residue	

CLAUSE 6: I don't know how to say doente in english (CC)

	I	don't know how to say		doente	in english
TRANSITIVITY	Sayer	Process: Verbal		Verbiage	Circumstance
MOOD		do + negative polarity	know how to say		
	Subject	Finite	Predicate	Complement	Adjunct
		Mood		Residue	

CLAUSE 7: when I was a child (CC)

	when	I	was		a child
TRANSITIVITY	Circumstance	Carrier	Process: Relational		Attribute
MOOD			past	be	
	Adjunct	Subject	Finite	Predicate	Complement
	Re...	Mood		...sidue	

CLAUSE 8: my grandmother help my mother with a *com minha criação* (IC) (LAP)

	my grandmother	help		my mother	with a <i>com minha criação</i> (Φ)
TRANSITIVITY	Actor	Process: Material		Goal	L2 Circumstance lacking
MOOD		Φ	help		
	Subject	past Finite lackig	Predicator	Complement	L2 Adjunct lacking
	incomplete Mood			incomplete Residue	

CLAUSE 9: I don't know (IC) (LAP)

	I	don't know		Φ	
TRANSITIVITY	Senser	Process: Mental		Phenomenon lacking	
MOOD		do + negative polarity	know		
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement lacking	
	Mood			incomplete Residue	

CLAUSE 10: and she is a very very important important for me (IC) (LAP)

	and	she	is		a very very important important (Φ)	for me
TRANSITIVITY	X	Carrier	Process: Relational		incomplete Attribute	Circumstance
MOOD			present	be		
	X	Subject	non-erroneous Finite: 'past'	Predicator	incomplete Complement	Adjunct
	X	Mood		incomplete Residue		

CLAUSE 11: I have a good (IC) (LPP)

	I	have		a good (Φ)	
TRANSITIVITY	Carrier	Process: Relational		incomplete Attribute	
MOOD		present	have		
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	incomplete Complement	
	Mood			incomplete Residue	

CLAUSE 12: I have a good images or histories about she and me (ECC)

	I	have		a good images (of) or histories	about she and me
TRANSITIVITY	Carrier	Process: Relational		erroneous Attribute	erroneous Circumstance
MOOD		present	have		
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	erroneous Complement	erroneous Adjunct
	Mood			Residue	

CLAUSE 13: and I miss you (ECC)

	and	I	miss		you
TRANSITIVITY	X	Senser	Process: Mental		erroneous Phenomenon
MOOD			present	miss	
	X	Subject	Finite	Predicator	erroneous Complement
	X	Mood		Residue	

CLAUSE 14: that's it (CC)

	That	's	it		
TRANSITIVITY	Identified	Process: Relational		Identifier	
MOOD		present	be		
		Subject	Finite	Predicator	Complement
		Mood		Residue	

WN04 (SUBJECT 4)

CLAUSE 1: In the last month my grandmother died. (CC)

	In the last month	my grandmother	died.	
TRANSITIVITY	Circumstance	Actor	Process: Material	
MOOD			past	die
		Subject	Finite	Predicator
		Re...	Mood	

CLAUSE 2: She doesn't have a good healthy for a three years ago, (SECC)

	She	doesn't have		a good healthy	for a three years ago,	
TRANSITIVITY	Carrier	Process: Relational		erroneous Attribute	erroneous Circumstance	
MOOD		does + negative polarity	have			
		Subject	non-erroneous Finite: 'had + negative polarity'	non-erroneous Predicator: 'had'	erroneous Complement	erroneous Adjunct
		simplified Mood		Residue		

CLAUSE 3: but in the last three month's she stay very sick. (IC) (LAP)

	But	in the last three month's	she	stay		very sick	
TRANSITIVITY	X	Circumstance	Carrier	Process: Relational		Attribute	
MOOD				Φ	stay + Φ		
		X	Adjunct	Subject	Finite 'had' lacking	Predicator lacking 'ed' ending	Complement
		X	incomplete Re...	incomplete Mood		...sidue	

CLAUSE 4: When I was a child (CC)

	When	I	was	a child
TRANSITIVITY	Circumstance	Carrier	Process: Relational	Attribute
MOOD			past	be
	Adjunct	Subject	Finite	Predicator
	Re...	Mood		...sidue

CLAUSE 5: my grandmother help my mother with my “criação”. (IC) (LAP)

	My grandmother	help	my mother	with my “criação”. (Φ)
TRANSITIVITY	Actor	Process: Material	Goal	L2 Circumstance lacking
MOOD		Φ	help	
	Subject	past Finite lackig	Predicator	Complement
		Incomplete Mood		incomplete Residue

CLAUSE 6: She is a very important for me, (IC) (LAP)

	She	is	a very important (Φ)	for me,
TRANSITIVITY	Carrier	Process: Relational	incomplete Attribute	Circumstance
MOOD		present	be	
	Subject	non-erroneous Finite: 'past'	Predicator	incomplete Complement
		Mood		incomplete Residue

CLAUSE 7: because this. (VLC) (AEC) (IC) (LAP)

	because + Φ	this
TRANSITIVITY	Minor Process lacking 'of'	Range (reference item whose referent is Clause # 5)
MOOD	Minor Predicator lacking 'of'	Complement (reference item whose referent is Clause # 5)

CLAUSE 8: I have a good memories, images and histories about my grandmother. (ECC)

	I	have	a good memories, images (of) and histories	about my grandmother.
TRANSITIVITY	Carrier	Process: Relational	erroneous Attribute	Circumstance
MOOD		present	have	
	Subject	Finite	Predicator	erroneous Complement
		Mood		Residue

CLAUSE 9: I miss she. (SECC)

	I	miss	she.
TRANSITIVITY	Senser	Process: Mental	erroneously simplified Phenomenon
MOOD		present	miss
	Subject	Finite	Predicator
		Mood	erroneously simplified Complement
			simplified Residue