

## Articles, telicity, and lexical transfer

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The second language (L2) acquisition of functional categories/features (FCs) has long attracted researchers' attention. Whether the entirety of L1 properties (including FCs) is transferred at the initial stage or FCs are missing at the beginning (and L1 transfer occurs at subsequent stages) has been discussed intensively. This study investigates the interpretation of articles and DPs by L2ers to shed light on this topic.

When an activity/accomplishment verb has a singular object, the event denoted by the verb phrase is *telic* (having an end-point) and is incompatible with the expression of event cancellation (i.e., *didn't finish eating it*), as in (1a). In contrast, an activity/accomplishment verb with a plural object tolerates event cancellation, as in (1b). Furthermore, when the definite article or a demonstrative is added to the plural NP, the event becomes telic, as given in (1c, d).

- (1) a. Bill ate *an apple*<sub>[sg]</sub>, #but didn't finish eating it.  
b. Bill ate *apples*<sub>[pl, -def]</sub>, but didn't finish eating them.  
c. Bill ate *the apples*<sub>[pl, +def]</sub>, #but didn't finish eating them.  
d. Bill ate *these apples*<sub>[pl, +def]</sub>, #but didn't finish eating them.

Given that Japanese optionally projects NumberP but lacks articles, 'Full Transfer at the Initial Stage' predicts a better performance on (1b) than the others by low proficiency Japanese-learners of English, whereas 'Lack of FCs at the Initial Stage' predicts no differences among them. Besides, 'Subsequent Transfer' predicts relatively advanced learners perform better on (1d) than (1c). We discuss these predictions with empirical data and the theoretical implications for L2 acquisition.