L1 effects on the development of L2 subordination

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Introduction

- Extensive research on Clause Subordination in both L1 and L2 acquisition(CS, Baten & Håkansson, 2015; Gass & Lee, 2007; Müller & Penner, 1996).
- CS is approached as:
  - **an acquisitional target** with its own developmental characteristics, or
  - **a descriptor of learner language** under the Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency (CAF, Bulté & Housen, 2012; Michel, 2017; Ortega, 2012; Wolfe-Qintero et al., 1998) framework.
- Limits of previous research:
  - Studies on the acquisition of CS mostly focused on Relative Clauses (RC, Gass & Lee, 2007).
  - CS treated as a unitary construct of global syntactic complexity (Lambert & Kormos, 2014).
  - Lacking finer distinctions of subordination types.

Methods

- Sampled corpus from EFCAMDAT:
  - Balanced sample of 31,040 texts from 16 proficiency levels (mapped to CEFR from A1 to C1).
  - 4 L1s: Brazilian Portuguese, Chinese, Russian, Japanese.
- SC usage measure: # **SCs / 1k words**.
- Patterns to observe: **developmental variations based on SC types (4 types) and L1 backgrounds.**

Findings

- Usage of clause subordination increases steadily with the development of proficiency, although L1 variation exists (Panel 1).
- Chinese learners of English use more SCs than the other L1 groups, which is mainly driven by the excessive use of complement clauses, but not adverbial or relative clauses (Panels 2-4).
- Within L1s, there is also variations in the development of different types of SCs.
- The syntactic difference between L1 and L2 subordination partially explains these variations.

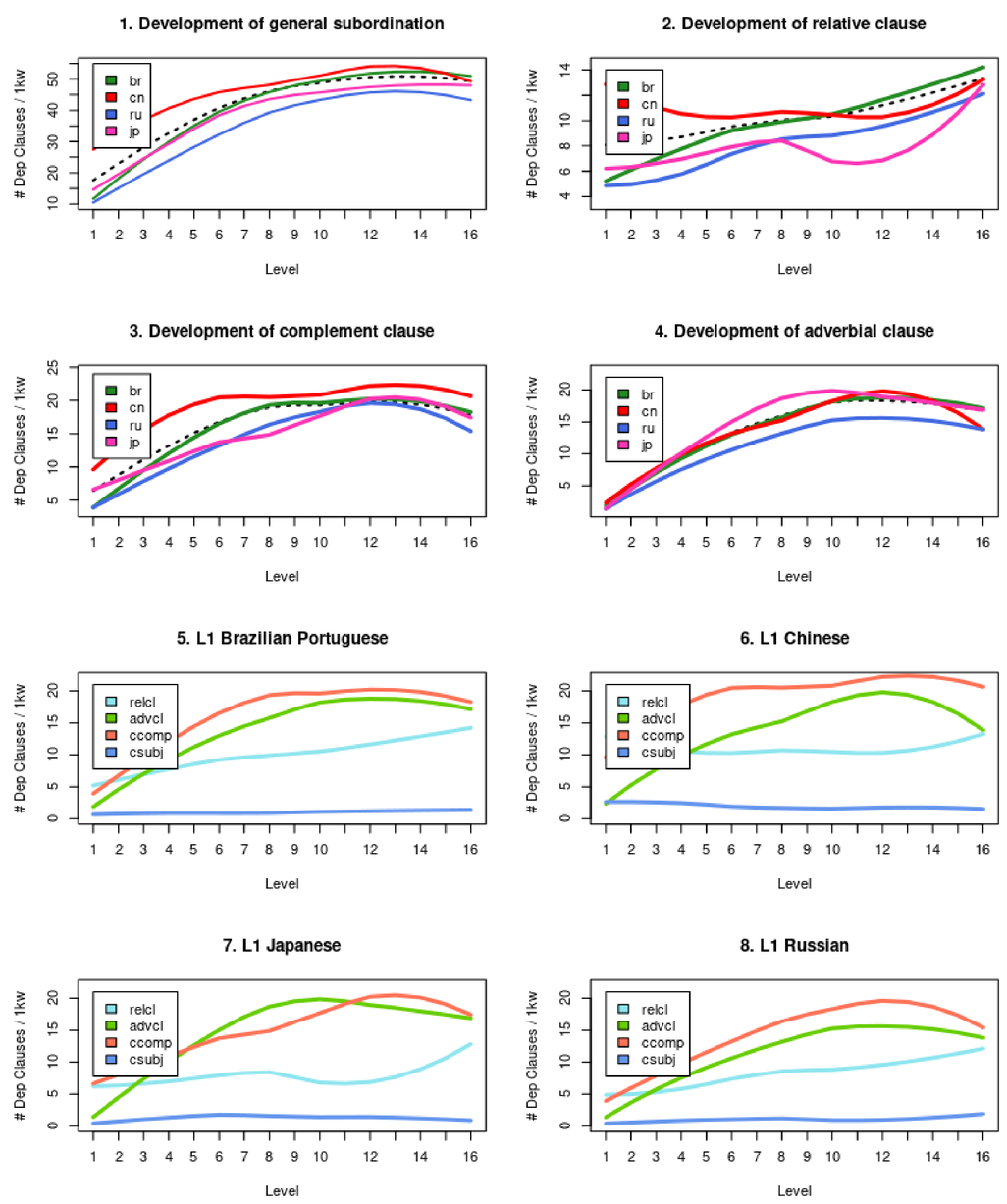
Aims of Our Study

- Investigate the **development of different types of subordinate clauses** (SCs) in L2 English across proficiency levels.
- Examine **the effects of L1 on L2 SC development**.

Instruments

- **AutoSubClause**: A tool for automatically extracting subordinate clauses from texts (technical details in Chen, Alexopoulou, Tsimpli, in prep).
- Information extraction **capabilities**: clause text, SC type, finiteness, subordinator, level of embedding, complement type, RC restrictiveness, head noun (HN), HN animancy, and grammatical roles in both the main and subordinate clauses.
- Performance: the tool is based on CoreNLP's highly accurate dependency parser, which performs well on both authentic and learner texts (Chen & Manning, 2014; Lu, 2010; Huang et al., 2018).

Results



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