Japanese Crosslinguistic Influence on the Dutch Progressive Aspect

Transfer from the Japanese *–te iru* to the Dutch *–is aan het*

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction

Japanese people have been trying to learn Dutch over the course of the trade relationship between the countries which goes back over 400 years. The two languages have many differences to be overcome by L2 (second language) learners, as the grammar, vocabulary and syntax of Dutch are sometimes materially different from Japanese – this because the two languages are typologically quite distant.

Over the past few decades, research has shown that for adult learners, one's first language (L1) can and does influence the acquisition of a second language (L2), and the other way around as well (e.g. Ellis 1994; Jarvis and Pavlenko 2010; Odlin 2003). The present research concerns the role of a speaker's L1 in their expressing an L2, where L2 stands for every language learnt after the first. In the case of the present research, the participants were L1 Japanese speakers using L2 Dutch.

Japanese as a language has featured in many studies on second language acquisition (SLA), from both target and source language viewpoints. Where Japanese as an L1 has been examined, it was generally done in comparison to the English progressive form *–ing* (e.g. Gabriele, Martohardjono and McClure 2005; McClure 1993). English is the first foreign language Japanese speakers generally learn in school, and which has been taught from Grade 5 in elementary school onwards since 2011 (MEXT). When adult Japanese speakers choose to learn Dutch, they will thus often have a basis in English as well, which might affect the way they acquire Dutch. Japanese learners of Dutch have as of yet not featured in any studies, and the present research will thus be a first foray into the field.

The main theoretic foci of this thesis are crosslinguistic influence and the Aspect Hypothesis. Crosslinguistic influence is the influence from one's L1 to one's L2 and vice versa (Scott and Pavlenko 2010), and this thesis is specifically concerned with the transfer of

progressive aspect from L1 to L2. The Aspect Hypothesis states, among other things, that [second] language learners will be influenced by the inherent semantic aspect of verbs in the acquisition of tense and aspect markers associated with those verbs (Andersen and Shirai 1994, 133)

Tense and aspect encompass an important section in the field of Japanese linguistics. The Japanese grammatical aspect marker –*te iru* has featured in many studies (e.g. McClure 1993; Nara 1999; Ogihara 1998; Ogihara 1999; Shirai 2000; Shirai and Kurono 1998; Yoshioka and Hilberink-Schulpen 2012). See also Li and Shirai 2000 for a review of the studies on the acquisition of –*te iru* available at the time. The Japanese –*te iru* can obtain both progressive and resultative meanings in combination with different verbs. The studies featuring –*te iru* generally focus on the different ways the two meanings are obtained (e.g. Jacobsen 1992; Kudo 1995; McClure 1993; Ogihara 1999; Shirai 2000). The present study, however, is solely focussed on the progressive meaning, in combination with its possible crosslinguistic influence on the use of the Dutch progressive construction –*is aan het*.

As for the Aspect Hypothesis, Japanese has been one of the only non-Indo-European languages studied concerning the Aspect Hypothesis, and even then not in very many studies (Bardovi-Harlig 2000, 231). Shirai and Kurono (1998, 249) state that studies concerning the Aspect Hypothesis up until then had involved only typologically similar languages. Thus, in order to claim universal status for the theory, the research must also cover non-Indo-European languages, such as Japanese. Japanese has featured in several studies, generally compared with English, but it has not been compared with Dutch yet on the area of aspect acquisition so far.

The present research will, first, try to identify possible crosslinguistic L1-L2 influence, from –*te iru* to –*is aan het,* as observed in tokens used. Secondly, in order to improve the

basis of claim for the Aspect Hypothesis, it will investigate whether the hypothesised association between lexical category and verbal morphology also applies to Japanese speakers of Dutch, two typologically distant languages. In addition, shedding more light on the possible influence of Japanese speakers' L1 on their L2 Dutch may allow for the possible creation of specific teaching programs.

This thesis starts with an overview of second language acquisition, with a focus on crosslinguistic influence. Next, in chapter 3, the concept of (progressive) aspect is elaborated on, with specific mention of the Japanese *–te iru*, the Dutch *–is aan het* and the English *–ing.* Chapter 4 covers the research question and hypotheses, followed by the methodology in Chapter 5 and an analysis of the results in Chapter 6. The thesis ends with a discussion of the limitations and implications of the present research, as well as a conclusion with some suggestions for future research.

2. L1-L2 Transfer in Second Language Acquisition

This chapter focuses on the possible influence from the first language on acquiring and using a second language. First, the definition of second language acquisition will be explored, as well as some variables which possibly affect the process of acquisition are examined. Next, the details of crosslinguistic influence and transfer will be examined, and lastly some studies will be elaborated on which discuss whether or not morphological transfer can even occur in second language acquisition at all.

The term 'second language' is generally used to refer to any language other than the mother tongue (Ellis 1994, 11). In this, a distinction is made between the acquisition of the *second* language, and someone learning a *foreign* language. A foreign language is a language which primarily learnt only in the classroom, and which has no big role in the community – such as L1 Japanese speakers learning English at school. In contrast, a *second* language plays an institutional and social role in the community (Ellis 1994, 12), such as in the case of L1 Japanese people who are living in the Netherlands and are acquiring Dutch. Though Ellis (1994) states that a more 'neutral and superordinate' term is needed, in this thesis the term 'second language' or 'L2' will be used, with the term also including languages learned after the first L2 is acquired.

A second language can be acquired in either a *naturalistic* or an *instructed* fashion. The *naturalistic* way of acquiring a language means the process of learning a language through naturally occurring social situations, and the *instructed* way refers to actively studying, with help from textbooks and/or structured instruction (Ellis 1994, 12). Japanese speakers living in the Netherlands will most likely have done some sort of learning of Dutch, if only to get the basics for everyday life down. For this purpose, they might have used textbooks or other types of structured instruction to further their knowledge of the language.

In this thesis, the participants are adults who are learning, or have learnt, a second language, most likely in an *instructed* second language acquisition situation.

Next, what it means to 'acquire a language' is examined. Unfortunately, researchers have been unable to agree on a single, clear definition for the concept of acquisition of a language (Ellis 1994). Incidentally, this also makes it very hard to compare the results of studies on the same subject, as one cannot always assume that the same thing is meant by the same terms. 'Acquisition' can mean a few different things, which we'll take a closer look at below.

First, some researchers distinguish between 'acquisition' and 'learning' (for example, Krashen 1981), where 'acquisition' is used to refer to picking up a language unconsciously, through mere exposure to it. 'Learning' in this definition refers to the conscious process of studying it. Although this distinction may seem a valid one at face value, it is in fact problematic, not in the least because of the difficulty in determining which of the two types of knowledge learners possess (Ellis 1994). Due to this difficulty, in this thesis the term 'acquisition' will generally be used, and the term 'learning' will be mentioned when its specific meaning is referred to, i.e. a child first *acquiring* a language feature as opposed to an adult *learning* a second language.

Secondly, researchers also cannot agree on what constitutes the performance of 'acquisition'. Some researchers look at what language learners produce, others study learner's intuitions about the second language they're acquiring, and yet others ask learners for their introspections and study those (Ellis 1994, 14). So when can someone be said to have acquired a linguistic feature? Does it come with the first appearance, as for example Bickerton (1981) claimed, or perhaps after it is used with a certain level of accuracy

(generally set at 80% or 90% in obligatory contexts), as for example Andersen states is now the "usual criterion" (1991, 306)?

Clearly, there is not a single, simple answer as to what 'second language acquisition' is, or how one measures it. Ellis calls it a complex, multifaceted phenomenon, which has come to mean different things to different people (1994, 15). However, one of the main differences between the acquisition of language by babies and adults learning a second language is that adults already have the knowledge of their L1 when learning an L2, which might influence them in certain ways. The next section sheds some light what shape this influence might take, what aspects might affect this influence, and how to identify that influence.

2.1. Crosslinguistic Influence

The process of acquiring a second language is definitely not the same as learning your first language. One's first language (L1) is popularly believed to strongly influence the process of acquisition of a second language (Ellis 1986), and this phenomenon of *crosslinguistic influence* (CLI) can be described as "the influence of a person's knowledge of one language on that person's knowledge or use of another language" (Jarvis and Pavlenko 2010, 1).

At a time when scholars were all using terms such as *transfer, interference* and *borrowing,* often without meaning the same thing for each term, Sharwood Smith and Kellerman (1986) came up with the term *crosslinguistic influence*, stating that:

… the term 'crosslinguistic influence' … is theory-neutral, allowing one to subsume under one heading such phenomena as 'transfer', 'interference', 'avoidance', 'borrowing'

and L2-related aspects of language loss and thus permitting discussion of the similarities and differences between these phenomena (1986, 1).

Kellerman further suggests that the term transfer, in concurrence with crosslinguistic influence, be restricted to "those processes that lead to the incorporation of elements from one language into another" (1987, 3). Though this was a good suggestion, and although Kellerman and Sharwood Smith's term of crosslinguistic influence has since gained general acceptance, Jarvis and Pavlenko (2010) acknowledge in their comprehensive book on crosslinguistic influence that 'transfer' and 'interference' are still being used synonymously with CLI. In this thesis, the terms crosslinguistic influence and transfer will, in agreement with Jarvis and Pavlenko, be used interchangeably.

Jarvis and Pavlenko (2010) identify two main types of transfer in crosslinguistic influence, namely conceptual and linguistic transfer. Within linguistic transfer they identify phonological and orthographic, lexical and semantic, morphological and syntactic, discursive, and pragmatic and sociological transfer. This thesis will focus on linguistic transfer, and within that on the morphological transfer that occurs with progressive aspect. Progressive aspect is a category of imperfective that typically denotes an action in progress, which will be further elaborated on in the next chapter. The present thesis focusses on whether L1-L2 transfer, and possibly L2-L2 transfer, can be identified in the use of progressive aspect in Dutch as an L2.

Linguistic transfer concerns "the way in which L2 users' production, perception, and comprehension of forms and structures in one language are affected by their linguistic knowledge of another language" (Jarvis and Pavlenko 2010, 61). In general, transfer can occur in "all linguistic subsystems" (Odlin 1989), though it is not always equally visible. CLI has not always been acknowledged to be important in every aspect of language equally.

Within linguistic transfer, the existence of morphological and syntactic transfer has been – and often still is – treated with a great deal of scepticism (Jarvis and Pavlenko 2010, 92). This scepticism arose partly from a sometimes too narrow understanding of how CLI might express itself, and also from a failure to recognise the effects of CLI when overshadowed by their interaction with other variables like oversimplification and overgeneralisation (e.g. Jarvis and Odlin 2000). However, several different studies (e.g. Jarvis 2002; Jarvis and Odlin 2000; Master 1997) have found that one's L1 grammatical morphology can, and does, affect the way a person uses a second language.

Of the studies into the acquisition of grammatical morphology in SLA, one of the most intensively investigated subjects is the expression of tense and aspect (Jarvis and Pavlenko 2010, 94). However, even with the multitude of carefully designed studies, not much evidence for transfer has been found yet (Bardovi-Harlig 2000; Jarvis and Pavlenko 2010). On the other hand, studies like Collins' (1999) dissertation research show subtle effect from the participants' L1 on the tense and aspectual forms they choose in a second language, leading Bardovi-Harlig to concluded that first language influence may be found in the details rather than the larger picture (2000, 411). Therefore, the present study hopes to tease out evidence of transfer by focussing on a language pair (Japanese to Dutch) and within that on the transfer of the use of the progressive (*–te iru* to *–is aan het*), which has not yet been researched so far.

In a follow-up investigation to her 1999 study, Collins (2002) investigated L1 French speakers of L2 English. Her results supported the predictions of the Aspect Hypothesis (Andersen and Shirai 1994; Bardovi-Harlig 1994), a theory which states, among other things, that [second] language learners will be influenced by the inherent semantic aspect of verbs

in the acquisition of tense and aspect markers associated with those verbs (Andersen and Shirai 1994, 133). The Aspect Hypothesis will be further discussed in more detail later.

Jarvis and Pavlenko (2010) cite the studies done by Collins (2002); Jarvis and Odlin (2002) and Polunenko (2004) as sources of studies which provide strong evidence that morphological transfer can and does occur. Collins' (2002) results generally support the Aspect Hypothesis, but they also show evidence of L1-L2 transfer in her participant's use of morphology. As paraphrased by Jarvis and Pavlenko: "[S]imple past is expressed in French with morphology that is structurally similar to English perfect morphology, and French-speaking learners of English correspondingly show a tendency to mark simple past with perfect morphology" (2010, 95). The Japanese has a grammaticalised, obligatory form of the progressive, while the Dutch equivalent is not fully grammaticalised and thus not obligatory yet. The present research hopes to add to the evidence of L1-L2 transfer on tense and aspect morphology by finding a similar occurrence to that in Collins' 2002 study, by examining the verb forms participants choose.

The next chapter will introduce the concept of aspect as expressed in Japanese second language acquisition, it will look at the Aspect Hypothesis in more detail, and it will elaborate on the way progressive aspect is represented in English, Dutch and Japanese.

3. Aspect in Japanese Second Language Acquisition

The expression of time in language is a fundamental ability, and learning to talk about time is therefore one of the earliest steps in language acquisition. Are you meeting up with your friend today or tomorrow? Are you *going* to the doctor, or *have you gone* to him? Though not always in the same way, every language encompasses the ability to lexicalise time reference, for example by having "temporal adverbials that locate situations in time, such as English *today, the year before last, at five o'clock"* (Comrie 1976, 6). Some languages use grammatical (morphological) means to express time, but some languages like Chinese use other methods, such as viewpoint aspect or temporal adverbials (Lin 2006).

This chapter will first examine the general concepts of tense and aspect, the latter of which has two subcategories: lexical and grammatical aspect. Next, the Aspect Hypothesis and the prototype theory will be explained in greater detail. Lastly, because this thesis looks at the possible transfer of progressive aspect of L1 (Japanese) or possibly L2 (English) on the use of another L2 (Dutch), the progressive aspect systems of these three languages will be elaborated on.

3.1. Tense and Aspect

Two of the most important concepts in expressing time are tense and aspect, which are semantic notions concerning temporality encoded implicitly and explicitly on the verb (Salaberry and Shirai 2002, 2). This chapter is focussed on taking a closer look at tense and aspect, and of the latter more specifically progressive aspect. This chapter will deal with the differences and interactions between grammatical and lexical aspect, how progressive

aspect is acquired, as well as how it is represented in three languages: Dutch, English and Japanese.

First, a distinction between the concepts of tense and aspect needs to be made. A deictic category, tense places a situation in time with respect to some other time, generally taken to be the moment of speech (Salaberry and Shirai 2002, 2). Aspect "concerns the different perspectives which a speaker can take and express in regard to the temporal course of some event, action, process, etc." (Klein 1994, 16). Traditionally there are two types of aspect, namely grammatical aspect (or viewpoint aspect) and lexical aspect (Andersen 1986), the latter of which is also sometimes called situation type (Smith 1991). In the next section, a closer look is taken at grammatical aspect and lexical aspect.

3.1.1. Grammatical Aspect

Grammatical aspect provides a means of expressing one's view of a situations or an event (Bardovi-Harlig 2000, 10), while lexical aspect refers to the inherent lexical semantics of a verb (Salaberry and Shirai 2002, 2). The present section will be focused on grammatical aspect, while lexical aspect will be the focus of the next section.

Grammatical aspect refers to the internal nature of the situation or event, as opposed to the time it takes place, as in tense (Andersen 1991, 310). For example, the sentences *Mike slept* (simple past) and *Mike was sleeping* (past progressive) are both in the past tense, yet show a difference in grammatical aspect.

(1) *Mike is walking home.*

In sentence (1), the grammatical aspect pertains to what aspectual notion is encoded on the verb 'to walk', in this case the marker for progressive aspect *–ing,* meaning that the action is in progress – Mike is walking home at the time the speech act takes place.

Every language realises grammatical aspect in a different way, such as by using inflectional morphology, derivational morphology, auxiliary, or periphrastic constructions (Li and Shirai 2000, 11), yet recurring patterns of aspectual marking have been uncovered in languages across the world (Bybee 1985; Bybee and Dahl 1989; Bybee, Perkins and Pagliuca 1994; Comrie 1976; Dahl 1985, all in Li and Shirai 2000). In the next section, these grammatical aspectual patterns and how they relate to one another are examined.

The most basic grammatically encoded aspectual opposition pertains to the perfective and imperfective (Li and Shirai 2000, 12; Shirai 2000, 330). Perfective aspect presents a situation from an external view, with a given endpoint, and imperfective aspect presents an action as seen from within (Comrie 1976). Two examples of this can be seen in (2) and (3) below.'

(2) *Mary wrote a book.*

(3) *Mary was writing a book.*

Sentence (2) is aspectually perfective (not to be confused with the perfect verb form), which means it presents a complete action, a situation in its entirety: Mary wrote a book from start to finish, and no distinction is made to the various separate phrases that make up that situation (Comrie 1976, 16). This is not to say that the action it refers to is not internally complex, or that it does not include a number of distinct internal phases, but rather that the situation is represented as a single whole (Comrie 1976, 21).

Sentence (3) is aspectually imperfective, which presents an internal view of the situation, but does not specify either the beginning or endpoint of the event. In Sentence (3), the event of Mary writing a book was in progress at some point in time, but whether or not the action was completed is unclear (Gabriele, Martohardjono and McClure 2005, 809). The imperfective aspect can be separated in the oppositional habitual and continuous forms, and this latter category again into non-progressive and progressive. This is illustrated below, as proposed by Comrie (1976, 25).

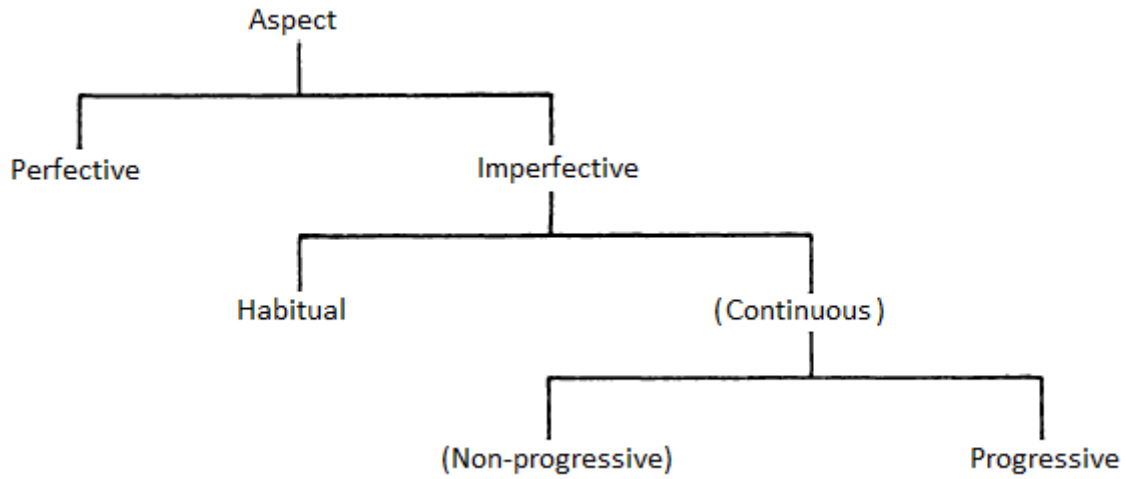

Figure 1. Classification of aspectual oppositions (adapted from Comrie 1976, 25).

It is the progressive form in the bottom right of Figure 1 that this thesis is focused on, and then specifically the progressive forms *–te iru* in Japanese and the *–is aan het* construction in Dutch. The English progressive form *–ing* will also be touched upon in this thesis, but is not the main focus. These specific grammatical forms will be further elaborated on later in this chapter.

3.1.2. Lexical Aspect

In this section the second aspectual type, namely lexical aspect, is discussed. Though the main focus of this thesis lies with the progressive forms, and thus grammatical aspect, part of the research will also focus on the application of that progressive form to two types of lexical aspect. Therefore, a more in-depth discussion of lexical aspect is required.

While the speaker can change grammatical aspect at will, lexical aspect is an inherent property of a verb and is invariant. However, the speaker is still free to make a choice as to how to describe a situation, so both levels of aspectual choice (inherent lexical aspect, and grammatical aspect) are basically linguistic choices (Andersen and Shirai 1996, 531). Still, every verb phrase can be classified semantically on its inherent lexical aspect (Vendler 1957).

Compare for instance *write a book* and *sit:* there is a natural endpoint to writing a book – namely finishing it – as there is not for sitting. One can stop sitting at any point in time, but one cannot simply be said to be 'finished' sitting. This demonstrates a distinction of lexical aspect between the two verbs. The following paragraph will elaborate on the four different types currently in vogue in regard to lexical aspect.

Zeno Vendler (1957) has been influential within the purview of lexical aspect, having classified four semantic categories of verbs: State, Activity, Accomplishment, and Achievement. These four categories are schematically represented below in Figure 2:

State	----------	*love, know*
Activity	~~~~~~~~	*read, run, draw*
Accomplishment	~~~~~~~~X	*write a book, walk home*
Achievement	X	*fall, notice, win the race*

Figure 2. Schematic representation of Vendler classifications (Shirai 2000, 330).

These four classifications of the inherent semantics of verbs are the starting point of any research on lexical aspect, and while the present research applies the progressive aspect only to two of these categories (Activity and Accomplishment), for clarity's sake all four categories are explained below – along with the meaning of the straight lines, the wavy lines, and the X's in Figure 2.

The category **State** represents verbs which are ongoing, without a beginning or endpoint, and which will stay the same unless something makes it change. **Activity** verbs are ongoing activities, which can be stopped at any point in time by the actor. If stopped, the action cannot be said to have been 'completed', merely to have ceased. **Accomplishment** verbs have a natural endpoint, a moment in time when the action is completed and thus stopped, such as in the verb phrase *walking home* – as soon as you reach home, you have automatically stopped *walking home*. **Achievement** verbs generally represent a single point in time, and are thus instantaneous. An example of this would be to *realise you forgot something*: though you will probably still know that you've forgotten something later on, the *realisation* took merely a moment.

These four semantic categories contain three properties that may [+] or may not [–] apply to a verb, namely dynamicity, telicity and punctuality (Andersen 1991; Comrie 1976). Dynamicity differentiates stative verbs (with little to no change over time) from dynamic ones (which describe a process that changes). Telicity specifies whether a verb has a natural endpoint or not, at which point the action is completed – the action cannot continue once that endpoint is reached. Lastly, if a verb is punctual, it happens instantaneously, meaning the event it describes occurs at a single point in time, as opposed to it having duration (e.g. Lee 2001, 594).

The straight line in the schematization represents State, which has no clearly specified beginning or endpoint, and is thus timeless in a way. States will also stay that way unless something makes it change, making it atelic. The wavy line indicates the dynamic duration of the action for Activity and Accomplishment, and the X seen with Accomplishment and Achievement represents the punctual [instantaneous] point of change of state. The X thus represents a clearly defined endpoint, and indicates the telicity of the verb. Therefore, States are [–dynamic], [–telic], [–punctual]; Activities are [+dynamic], [–telic], [–punctual]; Accomplishments are [+dynamic], [+telic], [–punctual]; and Achievements are [+dynamic], [+telic], [+punctual] (Andersen 1991).

Lexical aspect and grammatical aspect interact, so that grammatical forms sometimes yield different interpretations depending on the lexical class of the verb. For instance, while both English and Japanese have a grammatical form denoting the progressive, the two forms (*-ing* and *–te iru*) interact differently with the lexical semantics of the verbs to which they attach. The English *–ing* always denotes a progressive reading regardless of the verb stem, while the Japanese *–te iru* allows both progressive and perfective interpretations depending on the lexical semantics of the verbs (e.g. Gabriele and Martohardjono 2005, 98). This difference will be elaborated on later, in the paragraphs on the specific progressive forms.

The interaction of lexical and grammatical aspect has been observed to appear in certain patterns, in particular in regard to what in order specific markings (grammatical aspect) are acquired with specific verb forms (lexical aspect). These will be examined in more detail in the next section.

3.2. Aspect Hypothesis and Prototype Theory

The research on the L2 acquisition of tense-aspect morphology has provided the following observations:

- Learners will initially use perfective or past markings with achievement and accomplishment verbs, and only later extend its use to activity and state verbs.
- In languages that have a progressive form, learners first use the progressive marking with activity verbs, and only later extend its use to accomplishment and achievement verbs.
- In languages that encode the perfective/imperfective distinction morphologically, perfective past precedes imperfective past, and imperfective past markings begin with stative and activity (i.e. atelic) verbs, and only later extend its use to accomplishment and achievement (i.e. telic) verbs.

These tendencies were first observed in research on the L1 acquisition of various languages, and then applied to SLA by Andersen (1986) – they have been referred to as the Defective Tense Hypothesis, the Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis, and the Aspect Hypothesis. In this thesis, following Andersen and Shirai (1994), they will be referred to as the Aspect Hypothesis.

According to Andersen and Shirai (1994, 133), the Aspect Hypothesis states that: "First and second language learners will initially be influenced by the inherent semantic aspect of verbs or predicates in the acquisition of tense and aspect markers associated with or affixed to these verbs."

The explanations for the associations found in the Aspect Hypothesis are based on the theory of prototype categories (Clark 1989; Lakoff 1987; Rosch 1973; Ross 1973; Taylor

1989, all in Andersen and Shirai 1996, 555). This theory argues that a given category has specific members, the 'best examplars' or prototypes, which share many characteristics with the other members of the category. Each category also has non-prototypical members, which exhibit fewer features in common with the other members of the category. When applied to (second) language acquisition (see Taylor 1989 for a review of the prototype theory as applied to language acquisition studies), learners begin to acquire a linguistic category by first applying it to the most prototypical member(s) of that category, and only later extending it to the more peripheral members (e.g. Gabriele, Martohardjono and McClure 2005, 809).

For example, the prototype meaning for the category progressive is 'action in progress' (e.g. Li and Shirai 2000; Shirai 1991; Shirai 2002), denoting the semantic features [+dynamic, -telic]. If learners restrict their internal semantic representation of the progressive to only these [+dynamic, -telic] features, that may explain why in the beginning they restrict the use of the progressive to Activity verbs (Gabriele, Martohardjono and McClure 2005, 809), and only later applying it to other types of verb phrases. In regard to the order of acquisition of the progressive (grammatical) aspect, Andersen and Shirai (1996, 558) hypothesize that the internal structure, from most prototypical to marginal members, is as follows:

(4) process (activity → accomplishment) → iterative → habitual or futurate → stative progressive.

Example (4) shows the order in which the progressive is acquired with particular verb forms, based on their level of prototypicality within the category. Achievement verbs are not

included in Example (4), because when used with a progressive, they do not denote the meaning 'action in progress'. Instead, they obtain iterative, habitual or futurate meanings, with futurate here including the meaning of 'process leading up to the endpoint' such as *He's reaching the summit* (Andersen and Shirai 1996, 558).

Some researchers have lately questioned the predictions of the Aspect Hypothesis (e.g. Ayoung and Salaberry 2005; Domínguez et al. 2013; Labeau 2005; Salaberry 2008, all in McManus 2013), as they recovered data which for instance noted that prototypicality increased with proficiency (e.g. Labeau 2005). McManus (2013) even found evidence of an L2 acquisition route opposite to the one predicted by the Aspect Hypothesis. The present research is not a longitudinal study and thus cannot say anything concrete about these findings, but will keep them in mind in analysing the results.

This thesis looks into the acquisition of the progressive by Japanese learners of Dutch, who also already have knowledge of English. Therefore, in the next section the progressive aspect systems in English, Dutch and Japanese will be looked into, after which they will be used to illuminate the research question and hypotheses for the present study.

The English progressive *–ing* is the first to be examined. It is a form with broad uses, and because it is the first L2 the Japanese speakers have learnt, it may therefore possibly influence the present research. Next is the Dutch progressive *–is aan het,* the target language, which is solely used to express the ongoingness of an event. Lastly the Japanese *–te iru* will be focused on, which is a fully grammaticalised form of aspect, but which also has some characteristics that differ from the English *–ing.*

3.3. Progressive Aspect

3.3.1. The English *–ing*

In English, the grammatical marker *–ing* normally[1] has the following meanings when combined with different types of lexical aspect, the four Vendler categories (Vendler 1957):

(1)	Activity	Action in progress
		He's running. She's playing the guitar.
(2)	Accomplishment	Action in progress
		He's making a chair. He's running a mile.
(3)	Achievement	(a) Process leading up to an endpoint
		He's reaching the summit. He's leaving.
		(b) Iterative action in progress
		He's jumping. He's knocking on the door.
		(c) Anomaly
		**I'm noticing an error. *She's recognizing John.*
(4)	State	(a) Vividness; temporariness
		I'm liking it! I'm thinking that he might be sick.
		(b) Anomaly
		**I am owning a car. *I am knowing him.*

(Taken from Shirai and Kurono 1998, 250-251)

[1] This does not include the more marked cases of habitual (e.g. *I've been riding my bicycle to work recently*) and futurate (e.g. *we are flying to Rome tomorrow*), which can be used for any of these verb types (Shirai and Kurono 1998, 272)

The progressive form cannot be used to denote futurate meanings in Japanese (Shirai and Kurono 1998, 272) or Dutch (Stern 1984). The English progressive is defined essentially by continuousness (Comrie 1976), and as mentioned before, its prototypical features are that of an action which is in progress [+durative] and not complete [–telic] (Shirai and Andersen 1995).

3.3.2. The Dutch *–is aan het*

Dutch lacks a fully grammaticalised and thus obligatory form of aspect, and it is used considerably less frequently than the English *–ing* (e.g. Edwards 2014; Mortier 2008; Von Stutterheim, Carroll and Klein 2009). Instead, it has the periphrastic construction *is aan het* + infinitive, which is used to express the ongoingness of an event, as demonstrated in Example (4) below.

(4) *Hij is aan het tennissen*
he is play tennis-PERI[2].
'He is playing tennis.'

This construction is hypothesised to be (becoming) a grammatical marker of progressive aspect (Flecken 2011), but has not been officially acknowledged as such. Other ways in which the progressive can be indicated in Dutch include postural verb constructions such as *zitten/liggen/staan te* + infinitive, or 'busy locative' constructions such as *bezig met* + infinitive (Bogaart 1999), but the *–is aan het* construction is by far the most used (e.g. Behrens, Flecken and Carroll 2013, also cf. van Ierland 2010). The *–is aan het* construction is used considerably less than the English marker *–ing* (Mortier 2008; von Stutterheim, Carroll and Klein 2009), also because it covers less ground than the English progressive. There are

[2] The following transcription conventions are used: ACC = accusative, ASP = aspect, NOM = nominative, NONPAST = nonpast, PAST = past, PERI = periphrastic construction.

no grammatical rules as to when to use the periphrastic construction to express ongoingness, or when to use the simple present tense form, as both are a valid options (Yoshioka and Hilberink-Schulpen 2012), and the choice between which of the two to use is mainly a personal one. In addition, unlike with the English *–ing* as seen above, the meaning of the Dutch periphrastic construction *–is aan het* does not change according to the semantics of the verb phrase it is attached to, always denoting an ongoing or progressive interpretation (Yoshioka and Hilberink-Schulpen 2012, 422).

3.3.3. The Japanese *–te iru*

The Japanese *–te iru* form is an aspectual affix to verbs, which can have several different meanings. Unlike Dutch, the meaning the form obtains is heavily dependent on the semantics of the verb phrase it is attached to (e.g. Jacobsen 1992; Kudo 1995; McClure 1993; Ogihara 1999; Shirai 2000).

The prototypical interpretation of *–te iru,* when combined with Activity or Accomplishment verb phrases, is that of a durative imperfective marker, which indicates an action in progress at the reference time, and thus the progressive (Li and Shirai 2000, 129). This is illustrated in Example (5).

(5) *Taro wa* *hashit-te iru*
Taro Topic run-ASP-NONPAST
Taro is running.

When combined with Achievement verb phrases, the *–te iru* construction differs from the English *–ing* in a noticeable way, in that it leads to a resultative interpretation, as shown in Examples (6) and (7).

(6) *Taro wa* *kekkon shi-te iru*
Taro Topic marry do-ASP-NONPAST

'Taro is married.'

(7) *Densha ga eki ni tsui-te iru*
Train NOM station at arrive-ASP-NONPAST
'The train (arrived and) is at the station.'

These two examples show different aspects of the resultative state meaning which is obtained when the –*te iru* form is used with an Achievement verb phrase. Interesting to note here is that Example (7) does not allow for the interpretation of an action in progress, meaning that "The train is arriving" cannot be expressed using this construction. Due to the dichotomous interpretations (i.e. 'progressive' and 'resultative'), *-te iru* cannot refer to the preliminary stage leading up to the change of state, or to the endpoint of an action, as seen in Example (7). If one were to want to refer to that exact stage, an option would be to use lexicalised constructions such as –*yō to suru* ('is about to do') or –*tsutsu aru* ('is at the stage of'). These types of constructions can be used to refer to the duration of the activity prior to the moment of change (Fukushima 2007; Soga 1983).

The next chapter will draw on these different types of progressive aspect in their respective languages, when elaborating on the research question this thesis is examining.

4. Research Question and Hypotheses

L1 Japanese learners of Dutch will at first learn the progressive *–te iru* construction in their native Japanese when growing up. Later, they will come across the English *–ing,* as English is the first foreign language Japanese speakers generally learn in school, and which has been taught from Grade 5 in elementary school onwards since 2011 (MEXT). The *–ing* has a broader (or at least different) usage than the *–te iru,* but it is also a completely grammaticalised form.

As mentioned before, the use of the Dutch *–is aan het* construction differs from the *–ing* and the *–te iru* in that it is not grammaticalised, and its use is not obligatory. The *–is aan het* is used in a more limited set of circumstances than the *–te iru*, and previous research (Yoshioka and Hilberink-Schulpen 2012) has shown that in similar circumstances, native Japanese speakers use the *–te iru* more than native Dutch speakers do the *–is aan het*. A question then arises as to the influence of L1 in the usage of progressive aspect, which leads to the research question for this thesis: When L1 Japanese speakers use their L2 Dutch, will there be a visible effect from their L1 Japanese (or possibly their first (foreign) L2 English) in regard to progressive aspect? In order to research this question, the following two hypotheses are posited:

4.1. Percentage *–is aan het*

In both Japanese and English, the progressive construction is completely grammaticalised and thus obligatory in certain contexts, while the Dutch progressive construction is not yet fully grammaticalised and thus not obligatory. While the *–is aan het* form is a form used a lot in daily life, and while it is the most regularly applied form of progressive aspect in Dutch (e.g.

Behrens, Flecken and Carroll 2013, 119), the choice between simple present and the progressive in describing an event is a free choice for a speaker of Dutch.

In a study into the temporal perspective taking of native Dutch and Japanese speakers, Yoshioka and Hilberink-Schulpen (2012, 428) found that, when using their own languages, Japanese speakers were significantly more likely to use the progressive form than Dutch speakers describing the same clips – 73.9% (SD 8.1) and 35.28% (SD 11.6) respectively. They also accredited this partly due to the difference in grammaticalisation of the different constructions.

English natives also use the English progressive form *–ing* considerably more than the Dutch use their *–is aan het* construction (e.g. Edwards 2014; Mortier 2008; Von Stutterheim, Carroll and Klein 2009).

The Japanese speakers use *–te iru* more than Dutch speakers use *–is aan het,* and the English speakers also use *–ing* more than Dutch speakers use *–is aan het*. Therefore, the first hypothesis is that, if the Japanese speakers were to be influenced by their L1 Japanese (or possibly their foreign language of English) in choosing verb forms in an L2, they would use the Dutch progressive construction *–is aan het* more than native Dutch speakers would.

4.2. Activity vs. Accomplishment Clips

The Aspect Hypothesis, based on systematic and rigorous research, has led to several generalisations in regard to the acquisition of aspect by L2 learners of a new language. The generalisation concerning the progressive states that L2 adults initially restrict the progressive inflection to Activity verbs, which is later extended to Accomplishment and Achievement verbs (e.g. Andersen and Shirai 1994; Bardovi-Harlig 1994). The research these generalisations were based on, however, was mainly concerned with typologically similar

languages (English, Spanish, and French), and in order to prove its complete universality, the research regarding the Aspect Hypothesis should also be aimed at the non-Indo-European languages (Shirai and Kurono 1998). Several studies have since been conducted, but none as of yet into the combination of Japanese L1 speakers of L2 Dutch in regard to the Dutch progressive aspect construction *–is aan het*. This is a unique language combination, not only because the source language of Japanese is non-Indo-European while the target language of Dutch is Indo-European, but also because the source language has a grammaticalised and obligatory form of progressive aspect (*–te iru*), while the target language does not.

The present research hopes to shed some more light on whether this new combination affects the generalisations of the Aspect Hypothesis. As such, the second hypothesis posed in this thesis is that, in accordance with the Aspect Hypothesis, L1 Japanese speakers of L2 Dutch would use the progressive construction *–is aan het* more with Activity verbs than with Accomplishment verbs. This effect should be most visible for beginners, which five out of the seven participants to the research of this thesis were classified as.

5. Methodology

5.1. Participants

Eight L1 Japanese learners of Dutch participated in the study, though the data for one of them were lost due to the malfunction of a camera. Her data were not included in the performed analyses and calculations. The participants were recruited through contacts at the University, as well as through more personal connections. All seven of the participants were women with Japanese nationalities, and the mean age was 41.14 years (range 32-68). The participants have been in the Netherlands for an average timespan of 14,43 years (range 3,5-32), and all used Dutch on a daily basis, with five out of eight using only a few words or sentences of Dutch per day, and the other two having (more) extended conversations.

Six of the seven participants also used both Japanese and English in daily life, and one participant only spoke Japanese beside Dutch. Four of the participants had lived more than six months abroad, in Australia, Italy, Sweden, and the USA and Brazil respectively. All seven of the participants have learnt Dutch through courses at an institution, and three of them also indicated that they learnt from daily interactions and informal conversations with friends/partners. The research was conducted at the homes of the participants for four of the participants, and at their office for the other three participants.

The participants' proficiency level of Dutch was determined based on the questionnaire they filled out, the discussion based on the questionnaire that followed, and on the other interactions the test leader had with the participants. Five of the seven participants were found to be beginning speakers of Dutch (one low-beginning, two intermediate-beginning and two advanced-beginning), and the final two participants were classified as intermediate speakers. All of the participants had passed the Dutch as a Second

Language (NT2) test, although three of them only passed the first of two levels. Two participants had passed the second of two levels, and two could not remember which one it had been – based on their language capabilities, it was judged to be the first level as well.

5.2. Material

In order to operationalise the hypotheses for this thesis, the choices of verbal forms used in event descriptions were examined. For this purpose, in the present study verbal descriptions of video clips were collected as data. The stimulus set consisted of video clips, which were categorised into two event categories:

1. Accomplishments
2. Activities

The video clips[3] in these Accomplishment and Activity groups show events from their respective Vendler categories. An example of an Accomplishment clip used is a clip in which a ball rolls into a goal, and an example of an Activity clip used in a clip in which two women are walking through a park.

There were 15 video clips showing an Accomplishment, and 19 clips showing an Activity. The clips themselves were timed to be exactly 5 seconds long, and there was 8 seconds of black screen between each clip to allow the participants to finish their verbalisations. The entire proceedings, from the discussing of the questionnaire onwards, were recorded with a JVC camcorder on a tripod. The recorded data were transcribed and

[3] The video clips were originally used by Yoshioka and Hilberink-Schulpen (2012) and were part of the Japan Project (NWO, project number: 254-70-020 and 254-70-110) at the Radboud University. The clips were graciously provided to me by my thesis supervisor, Dr. K. Yoshioka.

coded for verb forms, as were the answers to the questionnaires, all of which data were then entered into SPSS for analysis.

5.3. Design and Procedure

In order to identify possible crosslinguistic influence, the acquisition of data needs to follow certain guidelines. In the psycholinguistic approach to CLI, Jarvis and Pavlenko (2010, 30-31) give two general approaches, namely the *inter*subjective approach, and the *intra*subjective approach. The former looks at groups of language users, and the latter looks at individuals, which is the process used in the present research.

The main advantage to the *intra*subjective approach is the level of interpretational validity one can derive from the results, at least when the findings "are grounded in a careful and thorough examination of CLI in a person's language in clearly specified contexts," as Jarvis and Pavlenko remind us (2010, 31). They also caution that studies like these are often disadvantaged by a lack of generizability, which is something to take into account in the present study.

One of the crucial components of any intrasubjective study is a rich presentation of data (cf. Gass and Selinker 2001, 33; Johnstone 2000; Richards 2003, in Jarvis and Pavlenko 2010), which calls forth the question of what type of data to gather. There are several main types of data which Ellis (1994, 669-676; Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005, 15-22) has claimed to be used in second language acquisition research, which are represented in Figure 3.

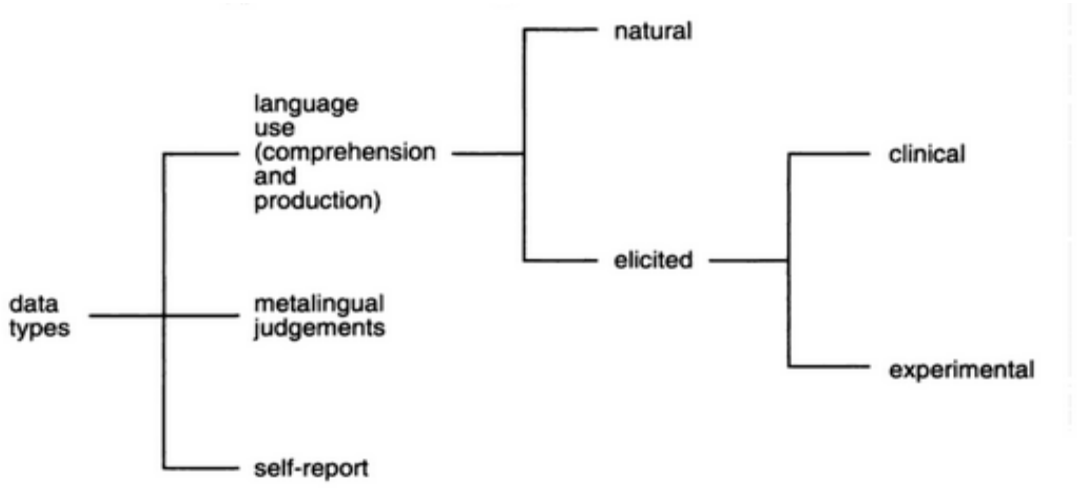

Figure 3. The data types used in second language acquisition (taken from Ellis 1994, 670)

The 'language use data' is data gathered when L2 speakers produce language, which can be either in a naturalistic setting (i.e. speakers producing language when not being studied), or it can be elicited. When the data are elicited, there are two more subcategories: clinical elicitation (where speakers are induced to produce any sort of language) and experimental elicitation (where speakers are induced to produce a specific feature the researcher is interested in) (Ellis 1994, 670). This last type, experimental elicitation, is the type of data that were gathered for the present thesis.

The order of the video clips was randomized through www.randomizer.org, with all 34 clips randomized in a single group. All participants were shown the clips in the same randomized order. The participants were tested individually, at the homes of the respective participants, or at their offices at the university.

First the participants filled out a Dutch questionnaire regarding their language experiences with Dutch and other languages, and various other details, which was then discussed with them in Dutch. They also signed an Informed Consent form. Next, they watched the video clips, on a 15.4-inch laptop at about 100 cm distance. The participants

had to verbalise the events shown on the laptop screen, and the instruction given to them was to describe what was happening in the clip, not merely a description of the scene: "*Het is uw taak om te beschrijven wat er gebeurt in de video. Dus niet wat u ziet, zoals bomen of water, maar wat er gebeurt.*" They were explicitly told to start speaking as soon as they knew what was happening in the video.

5.4. Identifying CLI

In order to identify which data points to evidence of transfer, Jarvis (1998; 2000) suggested that the following types of evidence should be considered: intragroup homogeneity, intergroup homogeneity and crosslinguistic performance congruity. Intragroup homogeneity means that the behaviour is not an isolated incident, but rather a common tendency of individuals who know the same languages. Intergroup homogeneity means that the behaviour in question is not something all language users do, regardless of any languages they might know. Crosslinguistic performance congruity means that the behaviour shown is actually motivated by the use of another language.

While Jarvis (1998; 2000) proposed that a proper study should include an attempt to evaluate all three of the previously mentioned types of evidence, Odlin (2003) has suggested that an uncontroversial case can be made for transfer even without testing for all three types rigorously, which Jarvis and Pavlenko (2010, 36) agree with. Furthermore, Jarvis and Pavlenko (Ibid.) also claim that while the use of rigorous tests is preferable whenever possible, a solid case can be made by appealing to the proper types of corroborating evidence. This is to say, Jarvis and Pavlenko acknowledge that all three types of evidence are essential, but state that this is regardless of "whether they are derived internally from within an empirical investigation, or drawn either implicitly or explicitly from external sources (such

as from previous studies, from existing language corpora, or from common knowledge)" (Ibid.). In the analysis of the present study, an attempt will be made to evaluate all three types of evidence.

6. Results

In this section, analyses of the data will be provided in regard to average use of the Dutch construction *is aan het*, as well as the use of said construction with Activity vs. Accomplishment clips.

There was one participant who had grown up in Brazil from the age of six onwards, and had spoken Portuguese in her daily home life. She never used the Dutch progressive form during the description of the clips, but did consequently refer back to English if she didn't know the Dutch word. Excluding her from the performed analyses had no influence on the results, however, so she was left included in the data presented here.

6.1. Percentage –*is aan het*

Figure 4 shows the usage of different verbal forms of Dutch chosen by the participants. It is immediately obvious that the simple present (e.g. *een man loopt* /a man walks) was the most commonly chosen option, followed by the infinitive (e.g. een vrouw lopen/*a woman to walk*). The progressive form (e.g. *er is iemand aan het afwassen*/someone is doing the dishes) was hardly ever used. There is also a large amount of missing data – data were marked as 'missing' when the participants didn't use a verb form during their description of a clip.

When participants used an English verb form in their descriptions, which occurred in 6 times out of 238 descriptions, this was recorded as such in the SPSS data set. However, because this thesis focusses primarily on the cross-linguistic influence of Japanese speakers' L1 on their L2 Dutch, these uses of English verbs are not included in Figure 4.

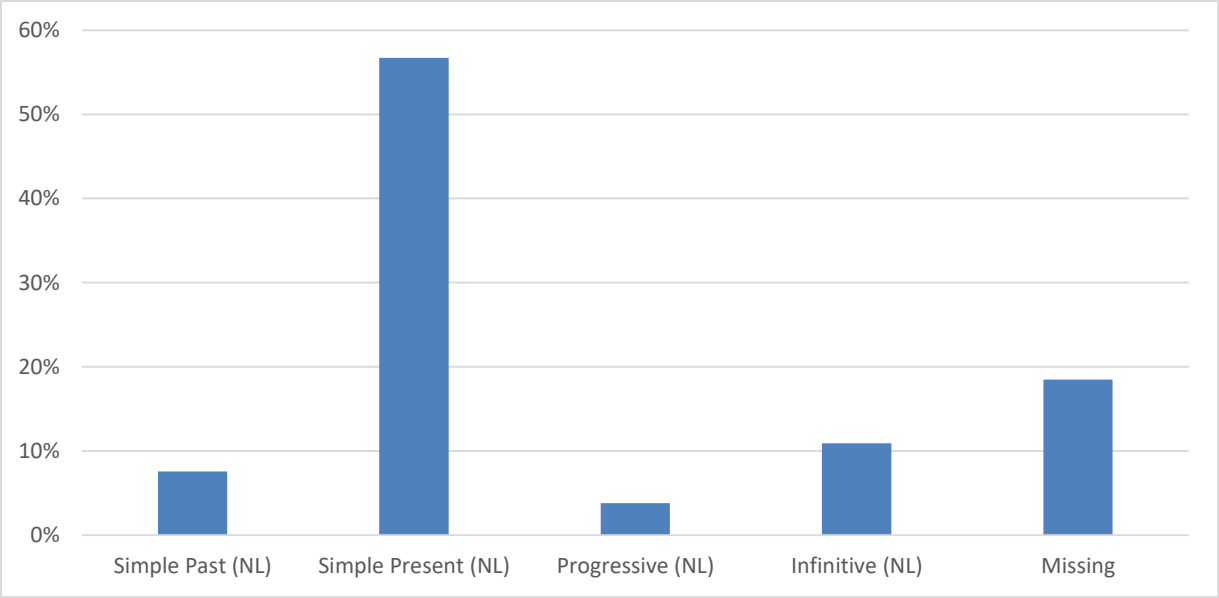

Figure 4. Use of verbal forms, separated by participant.

The average frequency of the use of the progressive form *–is aan het* was a mere 3.77% (SD 7.5), and only three out of the seven participants even used the form at all, with two of them only using it once, as can be seen in Figure 5.

Native Dutch speakers used the progressive form in 35.28% (SD 11.6) of the cases in a similar study, with the same video clips as the present research (Yoshioka and Hilberink-Schulpen 2012, 428). Although the present research hypothesised that Japanese speakers of L2 Dutch would use the *–is aan het* construction more than native Dutch speakers would, this did not turn out to be the case – it was much lower.

The results of a study on L1 English speakers using L2 Dutch, where the participants had to perform a similar task to the present study (a single event retelling), with basically the same type of video clips, indicated that while the L2 Dutch speakers used the progressive less than the L1 Dutch speakers (34.06% and 40.34% respectively), this difference was not significant (van Ierland 2010, 201).

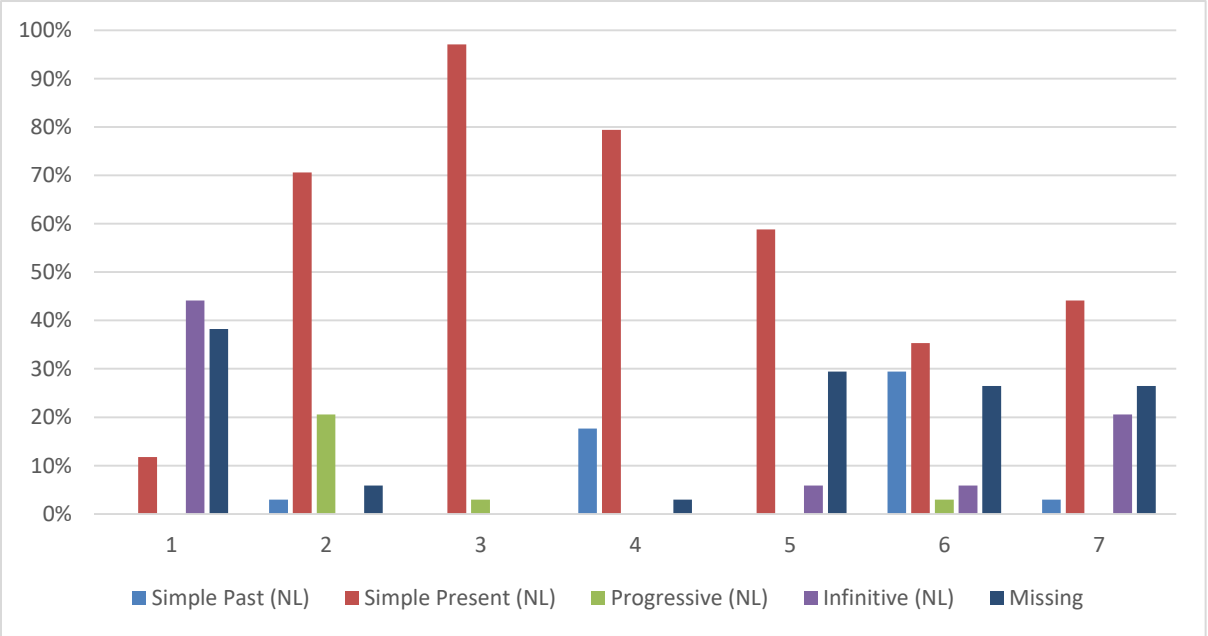

Figure 5. Use of verbal forms, separated by participant.

If the participants had been influenced by their L1 Japanese, they should arguably have used the *–is aan het* form more than the native Dutch speakers did, rather than hardly at all. If they had been influenced by their foreign language of English, they might have used it less, though not so little as they did in the present study.

One possible explanation for this phenomenon might be that, because the form is not fully grammaticalised, it is not taught explicitly during Dutch training courses. Some of the participants might thus not have been aware of the form at all, or been sure of how or when to use it. Other possible factors which might explain this phenomenon are the point at which the participants started talking during the video clips, the concept of economy, the factor of less input, or the instruction given to the participants, all of which will be discussed below.

Regarding the participants possibly not having been taught the form, a teacher from Leiden University who teaches a Dutch as a Second Language (NT2) course explained that

this is not the case (personal correspondence). According to her, the Dutch *–is aan het* form is taught very early on in the Dutch course, as it is a grammatical form that is used quite a lot in daily conversations. She generally teaches the *–is aan het* construction in the fourth lesson out of twelve in the beginner course, and the form comes back often in listening and reading texts, as well as in the assignments later on. Four of the participants had followed a course at Leiden University, and the other three had followed courses at various other language institutions. The participants should logically all at least be aware of the form, and have heard it frequently in daily life, so this is not the reason for the low usage of *–is aan het* in the data.

As for the possibility of influence of when the participants started talking, the instructions the participants were given included an explicit mention that they were allowed to start speaking as soon as they realised what was happening in the video clip. Three of the participants, however, consistently only started speaking after the video clip had ended. Possibly this may have influenced how they described the situation, as they might have been describing what *had happened* as opposed to what *was happening.* If so, there should have been a significant increase in use of the past tense. A statistical analysis (One-Way ANOVA) was performed with the dependent list 'use of the past tense' and the factor 'when the participant started speaking', which showed no significant effect ($F(1, 5) = 0.002$, $p = .962$). This showed that the point in the clip at which the participants started talking had no significant effect on whether they used the progressive form or not.

The factor of economy refers to the fact that, because *–is aan het* is nog obligatory, the participants may have opted to use the present simple form for every clip because it was more economical for them. A general form that can be used in a plethora of situations takes less thought to come up with than a specific form for this particular situation. Many

participants expressed a feeling of anxiety during the research, describing it as feeling as though they were taking a test, and not having enough time to come up with a proper answer. This may also have factored into them possibly choosing a simpler form that was more readily available to them.

Also, the possibility exists that the difference in use of *–is aan het* by Japanese speakers of Dutch lies in the fact that the present simple form is much more available in daily situations than the *–is aan het* form is. The participants will have heard the simple present form much more frequently, and thus may know it better and be able to produce it more easily, especially when they feel pressed for time to come up with a proper answer.

As for the factor of the instruction given, the phrase used to instruct the participants included a simple present form (*u moet beschrijven wat er gebeurt* / you have to describe what happens), which may have influenced them as well. Follow-up studies should take this into account and perhaps see what happens when the *–is aan het* form is included in the test instructions (e.g. *u moet beschrijven wat er aan het gebeuren is* / you have to describe what is happening).

Furthermore, Figure 4 also shows that a significant portion of the data consisted of variables marked as 'missing'. Five out of the seven participants were classified as beginning learners, and they generally needed a lot of time to think over their answers. This often led to them only starting speaking after the clips had finished (in the 'black screen time'), giving them less time to verbalise their thoughts. Those participants were often so busy thinking during that 'black screen time' that they either didn't get to the point of using a verb form before the next clip started, or merely described what they had seen in the clip, as opposed to what was happening. In those cases, the data were marked as 'missing', as no verb forms were verbalised.

The option most chosen after the simple present was the infinitive. This adds to the theory that the level of Dutch of participants for the present study might be too low to draw any significant conclusions. The participants could not always use Dutch fast enough to produce a verb form, and when they did it was the infinitive form, which they didn't have the time or knowledge for to conjugate. This is especially visible in participants one and seven in Figure 5. Participant one used the infinitive form in 15 out of the 34 clips, while not using a verb form at all in 13 out of 34 clips, a clear sign that her Dutch was unequal to the task of the present research.

Generally speaking, the level of Dutch of the participants was too low for the present research. This might have influenced their understanding of the directions, and their vocabulary might not have been adequate to the task. Future research into this subject should take this factor into account, and make sure their participants are at least of intermediate level Dutch, in order to obtain the most workable and generisable data. The difference in proficiency also prevents any useful comparisons between the present data and data from other research, such as the study done by Suzan van Ierland (2010), which had participants of a very advanced level of Dutch as an L2.

One of the two participants with an intermediate level of Dutch commented that, halfway through the clips, she realised I was looking for the *–te iru* form, but in Dutch. The construction is often preceded by "er", e.g. *er is iemand aan het lopen* (somebody is walking), and said participant consequently started her description of the last seven clips with "Er…" However, she didn't follow it up by using the progressive construction *–is aan het,* using the simple present instead, e.g. *er loopt iemand* (somebody walks). This sheds an interesting light on how much of the form actually sticks after having learnt it at some point.

6.2. Activity vs. Accomplishment Clips

The second hypothesis posed in this thesis was that, in accordance with the Aspect Hypothesis, L1 Japanese speakers of L2 Dutch would use the progressive construction *–is aan het* more with Activity than with Accomplishment verbs. The use of the progressive for the two types of clips can be seen below, in Figure 6. Though the progressive form was used more than twice as much to describe Activity clips than Accomplishment clips, the use of the progressive form for either group was still quite low. A statistical analysis (ANOVA repeated measures) was performed with the dependent variable 'percentage use of progressive' and the independent variable 'category type', which showed no significant difference between the two categories in regard to use of the progressive ($F (1, 6) = 3.27$, $p = 0.121$).

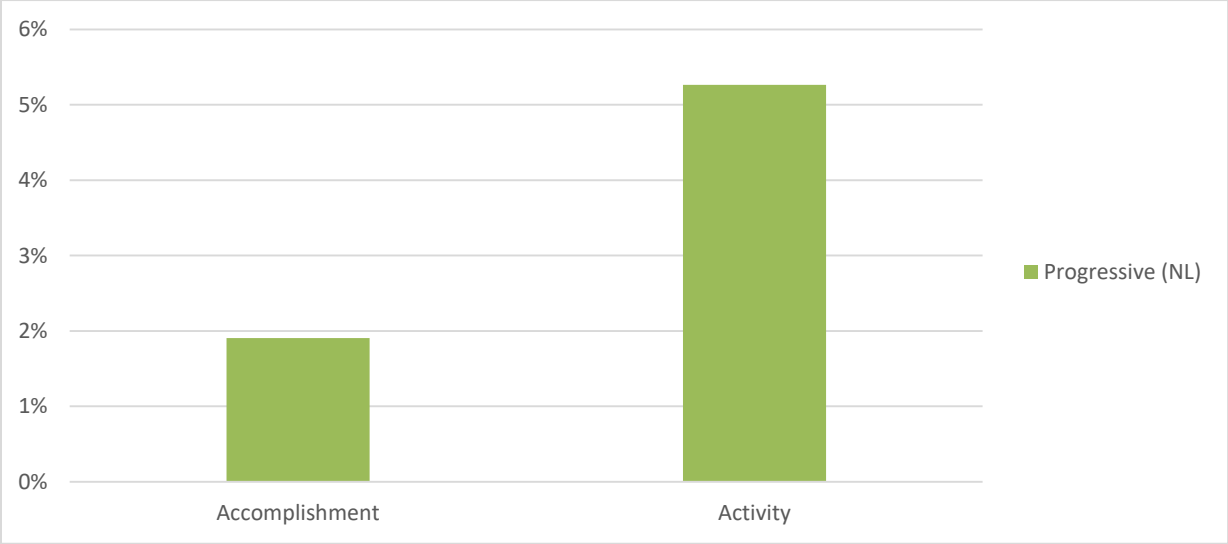

Figure 6. Use of the Dutch progressive, separated by Accomplishment and Activity clips.

No significant crosslinguistic influence was found in the analysis of the data of the present study. However, a follow-up study might shed a different light on the data that were found in the present study, and in order to facilitate any future interpretations, the three types of evidence Jarvis (1998; 2000) mentioned will still be evaluated.

The intragroup homogeneity for this study was high, with only participant 2 as an outlier with a use of 20.59% of the progressive. A common tendency to not use the progressive can indeed be discerned among these participants, who all knew Japanese, English and Dutch (with participant 5 also knowing Portuguese). The progressive was used by only three participants, and two of them only used it once, so useful conclusions as to intragroup homogeneity can be drawn there.

The intergroup homogeneity was such that the general usage of the progressive was indeed something not all language users do, regardless of any languages they might now. To be sure, native Dutch speakers of the L1 English speakers of L2 Dutch from van Ierland's study (2010) did not show the same behaviour. However, as the behaviour in question is not crosslinguistically significant, it is not interesting to the present study.

Finally, the crosslinguistic performance was difficult to determine. The participants referred back to English in 30 out of a total of 238 clips, and back to Japanese in 11 clips, with all but one participant having more English tokens than Japanese ones. The Japanese they uttered was often in the trend of *Nan dakke, wakannai* (What was that again, I don't know), voicing their thoughts aloud. The English they uttered was often the English version of a verb, such as *ironing*, which they then tried to translate into Dutch – to varying success. This might be evidence of influence of another language than Japanese on their Dutch – indeed, one participant voluntarily mentioned that she often translated Japanese to English to Dutch in her head, instead of directly from Japanese to Dutch.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to research the possible influence of L1-L2 transfer from Japanese to Dutch in the use of the progressive. For this, L1 speakers of L2 Dutch were asked to describe what was happening in a variety of clips, which showed either Activities or Accomplishments.

The present research found no evidence in support of either of the two hypotheses posited. Regarding the percentage of use of *–is aan het,* this turned out to be not higher, but significantly lower than expected. The percentage was almost one-tenth of the predicted value, Regarding the second hypothesis, concerning with which types of clips the progressive was used, the results indicated that if it was used at all, it was not significantly more (or less) so with Activity clips.

The results on the quantitative use of the progressive differ greatly from a study done by Suzanne van Ierland (2010), on English speakers of L2 Dutch. In van Ierland's study, there was no significant difference between the overall use of the progressive between L1 and L2 speakers of Dutch (2010, 201), the L2 users used the progressive just as much as the native speakers did. So why was there such a big difference between the present study and the one by van Ierland?

According to Bardovi-Harlig (2000, 411), comparisons across many studies found no first language influence on the acquisition of temporal expression. There may simply be no transfer to be found in this case. However, since other studies such as Collins (2002) have indeed shown subtle evidence of L1-L2 transfer in her participant's use of morphology in choice of verb forms, possibly another explanation can be found for the disparity.

The most likely factor contributing to the difference in results between the present study and that of van Ierland (2010) is that of the difference of L2 proficiency of the participants. The proficiency level of van Ierland's participants was at least intermediate, and most were advanced, while the participants of the present research were generally still in the beginning stages. The effects of a speaker's L2 proficiency on the presence of transfer are not always clear-cut, with the results of different studies varying widely as to whether the transfer increases, decreases, stays the same, or fluctuates as the L2 proficiency increases (cf. Jarvis 2000). The present data seems to imply that either, as noted above, transfer in the area of acquisition of aspect does not occur with low-level proficiency participants, or possibly that the transfer effects only show up with an increase in proficiency.

Jarvis and Pavlenko (2010, 202) note that "the effects of [L2] proficiency on lexical and morphological transfer often seem to be curvilinear, whereas they seem to follow more of a steady trend in areas such as word order and pronunciation (e.g. Ellis 1994; Jarvis 1998; Odlin 1989)." Therefore, in order to further examine this issue, future research into this topic should include more participants, from a greater variety of proficiency levels, with the possible expectation to only see transfer appear in much later stages of proficiency.

One other possibility for the difference in results on the quantitative use of the progressive between the current study and that of van Ierland (2010) might be found in this specific combination of source and target languages. Japanese to Dutch transfer has thus far been underexamined, and it is possible that for this specific language pair, there is no transfer of (progressive) aspect to be found. Further research into the acquisition of the Dutch progressive aspectual form of *–is aan het,* preferably by speakers of a variety of L1's, is required in order to prove or disprove this claim.

With regards to the second hypothesis, of the progressive not being used more (or less) with Activity clips, this shows no support for this part of the Aspect Hypothesis based on this language pair. The progressive form was hardly ever used, but when it was there was no preference for using it with Activity verbs. This implies that possibly the section on the progressive of the Aspect Hypothesis might not apply so strictly for this language pair, or possibly merely not for such early learners. The present research might even be taken to tentatively support McManus' reservations concerning the rigidity of the order in which the progressive is acquired.

However, the data from the present research contained only nine tokens out of a total of 238 descriptions, from merely three participants, and can therefore not be used to base any far-reaching conclusions on. More research into this language pair is necessary, possibly with the adaption of using the phrase *–is aan het* in the instruction in order to further elicit the use of the form, in order to further investigate whether or not the Aspect Hypothesis holds up in this situation as well.

In conclusion, the present research made a first foray into the research of L1-L2 transfer of the progressive aspect from Japanese to Dutch. No evidence of L1-L2 transfer was found in the area of progressive aspect, and the results showed no particular preference for use of the progressive form with Activity verbs – though the data were very limited in that regard. Future research would benefit from having Japanese speakers of Dutch of varying proficiency levels, as well as from having speakers from variety of other L1's.

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Appendices

Appendix I – Questionnaire

1. Wat is uw naam:

_____

2. Wat is uw leeftijd:

_____

3. Wat is uw nationaliteit:

□ Japans

□ Anders, namelijk _____

4. Hoe lang woont u al in Nederland:

_____

5. Heeft u langer dan 6 maanden in een ander land dan Japan of Nederland gewoond:

□ Nee

□ Ja, namelijk _____

6. Op welke manier(en) heeft u Nederlands geleerd (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk):

□ Les aan een instelling

□ Informele taalles

□ Dagelijkse interacties

□ Niet

□ Anders, namelijk _____

7. Hoe vaak gebruikt u Nederlands:

□ Iedere dag – een paar zinnen

□ Iedere dag – lange(re) gesprekken

□ Eén of meerdere keren per week – een paar zinnen

□ Eén of meerdere keren per week – lange(re) gesprekken

□ Eén of meerdere keren per maand – een paar zinnen

□ Eén of meerdere keren per maand – lange(re) gesprekken

□ (Zo goed als) niet

8. Met wie praat u Nederlands, als u dat doet (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk):

□ Familie

□ Vrienden

□ Collega's / werk gerelateerde mensen

□ Onbekenden

□ Ik praat met niemand Nederlands

□ Anders, namelijk _____

9. Voor welk doel gebruikt u Nederlands in het dagelijks leven (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk):

□ Boodschappen doen / shoppen

□ Werk-gerelateerd

□ Met vrienden communiceren

□ Met familie communiceren

□ Ik praat met niemand Nederlands

□ Anders, namelijk _____

10. Gebruikt u naast Nederlands nog andere talen in uw dagelijks leven?

□ Ja, namelijk _____

□ Nee

11. Zo ja, waar gebruikt u die taal/talen van voor?

□ Boodschappen doen / shoppen

□ Werk-gerelateerd

□ Met vrienden communiceren

□ Met familie communiceren

□ Anders, namelijk _____

12. Heeft u de NT2 (Nederlands als Tweede Taal) toets gehaald?

□ Ja, op _____

□ Nee

Appendix II – Examples of Verb Forms

Progressive form

Een vrouw is een gezicht aan het tekenen
a woman is a face draw-PERI
'A woman is drawing a face.'

Simple present form

Een man loopt door een park
a man walks through a park
'A man walks through a park.'

Simple past form

Een kind speelde met poppen
A child played with dolls
'A child played with dolls.'