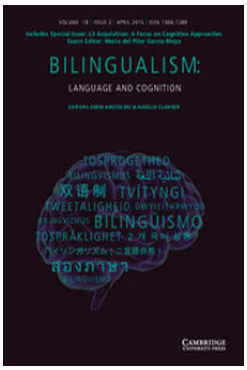


# The “frog story” narratives of Irish–English bilinguals


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# The "frog story" narratives of Irish–English bilinguals*

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*Four bilingual speakers of Irish (Gaelic) and English, two men and two women, were audiorecorded as they produced narratives based on pictures from the Mercer Mayer book Frog, where are you? Order of narration was counterbalanced. The narratives were analyzed according to certain features of global and local structure originally identified in Berman and Slobin (1994). Differences within and across narratives emerged in the number of components included, the number of planning components explicitly marked for purpose, the marking of tense and aspect, and the use of extended aspectual categories. These variations were attributed to 1) the order in which the narrative was told (first-told versus second-told versions), 2) the language of the narrative (Irish versus English), and 3) the particular preferences of individual narrators.*

## Introduction

In 1994, Berman and Slobin published their studies of children and adults from five different language backgrounds whose narratives were elicited by a Mercer Mayer picture book entitled *Frog, where are you?* Since that time, the "frog stories" (as they have come to be known) have served as a basis for many other narrative research projects, including those focusing on child and adult speakers of languages not included in the original series of studies. Somewhat fewer studies, though several of the more recent ones, have analyzed the effects on narrative production of bilingualism. Bilingual narration raises questions about the effects on the narrative task of the different structural options presented by each of a speaker's languages. Does the "ideal" narrator fluent in two languages exchange not just one linguistic system for another, but also the culturally determined narrative conventions associated with each language? This idea has been expressed by Fanon (1967), who wrote that "[t]o speak a language is to take on a world, a culture" (p. 38). Alternatively, will narratives told by bilinguals show marked differences from those of monolinguals in ways that are not clearly related to linguistic or cultural effects?

* Most of this work is based on data collected while I was on sabbatical from Wichita State University and working as a Visiting Scholar at the Linguistics Institute of Ireland in Dublin. I thank the director and the staff of the Institute very much for allowing me to take up some of their time and space. I would also like to express my enormous appreciation to Tina Hickey for her invaluable assistance in collecting, translating, and interpreting some of these data. *Go raibh míle maith agat!* All errors of fact and interpretation are, of course, wholly my responsibility.

There have been to date relatively few studies of bilingual retellings of the frog stories. Much of the existing research focuses on narrative development in bilingual children. A few exceptions include Haritos and Nelson's examination of Greek–English bilinguals (cited in Berman and Slobin), Howell's (1993) study of Spanish and Turkish bilingual speakers of Australian English, and Jisa and Kern's study of Turkish–French speakers, which included adults as well as children (also cited in Berman and Slobin). Aarssen (1996), for example, used frog story methodology along with experimental anaphoric reference and relativization tasks to explore narrative development in Turkish–Dutch children of school age. Shu (2000) utilized frog story methodology to examine the narratives of Chinese–English speaking children with varying exposure to English. Not surprisingly, the influence of the (dominant) English language and culture upon the Chinese stories, especially in vocabulary and word order, increased with exposure to English. Cenoz (2001) explored more specifically the cross-linguistic influences in the narratives of bilingual Spanish–Basque speakers acquiring a third language, English, focusing on code-switching, transfer, and "interactional strategies" whereby the narrator sought help from the investigator. Although no adults were recorded, the sample did include older students (i.e. in grades 6 and 9). All the subjects used Spanish more frequently as a source language, although L1 Spanish speakers transferred terms from Basque more frequently than L1 Basque speakers did. Cenoz proposed that the relatively close distance between Spanish and English (versus Basque) might have accounted for this observation.

Akinçi, Jisa and Kern (to appear) gave the frog

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story task to Turkish and French monolingual and bilingual children. Although there were no significant differences in the number of narrative components included by Turkish versus French monolinguals or between younger monolinguals versus bilinguals, the older (10-year-old) subjects exhibited a marked monolingual advantage. The authors attributed this to a delay in macrostructure development in French which was not the result of bilingualism per se, but rather of the lower rate of exposure that these children had to literacy-related tasks.

Other related studies focusing on temporality, perspective, and clause linkages in narratives also revealed a monolingual advantage up until (and in some cases including) age ten (Akinçi, 1998, 1999, to appear; Akinçi and Jisa, in press).

Of the studies of older children and adults that have been undertaken, none have focused on narration in monolingual speakers of either Irish (Gaelic) or Hiberno-English. Here, the narratives in each language of bilingual Irish–English adults are compared according to some of the characteristics described by Berman and Slobin. Specifically examined are conventions that concern the way narratives are structured globally and locally by various components, as well as various features of predicate structure, including aspectual and connective forms.

### *Narrative conventions*

In much of the western world, and certainly the world associated with British and American varieties of English, narratives are conventionally event-oriented and chronologically structured. That is, clusters of events form specific components to create the global structure of the story. Although such global structure has been variously identified, Berman and Slobin specify three "core" components: I. The onset of the plot, II. The unfolding of the plot, and III. The resolution of the plot.

Within each component, the narrative events are locally structured. Some events provide background information, and these may be marked aspectually (as in English, where the present or past perfect might signal background information) or may be signalled by transitional words and phrases (*previously*, *before that*, *since*, etc.). Some events relate the motivation of the protagonist or the attendant circumstances for a given action (*because*, *for*, *in order to*, etc.). Still other events may be so-called "plot-advancing" elements, typically (in English) marked with dynamic verbs in the simple past tense or progressive aspect. In most cases, the narration of such events proceeds in chronological fashion. Where causality rather than temporality is encoded, such connectivity has been considered of a higher order, e.g. more cognitively advanced, although clearly not the dominant concern of narrators. Rather, causality signals the coherence of the narrative to more general, so-called "higher-order" goals. Although temporality–causality is one of the dimensions of narrative requirements along which cultures differ, Berman and Slobin were nevertheless successful in analyzing narratives across several languages.

In addition to Berman and Slobin, several authors have undertaken analyses documenting differing narrative conventions – including introduction and maintenance of reference, predicate use, episodic structuring, and evaluation – across cultures using different approaches. Most recently, cross-linguistic analyses have focused on German, French, English, Chinese, Japanese, and Cambodian (among others), and on bilingual versus monolingual learners of English. Piaget (1998), for example, found that the conversational analysis techniques developed by English-speaking researchers are largely, but not entirely, appropriate for analyzing narratives of French-speaking Swiss subjects. Hickmann (1998) found differences in the ways both children and adults speaking Chinese, German, English, or French introduced animate and inanimate characters into narrative discourse. Language-specific influences affected both child and adult use. Taylor (1994) found that there are five categories of participants in narratives told by Nɔaande (narrow Bantu) speakers, and different rules are followed to introduce and maintain these different categories of referents. Hickmann, Hendriks and Roland (1998) compared predicate types and spatial reference in the narratives of monolingual English and French children and adults. Particularly notable was the way active predicates were used by the two groups. English speakers used their verbs to mark multiple forms of information, whereas French speakers rarely did. In a study by Mihm (1994), Japanese narratives, as compared to German ones, were found to exhibit features such as focus selection, spatial orientation, and causality only weakly.

Episodic structuring is another narrative parameter along which cultures may differ. Shrubshall (1997), comparing monolingual English-speaking children with bilinguals, found that 7- and 8-year-old bilinguals lagged behind their peers in evaluation and episodic structuring of their narratives. By age 10, though some progress had been made, the "monolingual advantage" still persisted. Narrative clauses in Cambodian are also not ordered chronologically, but rather use a topic-comment structure (Longmire, 1995); the stories begin at the end, then cycle back through progressively more detailed versions, which focus on why events occurred.

### *Narration in Irish culture*

Ireland is a country with a rich narrative tradition and the oldest oral literary tradition in the western world. In ancient Celtic times, bards held positions of high esteem at court; they trained for many years and learned a repertoire of some 300 tales at minimum. Modern Ireland is well known for its writers and poets, including four Irish-born Nobel Prize winners in the twentieth century. Although Irish was supplanted by English in many cases in recent centuries, the narrative tradition has nonetheless continued unbroken, in either Irish (*Gaeilge*) or the Hiberno-English dialect. It is somewhat less inclined to be an oral tradition than previously, and yet popular wisdom holds that certain cultural and expressive conventions distinguish Irish narrative production from its American and British equivalents. For example, the Irish narrative is often thought to be less linear and more verbose, while contemporary American narratives are often considered terse, an impression which may or may not be empirically verifiable.

### *Linguistic forms in narration*

Typological characteristics of different languages also have effects on the narrative task which may interact with cultural conventions. Berman and Slobin (pp. 109ff.) examined the four dimensions of 1) tense/aspect marking, 2) event conflation, 3) perspective, and 4) connectivity. The first refers to the degree to which distinctions of tense and aspect are encoded grammatically in the verb phrase. In some languages, such encoding is obligatory while in others, such as Chinese, it is not. Event conflation concerns the grammatical possibilities for relating various components of events such as location, movement, manner, temporality, and causation. Some languages are "verb-framed", meaning that such information is largely encoded in the verb itself, and others are "satellite-framed", because "satellites" such as particles, adpositions, and adverbs convey the same information. The effect on the discourse in the latter case is to allow the speaker "a greater specification of manner" (p. 119), and in the former the possibility of more elaboration of locations. The third dimension refers to the grammatical devices available for varying the linear order and the semantic roles of verb arguments, which thereby provides options for discourse distinctions such as focus, the foregrounding and backgrounding of information, and so on. Connectivity characterizes the use of multiclausal constructions.

## Irish and English morphology and syntax

### *The morphology of tense and aspect*

Affixation, stem changes, and periphrasis are the primary means of modulating references to events in Irish and English. Both languages rely on grammaticalized processes for marking past tense, for example. In Hiberno-English, suffixes perform the primary function, with stem changes following in frequency; but in Irish, a prefix marks the past tenses of vowel-initial verbs (e.g. *ith* "eat", *d'ith* "ate"), while a stem change to the initial consonant is the more typical case (e.g. *glan* "clean", *ghlan* "cleaned"). Subject marking is pronominal, except in some cases of the first person (cf. *ghlan mé* "I cleaned", but *ghlanamar* "we cleaned" or *glanaim* "I clean") In both languages, the progressive aspect is commonly used, and in both cases it is periphrastically marked with a finite be-verb followed by a nonfinite form of the event verb; in Irish this nonfinite form, or verbal noun, is preceded by a particle historically derived from a preposition, as in (1).[1]

(1) *Tá mé ag ithe.*
be.PRES I PART eat.VBL N
"I am eating."

The simple present and past tenses may be commonly used in English to convey the habitual aspect, but in Irish habitual past is marked by a separate set of suffixes, with non- first person forms typically marked periphrastically with a pronoun.

Unlike English, Irish has no true perfective aspect. To indicate action that has just been completed, a construction similar to the progressive is sometimes used, with a different particle preceding the nonfinite verb, as in (2). More often, the simple past or past progressive is used.

(2) *Tá mé tar éis ithe.*
be.PRES I after eat.VBL N
"I just finished eating/I have eaten."

In both languages, the most common verbs tend to be irregular, with suppletive forms for their past and, in some cases, future tenses. Many of these verbs are common to narrative discourse, e.g. *tar* "come" (past *thainig*), *téigh* "go" (past *chuaigh*), *abair* "say" (past *duirt*), and *feic* "see" (past *chonaic*), to name a few.

[1] In Irish, the nonfinite verbal noun may be used in several different grammatical constructions that are not very faithfully translatable into comparable English structures. Thus, *tá sé ag seasamh* "he is standing", is the progressive construction with the verbal noun *seasamh*, but *tá sé ina seasamh*, literally "he is in his stand(ing)", with the same verbal noun, describes a state.

Modal verbs are rarer in Irish as compared to English. Modality is more often marked via verbal particles or separate suffixes. In (3), the particle *go* signals present subjunctive, which causes morphophonological alternation in the following sound; it is often found in set phrases. The past subjunctive form of the verb, which is nearly identical to the habitual past, is used much less often than the conditional, as in (4).

(3) *Go n-éirí an bothar leat.*
PART rise.PRES SUBJ the road with.you
"May the road rise to meet you."
(4) *Thógfadh sé é.*
take.COND he it.OBJ
"He would take it."

***Event conflation***

Both languages are satellite-framed, though Irish is even more likely than English to construct expressions prepositionally (i.e. obliquely) to convey supporting information to the verbs, although in some cases such information is obligatory (as in English) and hence the oblique satellites are complements of the verb (see (5) and (6) below). Certain adverbial constructions, which might be expressed using an adverb in English, often in Irish contain a periphrastic particle + adjective form. The particle is roughly functionally equivalent to the English *-ly* adverbial suffix, e.g. *luath* "early" (adj); *go luath* "early" (adv). There are also numerous particles and prepositional constructions which, as in English, express location and direction, such as *thit amach* "fell out" or *chuaigh isteach* "went inside". Verbal particles or prepositions may also obligatorily occur with other, non-motion predicates, as in the examples *duirt le* "spoke with/to" and *ghlaoigh ar* "called for/upon"; the presence of one preposition or another may also change the sense of a verb, as in *feiceann* "see" vs. *feaiceann ar* "watch".

(5) *Is maith le Seán é.*
COP.PRES good with Seán it.OBJ
"Sean likes it."
(6) *Tá airgead agam.*
be.PRES money at.me
"I have money."

***Perspective***

Main clause order differs considerably in the two languages. While English is SVO, Irish is strongly VSO, with very little variation under normal circumstances. Fronting constructions are available, which often appear in narrative clauses or in idioms, as in *Tina is ainm dom*, literally "Tina is name to me," with the verb second. This is a means of providing focus on the fronted element, but aside from such constructions, word order variability is limited. Expansions of the clause to include wider categories of aspect and to provide modifications of the predicate are similar for those of English, although order is different, e.g. English ADJ-N versus Irish N-ADJ; genitives appear postnominally in Irish; relative pronouns occur postnominally in English, but in Irish are marked similarly to subordinate clauses in many cases.

Passive constructions are an alternative in English which also allows variation in semantic focus. Irish does not have a passive construction per se, although stative constructions using the substantive "be"-verb followed by a nonfinite verbal adjective may convey similar information in some cases.

***Connectivity***

In Irish, even fairly simple sentences technically display vestiges of clause embedding, notably those formed with one or the other of the two "be" verbs. Those initiated with the copula have been analyzed as having a higher predicate which remains in the form of a tensed copular clitic (Stenson, 1981); those initiated with the substantive "be"-verb are often followed by the subject and then a nonfinite verb marked as progressive or, in some cases, stative. However, it is questionable whether speakers recognize such sentences as historically or theoretically multiclausal. A variety of embedding formulae exist otherwise. In addition to relativization, dependent forms of the copula, the substantive existential, and other verb forms exist. The last of these appear largely in the past negative; more common are the dependent "be"-verbs, which may be translated as preceded by "that" in cases where reported or indirect speech follows, or where the main predicate is subcategorized for a sentential complement, e.g.

(7) *Tá súil agam nach bhfuil sí marbh.*
be.PRES hope at.me NEG.DEP be-DEP she dead
"I hope that she is not dead."

Simpler constructions may be conjoined using the forms *agus* "and", *ach* "but", and *ná* "nor/or"; temporal connectives include *ansin* "then", *tar éis* "after", *sular* "before", and those expressing simultaneity such as *san idirlinn* "in the meantime" (literally "in the between space (of time)"). Logical connec-

tivity may utilize such forms as *mar* "because"/"for"/"as" or *cé go* (+ dep. form) "although".

## Method

### *Subjects*

The subjects for this study were four adult bilingual speakers of Hiberno-English and Irish (a Gaelic Celtic language), two women and two men. All were native first-language speakers of Irish, although they came from different dialect areas. All were professionals working in the Dublin area in an organization where Irish was habitually used, but English was generally spoken or written for communication with those outside the organization.

Subject A was the eldest of the narrators. She grew up in an Irish-speaking household in the predominately English-speaking city of Dublin, and was no doubt exposed to English from infancy. Subject B grew up in a Gaeltacht in Donegal. He was fluent in German as well. Subject C was born and reared in the Aran Islands, one of the most isolated of the Gaeltachts. The youngest of the subjects, she learned English in school. Subject D was also reared in a Gaeltacht in the West of Ireland, and did not learn much English until primary school.

### *Procedures*

Each subject was given a three-ring booklet with enlarged and photocopied pictures from the Mercer Mayer story *Frog, where are you?* placed in plastic sleeves. Subjects were audiorecorded while spontaneously examining the pictures and generating a narrative. Two of the subjects, one male and one female, were asked to tell the story in Irish first; the other two told the story first in English. Instructions were given in Irish to elicit the Irish narratives and in English to elicit the English narratives. In balancing the order of telling, the effects of story retelling on the outcome could be noted, i.e. places where episodes were included with the second telling but not the first, or elaborated with retelling. This effect could thereby be distinguished from the effect of switching languages.

## Analysis

The narratives were transcribed by a fluent bilingual speaker of Irish and English, and the Irish versions translated by the author with the assistance of a bilingual linguist. Narratives were analyzed according to five characteristics described by Berman and Slobin (1994), and for which there are consequently analytical results for (American) English, German, Hebrew, Turkish, and Spanish. These included elements of global and local structure, i.e. (1) the presence or absence of three plot components, and (2) and (3) of specific sub-components of each. For the sub-components, it was noted both whether a specific sub-component was expressed, and, if so, what relationship it had to previous or subsequent sub-components. This focused in particular on picture 3, in which the protagonist wakes in the morning to discover that his frog has escaped, and pictures 14–16, in which the boy mistakes the antlers of a deer for tree branches. Another segment of the analysis, (4), concerned plot structure and the degree to which the narrator's formulation of the story reveals a hierarchical goal plan, i.e. a plan through which the superordinate goal (retrieving the lost frog) "motivates subordinate goals", in the words of Trabasso and Rodkin (1994, p. 88). For example, parts of the story can be interpreted as attempts that either succeed or fail to bring the protagonist closer to the ultimate goal; other parts of the story provide setting or establish initiating events leading to the various attempts. Of the 16 specific planning components examined, some may be episodes which are explicitly marked for purpose, e.g. "the boy looks in the hole of a tree to see if his frog is there", or not marked, e.g. "the boy climbs and looks in a tree, and then climbs on a rock".

Another analytic approach, (5), examined a few aspects of linguistic packaging of the narratives. In particular, the analysis concerned a) the manipulation of tense and aspect within and across clauses, and b) the use of verbal and verb + satellite constructions to expand predication for the purpose of either providing additional aspectual categories or adding non-obligatory elements to otherwise modify the skeletal structure of the narrative.

## Results

### *Global structure*

Table 1 compares the inclusion of three major plot components by each narrator in each language, Component I, the Onset (the boy realizes his frog is gone), Component II, the Unfolding (the boy searches for his frog), and Component III, the Resolution (the boy finds his frog). Asterisks indicate which version was told first. In cases where a plot component was either missing or expressed only implicitly, this can be explained on the grounds that it was the narrator's first attempt to tell the story; on the second attempt, regardless of which language was used, all components were present for all subjects.

Table 1. *Presence or absence of plot components in Irish vs. English narratives*

| Subject: | A (female) | | B (male) | | C (male) | | D (female) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language: | Irish | Engl* | Irish* | Engl | Irish* | Engl | Irish | Engl* |
| Component I: | X | (X) | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Component II: | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X |
| Component III: | X | X | X | X | O | X | X | O |

Key: X = component mentioned, O = component unmentioned, (X) = component not mentioned but implied
* = First-told story

Table 2. *Presence or absence of components of local structure in picture 3*

| Subject: | A | | B | | C | | D | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language: | Irish | Engl* | Irish* | Engl | Irish* | Engl | Irish | Engl* |
| Sub-components | | | | | | | | |
| a. 1) Boy wakes | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | O |
| 2) Time | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| b. 3) Boy's discovery | X | O | O | X | X | X | X | X |
| 4) State of affairs | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| c. 5) Boy's response | X | X | O | X | X | X | X | X |
| % of inclusions | 100 | 80 | 60 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 80 | 80 |

***Local structure***

The results of the second analysis focusing on the local structure of events depicted in picture number 3 are presented in Table 2. The five sub-components examined were divided into three segments: a. background components, consisting of 1) the boy's waking and 2) the time this occurred (i.e. the next morning); b. plot-advancing components, including mention of 3) the boy's discovery or learning of something and 4) the state of affairs depicted or inferred (the jar is empty; the frog is missing); and c., the attendant circumstances (or motivation), which consists of 5) the protagonist's active and/or affective response to the elements of b. Three of the four subjects included all five sub-components in at least one narrative, but only one subject included all five sub-components in both narratives. While some omissions might be considered the result of the novelty of the task, e.g. the omission of sub-component 3) by narrators A and B and of sub-component 5) by narrator B, others seemed to be matters of individual preference, as subject D declined to mention the boy's waking in either version of his story.

The lexical and syntactic form in which the sub-components were mentioned and, in some cases, related to one another was also noted. The first two components, where both are mentioned, are not always mentioned in the same sequence. In subject A's Irish version, the waking or rising of the boy was expressed prior to the time at which it occurred (*nuair a dhúsaigh an búachaill ar maidin* "when the boy awoke in the morning"), while subjects B and C mentioned first that it was morning or daytime (*tá sé ina lá agus tá an búachaill agus an gaidhir dúisithe* "it is day and the boy and the dog are awake"; *maidir lá na mháireach dúisíonn an búachaillín agus dúisíonn an madra* "as for the next day, the little boy and the dog wake up"). Narrator D mentioned only that it was morning (*agus ar maidin* "and in (the) morning"). In the English versions, narrators A and C mentioned first that it was morning and then that the protagonist woke (subject A: *it's daytime and the frog has disappeared. the boy is awake and so is the dog*; subject C: *in the morning, the little boy and the dog wake up*); narrator (B) reported the waking first (*when Paul woke up in the morning . . .*); and narrator D again declined to mention that the boy woke up (*The morning, the boy is amazed the frog is gone . . .*).

The third analysis was similar to the second, but focused on pictures 14–16, in which the boy grabs the "branches" of a tree only to discover that they are actually the antlers of a deer. Four possibilities for the encoding of this sequence are a. the mention of neither event or else of only one of them; b. the mention of both events, without specification of the relationship between the two; c. the mention of both

Table 3. *Specification of local structure for pictures 14–16*

| Subject: | A | | B | | C | | D | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language: | Irish | Engl* | Irish* | Engl | Irish* | Engl | Irish | Engl* |
| Sub-components: | | | | | | | | |
| a. One event or none | X | — | — | X | X | X | — | X |
| b. Two unrelated events | — | — | X | — | — | — | X | — |
| c. Two events, implied error | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| d. Two events, error specified | — | X | — | — | — | — | — | — |

events with the implication that the boy had been mistaken; or d. the mention of both events with the explicit encoding of the boy's misperception. Table 3 presents the results of this analysis.

Two of the four subjects (A and C) mentioned only one or no event when narrating in Irish; the other two mentioned both events but without specifying their relationship. In English, one of the subjects (A) indicated that the boy had possibly misperceived the antlers for branches; the other three subjects failed to mention either branches or antlers (or both) at all. For subject A, the specification of the events and their relationship occurred only in the first (English) version, and was omitted in the second (Irish) version. For subject D, who also narrated first in English, the retelling resulted in the mention of two events rather than no mention of either. Subject B, whose narrative was first told in Irish, mentioned two unrelated events, whereas upon retelling he stated only that the boy and his dog met a deer who chased them. In other words, for two of the subjects, the specification of local components actually declined with retelling, but this was unrelated to the language used. In a third subject, retelling appeared to enhance the narration of local structure.

### *Causal networks*

Analysis using a causal network model also revealed within- and across-narrator differences. Again, sometimes a narrator excluded a component on the first telling, and included it with the second telling, but this does not explain all the intra-narrator differences. Subject A (English first) excluded specific mention of the fact that the boy had a frog when narrating in Irish, even though she had previously implied this with her initial version. She also mentioned initially, but not on retelling, the presence of a hole in the ground and a log (behind which a family of frogs are found). On the other hand, the explicit description of the boy finding his (empty) jar the next morning, and the specification of higher order goals – to get the frog back, or at least to find the frog – were missing initially but provided upon retelling.

Subject B did a better job of including components in the English version that had initially gone unmentioned in Irish. The boy's discovery of the jar, his attempts to search the bedroom for the missing creature, his noticing of a hole in the ground and, later, a hole in a tree were all provided upon the second telling. On the other hand, B failed to mention the higher order goals of finding the frog or getting him back, even though he expressed these in the initial Irish version.

Subject C was the most consistent of the four narrators, including or excluding elements in either version with only minor differences. The boy's finding of the jar was stated more explicitly in the initial Irish version, as was the boy's attempt to search outside. Only one or two of the higher order goals was expressed, but it was a different goal for each story.

Subject D's two stories exhibited the greatest differences between initial and subsequent narration. In the initial English version, nine different components were omitted (compared to the Berman and Slobin subjects), and one attempt was marked explicitly for purpose. In the subsequent Irish version, there were only two missing components, one of which (the possession of the frog by the boy) was initially included. The same attempt to search outside for the frog was explicitly marked in the Irish version as well. Table 4 presents these data.

### *Tense and aspect*

Speakers sometimes utilized different tenses and aspects in one language from those used in the other, but this was apparently not a linguistic effect. For example, subject A expressed 98% of her finite predicates (81 of 83) using the English present tense, but when narrating in Irish used the past exclusively (38/38). This may be explained by the fact that she told the story first in English, and so used the present

Table 4. *Proportion of narrators who include planning components*

| Subject: | | A | | B | | C | | D | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language: | | Irish | Engl* | Irish* | Engl | Irish* | Engl | Irish | Engl* |
| Components of | | | | | | | | | |
| SETTING: | Introduce frog | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | Possess frog | O | (X) | O | (X) | O | O | X | X |
| INITIATING | Boy asleep | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| EVENTS: | Frog leaves | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | Boy wakes | X | X | X | X | X | X | O | O |
| | Boy finds jar | X | O | X | X | X | (X) | X | X |
| | Frog gone | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| | Boy sad/worried | X | X | O | O | O | O | X | X |
| ATTEMPTS TO | A1 Look in room | O | O | O | (X) | X | X | X | O |
| FIND FROG: | A2 Look out window | XP | X | X | XP | X | X | X | X |
| | A3 Look outside | XP | XP | X | XP | XP | X | XP | XP |
| | A4 Look in hole in ground | O | X | X | O | O | O | X | O |
| | A5 Look in hole in tree | X | X | X | O | O | O | X | O |
| | A6 Look under rock | XP | XP | X | XP | O | O | X | (X) |
| | A7 Look behind log | O | X | X | X | X | X | X | O |
| | ATTEMPTS EXPLICITLY MARKED WITH PURPOSE: | .75 | .67 | 0 | .60 | .25 | 0 | .14 | .33 |
| OUTCOME: | Find/take frog | X | O | X | O | X | O | X | O |
| HIGHER | Get frog back | X | O | X | O | O | X | X | O |
| ORDER GOALS: | Find frog | X | O | X | O | X | O | X | O |

Key: X = component mentioned, O = component unmentioned, XP = component mentioned with explicit purpose, (X) = component not mentioned but implied

tense because she was relating what she was just then seeing, and in Irish relating what she had seen before. In contrast to the other subjects, A used the progressive aspect more often in her English version (60% of the nonfinite verbs, or 31/52) than in Irish (28%; 5/18), where it was used primarily to mark protracted processes of looking and searching, or the simultaneity of events where one is protracted and the other not (e.g. *bhí sé ina sheasamh thuas ar an bharr carriage ag lorg an frog* "he was standing (=in a standing state) on top of a rock searching for the frog"). In English, the progressive tended to be used more often for descriptions, lending a sense of the immediate presence of the characters and events (e.g. *there's a boy sitting lost in the bedroom*, *the frog is hopping out of the jar*, *he's getting dressed*). This seems also to be evidence of A's approach to her initial narration being one of reporting what she is seeing rather than narrating a story she has "in mind". In both narrations, however, active indicative moods dominated (98% in English, or 133/135; 96% in Irish, or 52/56).

Subject B preferred the simple past indicative in his English version: 90% of finite clauses were in the past tense (45/50), and 93% of all clauses (57/61) were in active voice. In Irish, only 14% of finite clauses were past tense (10/70) and 86% present; 88% (86/98) of all clauses were active. Again, this shift in tense may be attributed to his telling the story first in Irish. Among the nonfinite verbs, over half were marked with progressive aspect in Irish (57%, or 16 of 28); of the eleven nonfinite English verbs, infinitives were more common (10, or 91%), and only one was progressive. There were nearly twice as many sentences expressed with stative constructions in the Irish version (12/98 versus 4/61), as well, revealed by the construction *ina* + verbal noun, e.g. *tá . . . go leor froiginín beag eile fagtha ina suí* "there were plenty of other little froggies left sitting"; see also *ina sheasamh* "standing", from subject A, literally "in-his standing".

Subject C reveals the most similarity between her two versions. In both, she utilized the present tense exclusively (35/35 English finite verbs; 43/43 Irish

Table 5. *Tense and aspect marking on verbs for English and Irish stories*

| Subject: | | A | | B | | C | | D | | Average | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language: | | Irish | Engl* | Irish* | Engl | Irish* | Engl | Irish | Engl* | Irish | Engl |
| Total Clauses: | | 56 | 135 | 98 | 61 | 50 | 42 | 91 | 42 | 295 | 280 |
| Finite Verbs: | n | 38 | 83 | 70 | 50 | 43 | 35 | 59 | 25 | 210 | 193 |
| | % | 68 | 61 | 71 | 82 | 86 | 83 | 65 | 59.5 | 71 | 69 |
| Present tense | n | 0 | 81 | 60 | 5 | 43 | 35 | 57 | 25 | 160 | 146 |
| | % | 0 | 97.5 | 86 | 10 | 100 | 100 | 97 | 100 | 76 | 76 |
| Past tense | n | 38 | 2 | 10 | 45 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 50 | 47 |
| | % | 100 | 2 | 14 | 90 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 24 | 24 |
| Nonfinite Verbs: | n | 18 | 52 | 28 | 11 | 7 | 7 | 32 | 17 | 85 | 87 |
| | % | 32 | 38.5 | 28 | 8 | 14 | 17 | 35 | 40 | 29 | 31 |
| Progressive | n | 5 | 31 | 16 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 16 | 13 | 40 | 45 |
| | % | 28 | 60 | 57 | 9 | 43 | 0 | 50 | 76 | 47 | 52 |
| Perfect | n | 0 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| | % | 0 | 17 | 3.5 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 13 |
| Infinitive/Other | n | 13 | 12 | 12 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 16 | 13 | 45 | 31 |
| | % | 72 | 23 | 43 | 91 | 57 | 86 | 50 | 18 | 53 | 36 |
| Voice: | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Stative/ Passive | n | 4 | 2 | 12 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 23 | 11 |
| | % | 7 | 1 | 12 | 6.5 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 8 | 4 |
| Active | n | 52 | 133 | 86 | 57 | 47 | 40 | 87 | 39 | 272 | 269 |
| | % | 93 | 98.5 | 88 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 93 | 92 | 96 |

finite verbs). Active and stative constructions occurred in nearly identical frequencies in both languages (2/42 total clauses in English; 3/50 in Irish). The primary differences were in the distribution of the relatively small number of nonfinite verbs. While C used the progressive construction 43% of the time in Irish (3/7 nonfinite verbs), generally for ongoing actions (e.g. *tosaíonn siad ag scairteadh air* ''they begin calling him''), infinitival and stative constructions were more often used (86% or 6/7 for English; 57% or 4/7 for Irish), especially for backgrounding and descriptions (e.g. *téann an buachaillín a chodladh* ''the little boy goes to sleep'', also *the frog is gone from the pot*, *the pot is broken*). Since she told the story in Irish first, this might explain the slightly greater use of stative descriptions, but it cannot explain the absence of the past tense in the second version.

Of all the subjects, D probably is the most militant advocate of the Irish language, which perhaps shows in his stories. He used a wider range of constructions in Irish than in English. Recall that he told the story first in English, and that his Irish version was nearly twice the length of his English narrative. In English, the present tense was used exclusively, primarily in the simple present form (25/25 finite verbs); 93% (39/42) sentences were expressed in active voice and 7% in stative or passive (e.g. *the boy is amazed*, *the jar gets stuck*). In the Irish version, the majority of the clauses were also in the present tense (57/59 or 97%), and 3% were past. This shift to past coincides with the insertion of backgrounding information in a purpose clause, e.g. *an chéad rud eile feicimid iad ag imeacht amach isteach ina san choill is dócha ag iarraidh fháilamach cár d'imigh an frog lei* ''the next thing they see going out into the woods and probably trying to find out where the frog went''.

Table 5 contains summary data of verbal tense and aspect marking for all the subjects. As the table reveals, the order in which the stories were told is more influential than the language in which it is told. In the first versions, regardless of language, the present tense is favored, while past is preferred for the retellings except in the case of subject C. In terms of aspect, a similar tendency emerged to favor the progressive in the first versions and other nonfinite forms in the retelling, although the use of progressives is not widely divergent for the two languages, averaging 52% for English and 47% for Irish.

It appears that language has somewhat more effect than order on the ratio of active to passive/stative. Three of the four subjects used the active

voice more often in English and the stative or passive more often in Irish, despite the order of narration. However, the averages for the two languages are similar: 96% of the English clauses (269/280), and 92% of the Irish clauses (272/295), are in active voice. Not surprisingly, the perfective appears in English much more often – 13% – versus the one instance of the *tar éis* construction that is roughly the Irish functional equivalent. Infinitive-like constructions were also favored in Irish, representing 53% of the 85 nonfinite verbs versus 36% of the 87 English nonfinite forms. Stories were slightly longer overall in Irish, as well – 295 total clauses, versus 280 for English. This reflects the longer length of the Irish story for three of the four subjects.

In addition, one narrator distinguished herself by her consistency. Except for the use of the progressive aspect, subject C's two stories were of similar length (42 clauses of English, 50 of Irish), her proportions of present tense were identical (100%), and the use of finite verbs (83% English, 86% Irish) was similar for each language. In contrast, subject A's two stories exhibited the greatest divergence, in length (135 English clauses; 56 Irish clauses), in tense marking (English 98% present; Irish 100% past), and in types of nonfinite verbs (English 60% progressive, 23% infinitive/other; Irish 28% progressive, 72% infinitive/other).

### *Satellites*

Extended aspectual categories are non-obligatory constructions separate from verb marking which may provide additional information regarding location, direction, time, and motion, or even the narrator's perspective on the ongoing action. These may be expressed adverbially, prepositionally, periphrastically, or through particles and other non-predicative devices. In English, for example, one may use adverbs such as *finally* or phrases such as *at last* to express achievement. Extended aspectual categories, as well as satellite constructions of various sorts, reflect differences similar to those of verbal tense and aspect marking. Irish is often said to be a prepositionally-oriented language, and indeed such constructions were more frequent in the Irish versions of the story, although the English versions were more likely to express aspect through clauses, phrases, repetition, and other such non-predicative devices. Order of narration clearly influenced some of the differences as well, with first-told stories typically containing fewer clauses marked with extended aspect, fewer aspectual categories, and somewhat fewer prepositional phrases and verb particles for three out of four subjects. Individual differences were also a factor, as once again subject C showed tremendous consistency between stories, whereas subject A exhibited the greatest differences between her Irish and English versions.

Subject A marked twice as many clauses with extended aspectual categories in Irish, which probably again reflects more familiarity with the story the second time around. She used six aspectual categories in English, including completive, cumulative, iterative, perfect, and retrospective, but most often, she expressed insecurity with the task, using such phrases as *I think*, *probably*, *I'm not sure*, or *it looks as if*. This contributed to the increased length of her English story. In Irish, however, she used a total of eleven aspectual categories, adding achievement, imminent, lative, prospective, and recurrent.

Subject B also marked more aspectual categories in the retold version, in this case in English, where 32% of the clauses contained extended aspect (versus 6% in Irish). He used six different categories in English and four in Irish. Perfect, completive, and cessive were expressed in both versions; prospective was used in Irish only (*dóigh gurbh é seo an peata a d'ealaigh* "[the] hope is that this is the pet who escaped"), while achievement, lative, and retrospective were used in English only. The frequency of adverbial particles (e.g. *breathnú isteach* "looking inside", *thit amach* "fall out") in Irish exceeded that in English (18% versus 7%), although, ironically, prepositional phrases were used more often in English.

Subject C, as well, tended to mark more clauses aspectually in English, the second version (20% versus 16%) using seven different categories (cessive, completive, inceptive, iterative, lative, perfect, recurrent) compared to six in Irish (perfect and iterative did not appear, but cumulative was marked). Use of prepositions and particles was similar: 63% of the English and 66% of the Irish clauses contained prepositional phrases such as *beside the lake* or *i seomra* "in a room"; and particles appeared in 14% of the English and 10% of the Irish clauses (e.g. *wake up*, *chase away*; *titeann anuas* "fall down", or *bhaint amach* "took out".

Subject D marked 21% of his English clauses and 17% of his Irish clauses with an extended aspectual category, despite having told the story first in English, but he used a wider range of categories in Irish (six versus eleven). English categories included completive, imminent, inceptive, iterative, recurrent; he also expressed uncertainty (*perhaps*) in this first-told story. In the Irish version, he did not include imminent, but added achievement, cessive, lative, perfect, protracted, and retrospective. Prepositions and particles were used more generously in the Irish

Table 6. *Satellites and extended aspectual categories*

| Subject: | A | | B | | C | | D | | Average | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language: | Irish | Engl* | Irish* | Engl | Irish* | Engl | Irish | Engl* | Irish | Engl |
| # Different Aspectual Categories Expressed: | 11 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 7 | 11 | 6 | 8 | 6.25 |
| % Clauses Marked with Aspectual Category: | 36 | 17 | 6 | 32 | 16 | 20 | 17 | 21 | 19 | 22 |
| % Satellites in the form of: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prep phrases | 77 | 30 | 56 | 72 | 66 | 63 | 48 | 33 | 62 | 50 |
| Adv particles | 18 | 10 | 18 | 7 | 10 | 14 | 15 | 9 | 15 | 10 |

version: 48% versus 15% of clauses contained a prepositional phrase such as *in a jar*, *on the bed*; *as an áit* "out of the place", or *ina míle píosaí* "in a thousand pieces"; and 33% versus 9% contained adverbial particles (e.g. *running about*; *imeacht amach* "going out"). Table 6 summarizes these results.

## Discussion

An examination of four bilingual speakers' renditions of the same story cannot of course result in any strong generalizations about whether speakers completely switch both linguistic and cultural conventions when narrating in a different language or whether differences appear which cannot clearly be attributed to either linguistic or cultural effects. However, several tendencies offer suggestions for future research using larger numbers of subjects and languages which offer more contrasts. Specifically, these tendencies fall into three categories: 1) the effects of first-told versus second-told versions of the story which persist despite language differences; 2) the effects of language (or perhaps culture) which persist despite differences attributable to order of telling; and 3) the effects of an individual speaker's choices that persist through both versions of the story. In addition, the effects of the method of elicitation may also need to be more clearly understood before definitive conclusions can be drawn about bilingual narration. In some cases, it is also possible to view the apparent general effects of bilingualism on narration.

### *First-told versus second-told stories*

In a number of cases, differences between versions of the same story were a function of the narrator's familiarity with the task. Across all four speakers, the number of components included in the second-told version exceeded (for three subjects) or was equal to (for one subject) the number included in the first-told version. It makes sense that during the initial narrative attempt, certain elements of the plot may not have been noticed, or may not have been attributed significance until after the narrator had seen the outcome of the story in the final sequence of pictures. Similarly, on examining the components of local structure, the first-told versions included fewer elements in two cases, and the same number in two cases.

In regard to the expression of tense and aspect, first-told effects included a tendency to use the present tense. In two subjects, the story was recast in the past tense when it was retold; in the other two cases, present tense was used in both versions. Similarly, the progressive aspect was associated more often with the first-told version of the story, regardless of language; this correlates with the relative dearth of other nonfinite verb forms in the same versions. First-told stories also contained fewer categories of aspect, and in three out of four cases they had fewer clauses marked with extended aspectual categories. Three out of four subjects used fewer prepositional satellites in the first-told version, regardless of language; three out of four (though not the same subjects) also used fewer adverbial particles in the first version. Again, these are all understandable differences, since familiarity with the story frees the speaker, the second time around, from the process of piecing together the basic narrative, and allows him or her to elaborate the basic predicates with additional information either not previously noted or else not deemed interesting or relevant enough to bother expressing.

### *Linguistic and/or cultural effects*

In some cases, the differences between the two languages seemed to persist despite the effects of order of narration. Most of these concern the marking of tense and aspect, though some differences appeared in narrative structure. There is little evidence to

support the popular notion that Irish speakers tend to be more loquacious than Americans. Although the Irish stories on the whole were slightly longer, two of the four English versions were longer than the Irish ones, and one subject's English story was nearly three times the length of the Irish one despite having been told first. This is unusual since second-told stories usually contained more components and extended aspectual categories. However, this speaker expressed uncertainty about the identity of elements or the nature of activity in a picture 27 different times. (More on this will appear subsequently.) One difference that may, however, be related to cultural conventions of Irish versus English are the inclusion in Irish of more attempts by the protagonist to achieve his goal of finding the frog, which accounted for the two cases where the Irish versions were longer.

Subjects were also somewhat more likely to explicitly report the purpose of the boy's various attempts to achieve an outcome when they were narrating in English (six markings of purpose, versus five in Irish). Since fewer attempts were included in the English versions, this may be a more substantial difference than it at first appears, and may give credence to the notion that Irish narratives are less linear, insofar as attempts not clearly marked with purpose may less obviously be related to the outcome or higher order goal of the story. All subjects referred to the boy's finding the (empty) jar when narrating in Irish, but only two of the four made such reference in English. (In comparison, 100% of Berman and Slobin's English subjects included this component.) On the other hand, they were more likely to refer to the boy's possession or ownership of the frog in English (75% versus 0%), yet much more inclined to refer to higher order goals when narrating in Irish. This is surprising insofar as 90% and 100% of Berman and Slobin's English-speaking subjects made explicit reference to the higher order goals of getting the frog back, and finding the frog, respectively. Of the four subjects, only one referred to getting the frog back, and none referred to finding the frog, when narrating in English. Interestingly enough, the one bilingual speaker who included a higher order goal in her English version was the only one who had grown up in a predominately English-speaking area and learned English prior to school age.

In general, then, more planning components were mentioned or implied in the Irish versions (n = 56) than in the English versions (n = 47), even though half the Irish versions were told first, i.e. were unrehearsed. Most of these differences are attributable to a single subject, however, as noted above. Subjects A and B included 14 components in their Irish versions and 13 in the English versions, although A narrated first in English and B first in Irish. Subject C included the same number of components in both versions (n = 12), but subject D, who arguably was the speaker with the greatest commitment to the habitual use of Irish, included only 9 components in the English version he told first, and 16 in the Irish version.

Another possibly cultural-linguistic effect is in the proportion of attempts by the protagonist to achieve his goal which are explicitly marked with a statement of purpose, e.g. *he looked in the woods in order to find the frog*. For all four subjects combined, the proportion of attempts explicitly marked for purpose in English is less than the proportion for Berman and Slobin's subjects, but the proportion in Irish is even smaller. Additional numbers of Hiberno-English subjects might tell us whether this is some sort of substratum effect if it is the case that the purpose of a protagonist's continued attempts to achieve a goal do not tend to be explicitly related in Irish narrative.

Generally speaking, the analysis of planning components shows in many cases the often-reported "monolingual advantage". Compared to the monolingual English speakers in the Berman and Slobin study, the four bilingual subjects here included fewer components, or else marked them less (or less explicitly). This is particularly true of their narration in English, which is the second language for them, albeit a "close second." Whether this means that bilinguals are "disadvantaged", or simply different, is a matter of interpretation.

In predicative marking of tense and aspect the narratives were astonishingly similar, as most of the differences were the result of order of telling and, since this was balanced, the effects cancelled each other out. When it comes to satellites and extended aspectual categories, however, linguistic differences were apparent. While in the Irish stories only slightly more aspectual categories were included, but fewer clauses actually marked aspectually, a much larger difference appears in the use of prepositional phrases and adverbial particles. It is often noted that Irish contains an unusually high number of prepositional constructions and "particles" of various sorts. These data bear this out, for although not all speakers used more prepositions and particles in Irish than in English, three out of four of them did. Thus, in the Irish versions, on average, a larger percentage of narrative clauses contained prepositional and particle-based satellites.

### *Effects of individual choice*

Finally, some differences persist in individuals regardless of language or familiarity with the task. As previously noted, some subjects were more consistent

than others in their inclusion or exclusion of components. In subject A's stories, 11 of 15 planning components were either included in both versions or excluded from both; for subject B, 11/15 components were present or absent in both stories; and for subject D, 10/15 components were, but subject C was remarkably consistent, as 14/16 components were either mentioned or unmentioned in both versions. No such consistency, however, appeared in comparisons of her inclusion of higher order goals, which, as mentioned above, were more often present in narration in Irish. Subject C, as it turns out, grew up in an extremely isolated Gaeltacht, in a completely Irish-speaking household and Irish-speaking community. Her encounters with English would not have occurred until she entered primary school, where the language of instruction would still have been largely Irish. It may therefore be no accident that her English narrative resembles her Irish narrative to a greater degree in many respects than for the other subjects. Irish narrative conventions may have exerted a strong influence on her English story, but it is equally possible that the similarities may be an individual, stylistic effect.

Subject A, who grew up in an Irish-speaking household in the large, cosmopolitan, and largely English-speaking city of Dublin, would have had the earliest exposure to English. Perhaps this explains why her Irish story is more like her English version in certain respects than was observed for the other subjects. For example, while half the subjects explicitly marked purpose in episodes recounting the protagonist's attempts to attain his goal more often in English, and the other half more often in Irish, the proportion of attempts marked by subject A is fairly similar in Irish (.75) and English (.67).

Similarly, in regard to local structure, subjects C and D displayed consistency across versions of their stories, including the same percentage of components in each case. Subjects C and D were also more consistent in their expressions of tense and aspect. Both used predominantly present tense in both versions, and in the number of clauses marked with extended aspectual categories, there is a difference of only 4% between the two versions. These two subjects were, in fact, largely responsible for the similar averages in the English and Irish versions taken as a whole. Subject C, in addition, used very similar proportions of prepositional phrases and adverbial particles in each version; it is unclear whether this represents a substratum effect or personal preference. On the other hand, subjects A and B showed the greatest contrast between versions in this regard. A's proportion of prepositional satellites was considerably smaller (by 40%) in English. This may be the effect of order of telling, but it could also reflect a wide divergence of this aspect of the grammatical systems of the two languages.

### *Effects of method*

It is unclear how the method of elicitation may have affected the structure of the narrative task. Our subjects were not all asked to tell the second version of the story within the same period of time. Some subjects told both versions the same day; at least one subject had a delay of two or three days between the two narrations. Immediate versus delayed retelling might have influenced the results in at least two different ways. Immediate retelling may enhance memory for the overall story, but it may also increase boredom, which in turn could lead to a subject's tendency to rush through the second narrative and leave certain things out. Delayed retelling, on the other hand, might ease the boredom factor and yet make it more difficult for the subject to remember the smaller details which related to the overall goal of the protagonist. Since these subjects were all adults, and the task not especially lengthy, there may have been little forgetting or boredom. However, one of the subjects, C, clearly struggled to remember certain details after an intermission of more than 48 hours, beginning his English version with *A boy named Paul . . . Paul, is it?* (In fact, the boy has no name.) Another subject, A, was extremely uncertain in her first (English) version, peppering it with phrases and clauses such as *can't see . . .*, *I think*, *I assume*, *I don't know*, *probably*, or *some kind of . . .* She sailed through a streamlined Irish version immediately thereafter, nevertheless including more components in a shorter narrative. Clearly, distance between telling and retelling influences each task, but this was a variable not closely examined here.

### *Comparison to narratives in other languages*

The performances of these four subjects may be compared to the typical proficient narrators in each of the five languages which Berman and Slobin (1994) examined in more detail. In American English, while the authors noted that "there proved to be no 'standard profile' characteristic of the adult narrative" (pp. 75–76), the typical story consisted of about 75 clauses and was told in the present tense, with progressive aspect used contrastively to indicate durative aspect of the co-occurrence of multiple events. Occasionally, a narrator shifted to perfect aspect for the expression of relative tense. There was also an abundant use of nonfinite verb complements; *-ing* verbs in particular were used largely as devices

for backgrounding and/or subordination (p. 630). Alternations in verb voice provided what Berman and Slobin called "textual layering" (p. 629), which in many cases allowed the narrator to step momentarily out of the narrative task and make an evaluative or meta-remark. Lexical verbs of various sorts that encode manner of motion, as well as extensive particles and prepositional phrases to express location, typified the proficient American English narrative. The bilingual Irish-English subjects also made extensive use of satellites such as prepositional phrases and particles, although use was greater in Irish.

The German narrators also used predominantly present tense. Without the progressive option, they used present perfect or past perfect forms to mark event boundaries, provide backgrounding, and so on. Aspectual adverbs were utilized, as were verbs combining manner of motion and path, along with satellites indicating deixis and directionality. However, relative clauses and passives were both rare, as was the case in the Irish-English narratives. In general, the German narrator was concerned with event beginnings and endings, and with the description of "spatial trajectories" rather than temporal elaboration (p. 632). Similarly, the bilingual subjects, in both Irish and English, utilized prepositional phrases and particles overwhelmingly to provide spatial and directional descriptions, with only a very few uses referring to temporal elements.

Spanish speakers also preferred present tense, but their verbal system more elaborately encodes aspect, and tense/aspect switching was a frequent backgrounding device. Nonfinite verb forms such as present participles also provided elaborated descriptions and indicated manner of motion. Relative clauses were used generously to encode additional information, such as the action of a new participant introduced in a previous clause. In contrast to both the Irish and the English narratives examined here, clauses in the Spanish narratives were highly embedded, subordinated, and packaged, and showed flexibility of word order (pp. 634–635).

In Hebrew, neither past nor present tense was dominant for adults. Rhetorical devices such as repetition, parallelism, and word order variations (from SV to verb-initial constructions) indicated aspect where no grammatical possibilities existed. Verbal morphology allowed these speakers to shift perspective through intransitive, causative, and passive patterns, and although prepositional phrases and other adverbials were available, they were seldom used, since they could be encoded in the choice of verb in many cases. Relativization, coordination, fronting of locatives as well as of verbs, and verb and topic elision provided cohesion and the distinction between topic maintenance and topic shift (635–636). While English and Irish both allow elision of co-referential subjects in successive conjoined clauses, relativization, and locative fronting (as well, in Irish, as noun phrase fronting), this was not a significant source of cohesion or contrast in the bilingual narratives. Only coordination was commonly used.

Turkish narrators tended to use an aspectually neutral present tense form to propel their stories forward. Average length was 82 clauses (p. 334, Table 1), of which 55% were simple (p. 367, Table 8). The so-called "past of indirect experience", common in fairy-tale narratives, is a contrastive option for Turkish speakers, who used past progressive versus nonprogressive to contrast durative and bounded events, as did the Irish speakers, and past perfect for retrospection. As a verb-final language, Turkish also allowed its narrators to link clauses through converbs, a series of nonfinite predications followed by a final, finite verb. Perhaps because of the relative dominance of this construction, conjunctions were rare, and both null subjects and reduced nonfinite verbs, along with relativization, were common. The verb-framed nature of Turkish allowed paths of motion to be encoded in the verb choice, although some speakers took advantage of case-markings on nouns associated with the verbs (pp. 637–639). The general effect was "a lean and compact narrative style" (p. 639), despite the Turkish narratives being somewhat longer than the American English ones, and longer than either the average Irish or Hiberno-English narrative examined here.

As with most of the Berman and Slobin subjects, the Irish-English bilinguals preferred present tense, although some of this preference appears to be a function of seeing the pictures for the first time and trying to piece together the narrative on the spur of the moment, as it were. The bilingual subjects' narratives resembled the American English narrators' in length, with the average being about 74 clauses for the Irish versions and 70 for the English. They differed, however, in the use of *-ing* forms, which the bilingual subjects used nearly twice as much as the Americans. This may reveal a substratum effect of Irish on Hiberno-English, as such nonfinite verbal noun constructions are more common in Irish. Although Berman and Slobin present no figures for the extent of voice and aspect alternation, they note that eight of their adult subjects (roughly half) used a present perfect at least once, mainly for the purpose of contrasting a prior event with a current one. In the bilingual subjects, all but one subject (3/4) used the perfective in English, and this was replaced by the infinitive, or by the stative constructions which con-

stituted over half the nonfinite predicates, when the story was told in Irish. For example, backgrounding information, such as the frog's escaping from the jar after the boy had gone to sleep, are reflected in expressions such as *nuair a chuaigh an buachaill a chodladh* "when went the boy to sleep". The same narrator, in English, uses the present perfect, *the boy has gone to bed*. Similarly, one narrator described the boy and dog discovering the frog's disappearance by saying *bhí díomá air mar nach raibh aon rud le feiceáil sa phróca* "be.PAST disappointment on.him as NEG.be.DEP. one thing with see.VBL N in.the jar", i.e. "he was disappointed that there wasn't anything to be seen in the jar," a quasi-infinitive; this, in English, was expressed as a present perfect, *the frog has disappeared*.

The possibilities suggested by this analysis are intriguing, if merely suggestive. Narrative tasks are influenced by a number of variables–familiarity with the specific narrative as well as with narrative tasks in general, cultural conventions, linguistic constraints and possibilities, variables of methodology, and the more elusive features of individual preferences and family background. In the case of multilingualism, a speaker's varying degrees of experience with his or her languages might also affect the storytelling process, insofar as languages and the cultures associated with them exert greater or lesser pressures, depending on the relationship among the languages in the individual, in the home, and in the wider culture. In this study, all of these features appeared to affect the narrative task, although the degree to which each variable made its mark differed from subject to subject, as one might expect. Yet in an increasingly global society where educational systems, especially in large cities, must learn to cope with rising cultural and linguistic diversity, it is critical that we have a better understanding of how even basic communicative tasks such as narration differ in bilingual/bicultural speakers. Clearly, this calls for more research on fluent adult multilinguals, using a larger number of subjects, and focusing on many other languages.

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