

THE ENGLISH *-ING* PARTICIPIAL ADJUNCTS IN FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGE WRITTEN DISCOURSE

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Abstract

The study reported on in this article shows that the *-ing* participial adjuncts are used differently by native speakers of English depending on the genre they occur in. A comparison of data from written re-narrations of a film with the data from argumentative essays shows that these constructions are more frequent in narrative texts. The *-ing* participial adjuncts are typically used to express temporal succession (e.g. Anteriority) in narrative texts, whereas Means is the most frequent function of these constructions in argumentative essays. The native speaker data is then compared to that of Norwegian learners of English. The non-native-like patterns in the L2 data are attributed to L1 transfer and lack of knowledge about the genre-specific uses of the *-ing* clauses.

Key words

the *-ing* participial adjunct, written narratives, argumentative essays, English native speakers, Norwegian learners of English

1 Introduction

The present analysis of *-ing* participial adjuncts (cf. Examples (1) and (2) below) draws on previous studies of these constructions which addressed problems of their interpretation (Kortmann 1991, 1995, Behrens 1998, Haug, Fabricius-Hansen, Behrens & Helland 2012).

- (1) *School pupils became disillusioned, seeing the school as an agent of social discrimination.* (the LOCNESS corpus)
- (2) *Hearing drops and the movement of water, Lofnu scrambled frantically in the sand to find the sound's source, only to fall through the sand to Scarvia's next level down.* ("Quest", English L1, Heidelberg project)

Example (1) is from an argumentative essay written by a native speaker of English, where the *-ing* participial clause (underlined) is used in the postverbal position (it follows the main verb of the sentence), and (2) is from a written re-narration of a silent film "Quest" by an English native speaker. In (2), the *-ing* participial clause is used in the preverbal position, preceding the main verb of the sentence.

The study presented here is concerned only with the *-ing* participial clauses which modify the main verb and share the main clause's subject. The study is neither concerned with *-ing* participial clauses which modify noun phrases, nor with deverbal *-ing* forms used as nouns (gerunds). Kortmann (1991) used the term 'free adjuncts', emphasizing the idea that these constructions are detached from the main clause and can be freely added or removed from the sentence without affecting the syntactic structure of the main clause.

Another term used for these and similar constructions across languages is 'converbs' – non-finite verb forms used for adverbial subordination (Haspelmath 1995: 3). More recently, Haug et al. (2012) have analysed *-ing* participial adjuncts as 'open adjuncts' headed by non-finite, verbal forms. Such constructions form a subgroup of a larger class of open adjuncts (including the verb-less ones), "adjunct constructions that are without an overt subject and that are attached as clausal or predicational structures to a main predication" (Haug et al. 2012: 131).

The English *-ing* participial adjunct is both aspectually and temporally vague compared to the corresponding constructions with overt aspectual and temporal morphology in languages such as Russian (cf. Krave 2011). The *-ing* participial adjunct expresses the general relation of temporal overlap. However, despite the absence of overt aspectual morphology in *-ing* forms, the adjuncts may be interpreted as either perfective or imperfective, depending on what Haug et al. (2012: 154-155), following Bohnemeyer and Swift (2004), call the 'default aspect'. The default aspect of states and activities is imperfective, while the default aspect of accomplishments and achievements is perfective. These differences in the default aspect of *-ing* participial adjuncts account for the different temporal relations between the adjunct event and the main clause event. As observed by Kortmann (1991), simultaneity with the main clause event is the most frequent temporal interpretation of the *-ing* adjunct, followed by anteriority (the less frequent interpretation) and posteriority (the least frequent interpretation). In addition to these temporal functions, the *-ing* participial adjunct often expresses non-temporal meanings, such as Cause, Manner, Accompanying Circumstance (AC), Means (or Instrument), Purpose, Result, Concession and Condition.

The problems of the information-structural status of *-ing* participial clauses in non-fiction texts have been recently addressed by the Prague School linguists – Šaldová and Malá (2010) and Malá (2006). They distinguish between thematic (typically in the sentence-initial position) and rhematic (in the end position) participial adverbial clauses. Sentence-initial adverbial clauses play an important role in "carrying" the theme from one sentence to another, while at the same time being the most dynamic part of the theme of the superordinate clause – the so-called diatheme.

Very few studies have addressed the relation between the specific genre of texts and the typical functions of *-ing* participial adjuncts. One of the few exceptions is Kortmann (1991), whose study suggests that the functions of these constructions are heavily text-type dependent. Using a corpus of professional writing, Kortmann observed that fictional texts have a higher frequency of free adjuncts compared to both newspaper articles and (especially) scientific literature. Moreover, his study shows that the least formal texts (i.e. fiction texts) frequently use *-ing* clauses in the less informative relations (AC, Simultaneity, Exemplification), whereas more formal texts (scientific discourse) employ the *-ing* clauses expressing the most informative semantic relations (Cause, Result, Anteriority).

The analysis presented in this article concerns the use of *-ing* participial clauses in two different types of written discourse – narrative and argumentative – produced by novice writers. The first part of the study investigates whether specific functions of the *-ing* clauses are also associated with a specific text type in non-professional writing (cf. Section 3). The choice of data produced by novice writers of English is motivated by the comparison of this native speaker data with that of another group of novice writers – namely, learners of English with Norwegian as their L1 (cf. Section 4). The goal of this Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis (cf. Section 2 below) is to identify difficulties that Norwegian learners of English may have in acquiring the correct use of the construction in different text types, and to suggest some plausible explanations for these difficulties. In this way, the present study will complement earlier analyses of the difficulties that non-native speakers in general and Norwegian L2 learners of English in particular experience when writing academic texts (cf. the discussion in Hasselgård & Johansson 2011).

2 Method

2.1 The data

As mentioned above (Section 1), the present analysis of *-ing* clauses is based on data from written narrative texts and argumentative essays produced by novice writers, in this case university students who are native speakers of English (mostly American English (AE), but also some British English (BE)) and intermediate-to-advanced (for argumentative texts) and advanced (for narratives) Norwegian learners of English.

The narrative data is elicited from the speakers' written retellings of a silent 8-minute animated film, "Quest" (1986), produced by Thomas Stellmach. The

film shows a figure in its quest for water. It consists of four scenes showing the figure in different environments: a desert, a paper world, a stone landscape and a metal world. There is music but no speech in the film. The informants (both the native speakers and the learners) were asked to watch the film twice and write down what they saw, retelling the story. The data from native speakers of English is borrowed from the Heidelberg/Haifa project (thanks to Barbara Schmiedtová and Bracha Nir). Bergljot Behrens (University of Oslo) has kindly shared with me the English learner data produced by Norwegians living in the US.

The analysis of *-ing* participial clauses in argumentative essays is based on data from two electronic corpora: the LOCNESS corpus (Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays; Granger 1996) and the Norwegian subpart of the ICLE corpus (International Corpus of Learner English; Granger, Dagneaux, Meunier & Paquot (2009). The data used for the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Narrative L1	Renarrations of the film “ Quest ” (Heidelberg/Haifa project: B. Schmiedtová/ B. Nir)	10 English L1 speakers (AE), university students
Argumentative L1	LOCNESS corpus (Louvain, Centre for English Corpus Linguistics, CECL: S. Granger)	20 English L1 speakers (15 AE, 5 BE), university students
Narrative L2	Renarrations of the film “ Quest ” (Oslo, B. Behrens)	10 Norwegian speakers of English (living in the US)
Argumentative L2	ICLE-NO (International Corpus of Learner English, Louvain, CECL: S. Granger)	20 Norwegian speakers of English

Table 1: The data

The criteria for text selection in the argumentative corpora include the comparability of topics (Crime, Prison, Feminism, Television, Dreaming and imagination in the modern world) in the ICLE-NO subcorpus and similar topics in LOCNESS.

2.2 The analysis

The study presented below includes both quantitative and qualitative analyses of data from the corpora described above (Section 2.1). The quantitative analysis consists in calculating the frequencies of the *-ing* participial adjuncts in the two text types produced by L1 and L2 speakers. The qualitative part of the analysis concerns the different positions and functions of the *-ing* clauses and the comparison between the L1 and the L2 uses of these constructions. A comparison

of patterns in native (L1) and learner (L2) varieties is known as the Contrastive Interlanguage Analysis (Granger 1996).

In many cases, the *-ing* participial adjuncts are augmented by prepositions which make the meaning of the construction explicit, such as ‘by’ (Instrument/ Means), ‘without’ (absence of AC) or ‘after’ (Anteriority). In other cases, the adjunct is introduced by a temporal conjunction, such as ‘while’ and ‘when’ expressing temporal overlap or anteriority, respectively. All these constructions are included in the analysis of *-ing* participial adjuncts, but they are listed separately from the ‘bare’ *-ing* participial clauses in the tables showing their frequency below.

3 The *-ing* participial adjuncts in L1

3.1 The frequency of *-ing* clauses in L1 narrative and argumentative texts

As stated in the Introduction (Section 1 above), the goal of the analysis is to find out whether genre affects the use of *-ing* participial adjuncts in narrative as opposed to argumentative texts produced by native speakers (novice writers). Table 2 below shows actual (raw) and relative (occurrences per 10,000 words) frequencies of adjuncts in the two text types. The relative frequencies are calculated to compensate for the different sizes of the corpora.

	Actual frequency / total word count	Relative frequency per 10,000 words
Narrative L1	58 / 6374	90
Argumentative L1	61 / 16391	37

Table 2: Actual and relative frequency of *-ing* participial clauses in narrative L1 (Quest renarrations) and argumentative L1 texts (LOCNESS)

As shown in Table 2, *-ing* participial adjuncts are more frequently used in the narrative L1 texts than in the argumentative essays. The observation that the *-ing* participial adjuncts play a minor role in argumentative essays compared to narrative texts seems to slightly contradict the results offered by Malá (2006). However, one should bear in mind that the non-fiction texts studied here are short essays written by novice writers (students). In contrast, the data analysed by Malá are taken from the British National Corpus, i.e. a corpus of professional writing.

The next step is to analyse functions and positions of the *-ing* participial clauses in narrative L1 texts (Section 3.2) vs. argumentative texts (Section 3.3) to see if there are any pertinent correlations.

3.2 Narrative L1 data (Quest renarrations)

All the uses of the *-ing* participial adjuncts in written renarrations of the film are presented in Table 3.

Preverbal position (17)		Postverbal position (41)	
Temporal (13)	Other (4)	Temporal	Other (41)
Anteriority (12): <i>-ing</i> (7)/ <i>after+-ing</i> (5)	Accompanying Circumstance (AC) or absence of AC (<i>without + -ing</i>): 4	-	AC or absence of AC (<i>without + -ing</i>): 15 Result (comp. with posteriority): 10 Reason/Cause: 6 Manner: 5 Means: 5
Overlap/ simultaneity: <i>while+-ing</i> : 1			

Table 3: *-ing* participial clauses in English L1 renarrations of “Quest” (58 tokens per 10 speakers)

The analysis of the English L1 narrative data shows that the English converb is frequently used as a means of expressing a narrative succession of events. Anteriority with respect to the event in the main clause is frequently expressed by preverbal *-ing* adjuncts, as in Examples (3) and (4):

- (3) *Turning back to the damp piece, Lofnu scrambled to gather water for himself, only to find himself falling again.* (E1E02)
- (4) *Thinking for a moment, Lofnu looked at the great distance between himself and the ground, and decided to gingerly climb down the tower.* (E1E02)

Anteriority is sometimes explicitly expressed either when the *-ing* participle is combined with a temporal conjunction or preposition, as in (5), or where the Perfect counterpart of the *-ing* participle is used (‘*having* + past participle’):

- (5) *After regaining his senses, Lofnu once more awoke, this time to find himself in a land covered with papers.* (E1E02)

Although several postverbal adjuncts are compatible with a posteriority reading, it is difficult to distinguish them from the Result reading. Thus the two possible interpretations are here analysed as one (cf. the right-most column in Table 3). An example is given in (6):

- (6) *As he lay on top of the column, he looked around for the water, spotting a wet spot, puddle.* (E1E03)

Accompanying Circumstance (AC) is another frequent function of the *-ing* participial clauses, especially postverbal clauses, as in (7):

- (7) *Once there was a man who was lying in a desert-type place, under bright sun, appearing to be asleep.* (E1E01)

Three native speakers used predominantly Past tense, whereas the other seven used either Present tense (four speakers) or a combination of Past and Present tense (three speakers). It is noteworthy, however, that all adjuncts expressing Anteriority are in the preverbal position and occur with main clauses in the Past tense (cf. Examples (3) and (4) above). On the other hand, preverbal *-ing* clauses expressing other functions (AC) modify main clauses in either Present or Past tense. The same is observed with postverbal converbs (including the Result/Posteriority ones), which occur both with Present and Past tense main clauses.

Functions and positions of adjuncts in argumentative essays written by native speakers are analysed next.

3.3 Argumentative L1 data (LOCNESS)

Table 4 shows the frequency distribution of the *-ing* participial adjuncts according to their positions and functions in the LOCNESS corpus (argumentative essays written by native English speakers).

Preverbal position (14)		Postverbal position (47)	
Temporal (2)	Other (12)	Temporal (4)	Other (43)
Overlap/ simultaneity: <i>while</i> +-ing: 1 <i>when</i> +-ing: 1	Means: <i>by</i> + -ing: 8 Reason/Cause: 1 Viewpoint disjunct: 2 Contrast (<i>while</i> +-ing): 1	Overlap/ simultaneity: <i>while</i> -ing: 1 <i>when</i> -ing: 1 -ing: 1 Anteriority: <i>after</i> + -ing: 1	Means: <i>by</i> + -ing: 14 -ing: 2 Reason/Cause: <i>Whilst</i> +-ing: 1 -ing: 2 Contrast: <i>While</i> +-ing: 4 Specification: <i>While</i> +-ing: 1 -ing: 3 AC or Absence of AC (<i>without</i> + -ing): 8 Result: 7 Sentential disjunct: 1

Table 4: *-ing* participial adjuncts in the LOCNESS corpus (argumentative texts; 15 AE and 5 BE; 61 tokens in 20 texts)

As shown in Table 4, when writing argumentative essays, native speakers use *-ing* participial adjuncts to express Means most frequently: especially in the postverbal position (16 tokens), but also preverbally (8 tokens). However, the *-ing* adjuncts rarely express Means unless augmented by the preposition ‘by’. Sentence (8) is perhaps the only instance of Means expressed covertly. The majority of clauses expressing this function are augmented, as in Example (9).

- (8) *The advent of the television changed all of that, however, giving the public a “peak” at what radio wasn’t able to give them.* (LOCNESS-AE)
- (9) *He tried to prolong school life for a large number of pupils by making education compulsory until the age of 16...* (LOCNESS-BE)

Other frequent functions in this group include: Accompanying Circumstance (compatible with simultaneity with the main clause event) in the postverbal position (8 occurrences) and Result (7 occurrences), as shown in (10):

- (10) *If there were fewer civil cases to be dealt with, it would free up courts to deal with more criminal cases, reducing the backlog of criminal cases, which would bring the criminal cases to trial quicker.* (LOCNESS-AE)

Causal elaboration is also attested, as in (11), whereas (12) is an example of another type of elaboration – specification:

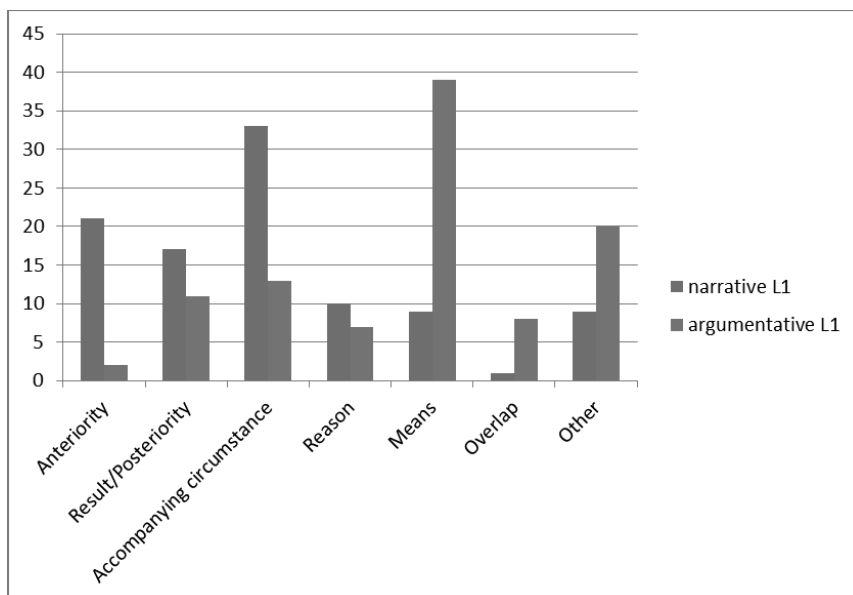
- (11) *They simply perform millions of calculations, very quickly, following instructions laid out by a human.* (LOCNESS-BE)
- (12) *A three way conversation is started, with the tester ‘chatting’ to the other two, asking questions and receiving answers.* (LOCNESS-BE)

3.4 Comparison of adjuncts in L1 narrative and argumentative texts

As we can see from Tables 3 and 4 above (Sections 3.2-3.3), the *-ing* participial adjuncts are most frequent in the postverbal position in both narrative and argumentative texts. However, preverbal adjuncts are still more frequent in narrative texts compared to argumentative texts. These observations are also confirmed if we compare relative frequencies of preverbal and postverbal adjuncts in the two text types: 27 preverbal vs. 64 postverbal adjuncts (per 10,000 words) in the renarrations, and 9 preverbal vs. 29 postverbal adjuncts (per 10,000 words) in the essays.

Moreover, the functions in which the adjuncts occur are different across the two genres. In film renarrations, Anteriority is frequently expressed by the *-ing* clauses in the preverbal position (12 occurrences): five with an explicit temporal preposition ‘after’ and seven with the ‘bare’ *-ing* form (cf. Examples (3) to (5) above). The two other frequent functions of postverbal adjuncts in narrative texts are Accompanying Circumstance (15 tokens) and Result (10 tokens, compatible with posteriority).

In contrast, Means is the most frequent function of the *-ing* participial adjuncts in argumentative essays, both in the preverbal and postverbal positions (cf. Examples (8) and (9) above). Accompanying Circumstance and Result are also typical functions of postverbal adjuncts in this type of texts. The functional differences between the adjuncts are shown in Graph 1, which uses percentage data calculated from the actual frequencies presented in Tables 3 and 4 above. The two positions – preverbal and postverbal – are merged here. The category “Other” in Graph 1 includes five Manner adjuncts attested in the narrative texts, as well as five adjuncts expressing Contrast (“while” followed by the *-ing* participle), two sentence-initial viewpoint disjuncts, and one sentence-final sentential disjunct – in the argumentative data.



Graph 1: The use of functions in narrative (Quest L1) vs. argumentative (LOCNESS) texts (%)

As shown in Graph 1, the most marked differences between *-ing* participial adjuncts across the two genres are observed in the use of Anteriority and Means adjuncts. Anteriority adjuncts are considerably more frequent in narratives (the blue column) compared to argumentative essays (the red column). On the other hand, adjuncts expressing Means are significantly more frequent in argumentative texts compared to narratives.

3.5 The discourse-structural status of *-ing* participial adjuncts

In this section, I will take a closer look at temporally interpreted *-ing* participial clauses. I will examine the contribution of such adjuncts to the information organization of the text as a whole. In view of the non-finite, subordinate nature of the *-ing* adjuncts, they should be analysed as belonging to the so-called ‘side structure’ of the narrative (i.e. the backgrounded material, as opposed to the ‘main structure’ – typically foregrounded information pertaining to the main question of the text – the Question-Under-Discussion (QUD) or Quaestio, cf. Klein & von Stutterheim 1987). On the other hand, sequentiality, dynamicity, completion and telicity are associated with foregrounded material (cf. Hopper 1979, Schmiedtová & Sahonenko 2011). Hopper’s example of an *-ing* clause presenting backgrounded information is shown in (13):

(13) *We journeyed for several days, passing through a few villages.*

In (13), the second clause elaborates on the event in the main clause and is a subpart of the main clause event (i.e. the ‘big’ event using the terminology of Fabricius-Hansen & Haug 2012). However, a closer look at the *-ing* participial clauses that have a temporal/sequential interpretation (anteriority or posteriority) suggests that the events expressed by these adjunct clauses introduce completed events and in this way contribute to the main structure of the sentence. Recall sentence (5) from the film renarration, repeated here as (14):

(14) *After regaining his senses, Lofnu once more awoke, this time to find himself in a land covered with papers. (Quest L1)*

The adjunct event in (14) is an achievement, i.e. it is dynamic, telic, complete and explicitly sequential due to ‘after’. To take another example from above, the adjunct event in (3), repeated here as (15), is an achievement, and is dynamic, telic, complete, and has a sequential interpretation due to completeness.

- (15) *Turning back to the damp piece, Lofnu scrambled to gather water for himself, only to find himself falling again.* (Quest L1)

In (4), repeated here as (16), we have an activity in the adjunct event. It is non-dynamic and atelic. However, due to the presence of the temporal adverbial ‘for a moment’, the event of thinking is interpreted as completed and therefore temporally precedes the main clause event.

- (16) *Thinking for a moment, Lofnu looked at the great distance between himself and the ground, and decided to gingerly climb down the tower.* (Quest L1)

This strongly suggests that English *-ing* participial adjuncts expressing sequentiality are more likely to contribute to the main structure of the narrative, despite their non-finite status.

These observations seem to be in line with the analysis of participial clauses in non-fiction texts proposed by Malá (2006). Analysing participial clauses from the point of view of the functional sentence perspective, the author suggests that nonfinite clauses expressing anteriority or posteriority are less dependent on the matrix clause (compared to clauses expressing simultaneity) and should be treated as mostly rhematic units of the superior distributional field of the superordinate clause (Malá 2006: 56).

3.6 Summary of the results of the narrative and argumentative texts in L1

The analysis of native English texts presented here shows that the overall frequency of *-ing* participial clauses in film renarrations is higher than in the argumentative essays in LOCNESS. The qualitative examination of the different functions which are most prominent in the two text types confirms the important role of genre in the use of these constructions by native speakers.

Further, it was pointed out that different types of adjuncts contribute differently to the information structure of the sentence. Despite their non-finite, subordinate status, the *-ing* participial adjuncts may contribute to the main structure of the texts (especially in narratives), for example, when they are used to express temporal functions such as Anteriority with respect to the main clause event.

The following section presents the analysis of the *-ing* participial adjuncts used by Norwegian learners of English. The section presents the narrative and the argumentative data from L2 and discusses differences observed in the L2 data compared to the L1.

4 The *-ing* participial adjuncts produced by Norwegian learners of English

Norwegian is a Germanic language which does not have converbs, although the present participle form can be used in the adverbial function. This use is, however, restricted to participant-oriented adjuncts which typically describe the manner of the main clause event or the person's (the participant's) state. For example, *Hun kom smilende inn* corresponds to *She came smiling in*, where the adjunct elaborates on her look (when she came in) rather than introducing a separate event. Based on this limited use of adjuncts in Norwegian, it is expected that the learners' use of the *-ing* construction will deviate from the native speakers' use in both narrative and argumentative texts.

More specifically, it is possible to predict underuse and misuse of *-ing* participial adjuncts in general as well as a non-target-like use of these constructions with respect to the genre-specific preferences observed in the L1 narrative vs. L1 argumentative texts.

4.1 The overall frequency of *-ing* clauses in L2

Table 5 presents the quantitative data for the use of adjuncts in narrative vs. argumentative texts by the Norwegian learners (advanced and intermediate-to-advanced L2 speakers) of English.

	Actual frequency / total word count	Relative frequency per 10,000 words
Narrative L2	23 / 5444	42
Argumentative L2	33 / 15330	22

Table 5: Overall frequency in L2

Interestingly, Norwegian learners are similar to native speakers in using the *-ing* participial adjuncts in narrative texts more often than in argumentative texts. On the other hand, the comparison of relative frequencies in the L1 and L2 production shows that learners significantly underuse these forms in both narrative and argumentative written discourse (cf. Table 6). As mentioned above, the underuse is expected and is a result of negative transfer from the speakers' L1.

	L1	L2
Narrative	90	42
Argumentative	37	22

Table 6: Comparison of relative frequencies in L1 vs. L2 (*-ing* clauses per 10,000 words)

Table 6 shows that the underuse of *-ing* clauses in L2 is greater in the narrative texts than in the argumentative essays.

A detailed analysis of *-ing* clauses in different functions and positions used by the Norwegian L2 speakers is presented in 4.2 (film renarrations) and 4.3 (argumentative essays) below.

4.2 Narrative L2 data (Quest renarrations)

Table 7 shows functions and positions of adjuncts in the narrative L2 data from Quest.

Preverbal position (12)		Postverbal position (11)	
Temporal (8)	Other (4)	Temporal (1)	Other (10)
Anteriority: <i>after</i> + <i>-ing</i> : 1 <i>when</i> + <i>-ing</i> : 2 Overlap: <i>while</i> + <i>-ing</i> : 4 <i>-ing</i> : 1	AC: 1 Reason: 2 Absence of AC: 1	Anteriority: <i>after</i> + <i>-ing</i> : 1	AC (overlap): 5 Reason: 3 Means: <i>by</i> + <i>-ing</i> : 1 Result: 1

Table 7: Positions and meanings of *-ing* clauses in the Norwegian learners' narrations (Quest L2)

The quantitative analysis presented in Table 7 shows that the proportion of preverbal and postverbal forms is the same in the learner data (compare to 17 preverbal vs. 41 postverbal converbs in the native speakers' data). As for the functions, Anteriority (which was frequently used in native speaker retellings of Quest) is relatively infrequent in the L2 data, and similarly for Result. On the other hand, overlap with an explicit conjunction is more frequent compared to the L1 patterns, as in (17).

- (17) *While walking around in the paper-land he finds a damp spot.* (Quest L2)

The most frequently used function is that of AC, i.e. the least informative one according to Kortmann (1991). An example of the adjunct expressing an Accompanying Circumstance is in (18).

- (18) *He wanders, observing construction machines: cranes, tractors etc.* (Quest L2)

It is noteworthy that all the anteriority uses appear in combination with the explicit preposition ('after') or temporal conjunction ('when'), as in Examples (19) and (20):

- (19) *After falling from the paper world, the sandman **lands** in a rock-landscape.*
(Quest L2)
- (20) *When digging, he ends up with a hole which he falls through.* (Quest L2)

The next observation concerns the use of tense in the main clause. All the speakers in this group used Present tense to retell the film. One speaker used a few sentences in the Past tense, but rather sporadically, and not in a target-like manner. In contrast, all anteriority adjuncts in the L1 data are in the preverbal position and occur with the Past tense main clauses. Compare the use of Present tense in the main clause in (19) above and the Past tense used in (5), repeated here as (21):

- (21) *After regaining his senses, Lofnu once more **awoke**, this time to find himself in a land covered with papers.* (Quest L1)

Although both Present and Past tense main clauses can be modified by the *-ing* participial adjuncts in principle, we do not find the combinations of Anteriority adjuncts with Present tense main clauses in the native speakers' narratives. Thus in (19), a native speaker of English would probably use the Past tense in the main clause.

4.3 Argumentative L2 data (the ICLE corpus)

Table 8 shows functions and positions of adjuncts in the argumentative L2 data from the Norwegian subpart of the ICLE corpus (ICLE-NO).

Preverbal position (10)		Postverbal position (23)	
Temporal (3)	Other (7)	Temporal (3)	Other (20)
Overlap/ simultaneity: 'as' + -ing: 1 'when' + -ing: 1 Anteriority: 'after' -ing: 1	Means ('by' -ing/ -ing): 3 AC (-ing): 1 Reason ('by' -ing/ -ing): 2 Result (-ing): 1	Anteriority ('after' -ing): 1 Overlap ('when' -ing): 1 Posteriority ('before' -ing): 1	Result (-ing): 8 Means ('by' -ing): 5 Reason (-ing): 2 absence of AC (('without -ing): 5

Table 8: The ICLE-NO data (argumentative essays by Norwegian learners)

Overall, the analysis confirms the prediction about the underuse of the *-ing* participial clauses in ICLE-NO (the underuse is marginal, with the $p=0.01$).

Similarly to the L1 argumentative data, the L2 data shows a preference for postverbal *-ing* participial adjuncts (23 vs. 10 preverbal ones). Although there is too little data to draw any firm conclusions, it is interesting to note that Means is a relatively frequent function of adjuncts in the learner data (as in the L1 data, cf. Section 3.3 above). All these forms are used with the preposition ‘by’, as shown in (22):

- (22) *Of course they can try to get their own practical experience by asking different companies and businesses to work there, but it's not easy and the students might not even have time, because they have got too much to read.* (ICLE-NO)

While the *-ing* adjuncts expressing Means are not significantly underused in ICLE-NO compared to LOCNESS ($p=0.09$), adjuncts expressing Result are clearly overused (8 cases out of 33 in L2 vs. 8 out of 61 in the L1 data):

- (23) *Still it is “soft” subjects like these that attract most students, partially because they are considered easier than the natural sciences and partially because they are cheaper for the government to teach, allowing politicians to keep unemployment numbers artificially low by inflating the number of “soft” courses.* (ICLE-NO)

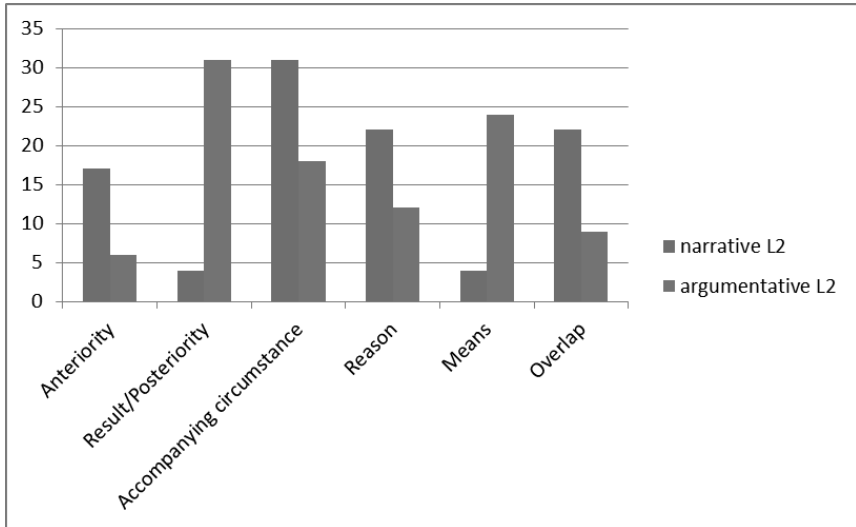
In addition to target-like forms, several errors are observed in the learner data: (i) dangling participles, as in (24), (ii) incorrect use of certain conjunctions preceding the *-ing* participle, and (iii) participial clauses occurring at the beginning of a new sentence while modifying the event expressed in the preceding sentence, as in (25):

- (24) *When watching TV, there's little left for the imagination.* (ICLE-NO)
 (25) *[...] milieu is widely considered to be responsible. Releaving the individual of some guilt, by blaming society.* (ICLE-NO)

These errors show that the learners' use of *-ing* clauses is not fully target-like (i.e. grammatically correct).

4.4 Summary of the results and some explanations

Graph 2 compares occurrences (percentage distribution) of *-ing* participial adjuncts in the two genres of L2 texts.



Graph 2: The use of functions in L2 narrative (Quest L2) vs. argumentative (ICLE-NO) texts (%)

If we compare the L2 data in Graph 2 with that of L1 speakers (Graph 1 in Section 3.4), we will find that the patterns for Result/Posteriority and temporal Overlap (simultaneity) are reversed for narrative and argumentative texts.

The overall impression is that learners do better in argumentative than in narrative written texts, where their use of *-ing* clauses is less native-like. However, there are non-native-like features in both genres. In narratives, the non-target-like features include (i) overuse of *-ing* participial adjuncts expressing temporal overlap and underuse of adjuncts expressing a narrative sequence of events, as well as (ii) the non-native-like use of adjuncts in the function of Anteriority with Present tense main clauses (as opposed to Past tense main clauses in the L1 data).

In argumentative texts, learners overuse *-ing* clauses expressing Result (a typical use in narrative texts in L1). There are also various types of errors, such as dangling participles, incorrect use of certain conjunctions preceding the

-ing participle, and the use of sentence-initial clauses which modify the clause in the preceding sentence.

Negative transfer from the speakers' L1 (due to absence of the corresponding construction in Norwegian) is certainly the most plausible explanation of the learners' avoidance of these constructions in written texts of both genres. The non-target-like uses of *-ing* adjuncts with respect to the type of written discourse witness the lack of knowledge about the genre-specific use of adjuncts in different positions. For example, temporal Anteriority in the preverbal position and Result (compatible with posteriority) in the postverbal position are typical of L1 narrative texts. Moreover, adjuncts expressing Anteriority occur in combination with Past tense main clauses in the native speakers' data as opposed to Present tense used by the Norwegian learners.¹

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Corpora used in the article

ICLE and LOCNESS: <http://www.uclouvain.be/en-cecl.html>

"Quest" data: German-Israeli project: University of Heidelberg (Barbara Schmiedtová, Christiane von Stutterheim, Natascha Sahonenko); University of Haifa (Bracha Nir); Norwegian learner data: University of Oslo (Bergljot Behrens)