Language use and intercomprehension in telecollaboration among Italian mentors and heritage Spanish speaker mentees

Diego Cortés Velásquez
diego.cortes@uniroma3.it
Roma Tre University

Clorinda Donato
clorinda.donato@csulb.edu
California State University, Long Beach

Francesca Ricciardelli
francesca.ricciardelli@upf.edu
University of Southern California and Universitat Pompeu Fabra

This study addresses multilingualism in the paradidactic setting of telecollaboration. During the Fall and Spring semesters of the 2018/2019 academic year, a telecollaborative program was implemented with students from Roma Tre University (R3) who served as native Italian speaker mentors and students enrolled in Italian classes at California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). CSULB offers targeted Italian learning courses for the substantial population of heritage speakers of Spanish to exploit the typological proximity of Italian and Spanish through intercomprehension. The telecollaborative program employed two different modalities: mentoring and partnership. In this study, we focus on the mentoring, to which

69 students participated: 15 native speaker mentors of Italian, (students of second language teaching at Roma Tre) and 54 mentees (first-year Italian language students at CSULB, some being speakers of Spanish). Our aim was to investigate the use of the languages in the linguistic repertoire of mentors and mentees to determine whether there were important differences between those who did and those who did not have Spanish as a heritage language in their linguistic repertoire. To do so, we observed the occurrence of meaning negotiation episodes and the languages used in 60 video-recorded Zoom-in-mentoring sessions of which the first and last five minutes were transcribed and coded. The results show that HSSs benefit from the presence of Spanish in their linguistic repertoire since they can use Spanish as a pivot language while learning Italian.

Keywords: *heritage Speakers, intercomprehension, telecollaboration, L3 learning, pivot language*

1. INTRODUCTION

Language distance has been identified as a crucial factor in the acquisition of a new language (e.g., Gundel & Tarone, 1992; Muñoz et al., 2018). For instance, speakers of Spanish may find it relatively easy to learn Italian due to the close linguistic relationship between the two languages. Conversely, Chinese speakers may face greater difficulties when learning a language like French due to significant differences in linguistic structures and features. Notably, Schepens et al. (2013a, 2013b, 2016) have demonstrated that learners of Dutch who are also speakers of languages closely related to Dutch tend to perform better than those whose languages are less closely related. These studies emphasize that the smaller the linguistic distance in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation between a first language (L1) and a second language (L2), the higher the learnability of L2. This concept is rooted in the idea of language transfer, where knowledge from one language can have both positive and negative influences on the learning process of another language.

Another influential factor in language acquisition is the number of languages in a learner's repertoire. Schepens et al. (2016) note that the impact of a linguistic repertoire on acquiring an additional language has long been a topic "wreathed in controversy" in second language acquisition research. However, determining the precise number of languages in an individual's repertoire is not a straightforward task. Furthermore, scholars use the terms *bilingualism* and *multilingualism* ambiguously. Therefore, in line with Aronin and Jessner (2014), the authors of this article consider bilingualism as a case of multilingualism. Consequently, the term "bilingual-

ism" will only be employed when distinguishing between two languages in a speaker's repertoire.

The study presented here is shaped by Berthele's (2020) conceptualization of multilingualism. According to this concept, the author defines multilingualism as a natural category that distinguishes between (a) prototypical multilinguals who possess at least two languages at the same level of proficiency; (b) regular multilinguals, for whom one language is dominant, while competencies in the other(s) may be high; (c) and a limiting case, in which one language is dominant, with competencies in the other(s) limited to vocabulary or listening comprehension of household exchanges. One of the possible instances of (c) is the case of receptive multilingualism, also known as mutual intelligibility, and intercomprehension (IC). IC is defined as the phenomenon by which speakers with different first languages (L1s) are able to comprehend each other by using their respective L1s and/or a bridge language, that is, an L2 closely related to their interlocutor's L1 (Bonvino, 2015; Möller & Zeevaert 2015; Van Bezooijen & Gooskens 2007). IC can be considered the most direct way to achieve multilingualism (Peyer et al., 2010). This means that the speaker of Spanish, in the example above, who has never learned/acquired any other language before, can be considered a (receptive) multilingual since the linguistic proximity of Spanish with Romance languages allows them to understand these languages, albeit to varying degrees. While many studies have investigated the intercomprehension of unknown but related languages in comprehension and/or translation tasks, scarce attention has been devoted to the role of intercomprehension in tandem exchanges, when the Target Language (TL) of one of the partners is closely related to one of the languages in their linguistic repertoire.

In order to examine this role, this article presents the findings from a study that examined the learning of Italian in an ongoing digital telecollaboration mentoring program between Italian students and US students, the latter group composed of both Heritage Spanish Speakers (HSSs) and Non-Heritage Spanish Speakers (NHSSs). The main objective of this study was to explore the way mentors and mentees exploit their multilingual repertoires during interaction, since it is assumed that the similarity between Spanish and Italian is an important factor in the language learning process.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Telecollaboration and negotiation of meaning

Telecollaboration (TC) can be defined as a type of online learning arrangement between geographically distant participants for the development of language and intercultural competence (Akiyama, 2018). The TC environment can be defined as "paradidactic" since it refers to a low-structured learning online context in which the teacher's role is primarily focused on promoting the meaningful use of the TL through exposure to input and/or collaboration with peers, rather than teaching the languages themselves (Cortés Velásquez & Nuzzo, 2021a).

The growing body of research shows that TC programmes provide a natural environment in which learners, especially those in the context of foreign language learning, have the opportunity to engage in meaningful and goal-oriented oral communication using the TL (Lee, 2007; O'Dowd, 2006; Schenker, 2017; Thorne, 2006). Moreover, in comparison with face-to-face interaction, there is a greater amount of collaboration among learners (Chun, 1994), learners produce more language (Kern, 1995), feel more relaxed (Chun, 1994), and contribute more (Kern, 1995; Warschauer, 1996). The advantages of TC can be summarised in terms of the development of different types of competencies: intercultural, linguistic, pragmatic; other types of knowledge, such as digital literacies and multiliteracies; and the development of learning autonomy. Thus, they represent a valuable resource for language instructors whose interaction with students is limited to only a few teaching hours per week, which is not enough for students to achieve high levels of proficiency (Cortés Velásquez & Nuzzo, 2021b). Moreover, individuals learning languages other than English often lack opportunities to engage in meaningful conversations in their TL beyond the classroom.

Conversation stands out as a particularly rich context for language acquisition due to its ability to enhance various aspects of second language development. Interactions provide increased opportunities for learners to negotiate meaning, effectively connecting input, attention, and output (Long, 1996). The concept of negotiation of meaning refers to a specific type of interaction where interlocutors collaboratively strive to overcome communication breakdowns and achieve mutual understanding. Yuksel and Banu (2014) observed that a growing body of studies has confirmed the occurrence of negotiation of meaning (NoM) episodes even during video sessions. As highlighted by van De Zwaard and Bannink (2016), NoM events typically involve an initial indication of non-understanding and a

subsequent repair sequence. Researchers have identified three distinct types of NoM episodes:

    (a) Clarification requests: episodes in which one speaker seeks assistance in understanding the other speaker's preceding utterance through questions in statements such as "I don't understand," or imperatives such as "Please repeat" (Pica, 1987). These episodes are intended to elicit clarification, normally in the form of reformulation or repetition of the other student's preceding utterance (Clavel-Arroitia, 2019).

    (b) Comprehension checks: episodes in which one speaker attempts to determine whether the other speaker has understood a preceding message (Pica, 1987). In these episodes a speaker confirms that he/she has understood or acknowledged the other student's acceptance (Clavel-Arroitia, 2019).

    (c) Confirmation checks: episodes in which one speaker seeks confirmation of the other's preceding utterance through repetition, with rising intonation, of what was perceived to be all or part of the preceding utterance (Pica, 1987; Clavel-Arroitia, 2019). For instance, expressions like "right?", "ok?" or "do you understand?" clearly show an effort on the part of one of the students to anticipate and prevent a break-down in communication.

2.2. Heritage language speakers, intercomprehension and L3

As a country with a high number of immigrants throughout its existence, the United States is a nation formed by heritage language speakers. By heritage language we mean a language spoken at home by bilingual children of immigrant parents, with the language skills of these speakers covering the entire spectrum of language proficiency. Though a heritage language constitutes one of the languages in the linguistic repertoire of individuals living in multilingual societies, scholarly attention to the unique set of political, linguistic, interpersonal, and social conditions characterizing the heritage speaker's life in languages has only recently become the focus of research endeavours, most of which have originated in the United States, due to the linguistic history of the country, alluded to above. Thanks to a series of relatively recent handbooks, monographs, and collected volumes, the linguistic profiles of heritage language speakers have emerged as a unique subset of learners of interest in language acquisition studies. Indeed, their heritage and L3 language acquisition trajectories are the subject of new research studies (e.g., Montrul, 2016; Montrul & Polinsky, 2021; Polinsky, 2018). In

the United States, the ever-growing number of Spanish-heritage speakers constitutes a significant subject of interest, with a wealth of studies in its own right, as exemplified by Potowski (2018).

The study of heritage languages and heritage speakers in the US is only of recent vintage, coinciding with the first National Heritage Language Conference[1]. Heritage language research is contributing to our understanding of language acquisition, preservation, and attrition in the context of multilingualism, together with a growing appreciation for the effects of multilingualism on language behaviour (Brown & Bousquette, 2018). The status of heritage languages and their particular sociolinguistic environment is pertinent in assessing language performance (Rothman, 2009). In the case of heritage Spanish speakers, new waves of migration create cyclical multilingualism, reinforcing the presence of the heritage language and its evolution in the heritage speaker's identity. The acknowledgment that heritage speakers navigate linguistic and cultural blending throughout their lives as multilingual individuals, has surfaced as a distinctive aspect worthy of examination. Thus, heritage speaker multilingualism defies rigid classifications of L1 and L2, simultaneously questioning established national monolingual frameworks and language ecosystems. These frameworks have typically placed heritage languages in the context of a heritage speaker's past (Baker & Jones, 1998), rather than considering the current and future roles of heritage languages within contact-rich environments.

Over the past two decades, the field of third language (L3) acquisition has garnered increasing attention. The primary goal of these investigations is to delve into how learners' pre-existing linguistic knowledge shapes the process of acquiring an additional language, specifically the L3.

Distinguishing itself from the realm of second language acquisition, third language acquisition stands apart and cannot be simply construed as the mere amalgamation of various linguistic systems (Safont Jordà, 2005). Notably, a central focus of research in the context of L3 use revolves around the concept of cross-linguistic influence (Hammarberg & Hammarberg, 1993; Williams & Hammarberg, 1998). Furthermore, an exploration of typological effects on the acquisition of an L3 suggests that when a typological similarity between the target language (TL) and the languages

---

[1] The Heritage Languages in America conference took place October 14-16, 1999, at California State University Long Beach. It marked the first major project of the Heritage Languages Initiative, which grew out of a joint, national effort by the National Foreign Language Center and the Center for Applied Linguistics to promote heritage language preservation and study.

already present in the learner's repertoire exists, it tends to foster positive cross-linguistic influences (e.g., Ard & Homburg, 1983; Kellerman & Sharwood Smith, 1986; Odlin, 1989).

To capitalize on these advantageous cross-linguistic influences, certain scholars (e.g., Bonvino, 2015) have introduced the pluralistic approach of intercomprehension (IC). This approach has developed through observing how speakers with different L1s effectively communicate using their own native languages and/or a bridge language – an L2 closely related to their interlocutor's first language. This makes it possible to avoid using a lingua franca such as English (Meissner & Burk 2001; Meissner et al. 2004; Möller & Zeevaert 2015; Van Bezooijen & Gooskens 2007). The studies from the field of IC provide cases addressing spontaneous comprehension and production of a third language, especially when the third language is also a Romance language. These studies have observed that the extent to which a learner understands a new language depends on several factors, including differences or similarities in phonology, orthography, syntax, the number of cognates that the languages share, the context, the number of languages in the learner's linguistic repertoire, and the metalinguistic awareness (Heeringa et al., 2013). Several studies have investigated IC in translation tasks (Swarte et al., 2015; Mieszkowska & Otwinowska-Kasztelanic 2015; Smidfelt 2015; Smidfelt & van De Weijer, 2019), showing how participants use the languages in their repertoire to comprehend a text in an unknown language. Others have analysed the IC potential through word recognition activities (Möller & Zeevaert, 2015).

However, to our knowledge there are no studies investigating the role of Spanish as a pivot language in the learning of L3 Italian from an IC perspective. By pivot language we mean a language in the students' linguistic repertoire (in our study, Spanish) that may facilitate the learning of a third language belonging to the same language family, in this case Italian.

3. THE STUDY
3.1. Aim of the study

This exploratory study aims to investigate the use of linguistic repertoires by heritage Spanish speakers (HSSs) and non-heritage Spanish speakers (NHSSs) during small talk interactions in mentoring sessions with Italian partners. This study is framed by the following two research questions:

RQ1: How do the HSSs and NHSSs use their linguistic repertoire when engaged in small talk during the mentoring sessions with Italian partners?

RQ2: Are there differences between the HSS group and the NHSS group in the use of English, Italian, and Spanish? If so, does intercomprehension competence play any role in their telecollaborative sessions?

3.2. Context

California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) is designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), with a student body of 40,069 students, 46% of whom are Hispanic. Within this substantial Hispanic population, a significant number of students identify as speakers of Spanish as a heritage language. As a result, CSULB has developed an Italian-language learning program tailored specifically for Spanish heritage speakers. This program has followed a trajectory similar to that of Portuguese for Spanish Speakers programs, which have taken root in universities across the United States (Carvalho et al., 2010; Oliva et al., 2019). Furthermore, there is a growing interest in teaching typologically related languages to heritage speakers of Spanish, as demonstrated by the work of Carvalho and Child (2018).

During the Fall and Spring semesters of 2018/2019, a telecollaborative program was implemented with students from Roma Tre University (R3) and CSULB. The telecollaborative program was structured using two types of collaboration, namely mentoring and exchange. These modalities correspond to those labelled by Ware and O'Dowd (2008) as e-tutoring and e-partnership. In this study, we focus only on the former, also widely known as telecollaborative mentoring. In the mentoring collaboration, one group (R3) was completing internship hours for a course on Teacher Education, therefore their role was meant to provide guidance and help in the learning of the Italian language for the students from CSULB. In the case of the exchange, the R3 and CSULB students worked on assignments following peer-collaboration strategies.

The main purpose of the program, then, was to provide CSULB students with the opportunity to engage in meaningful and goal-oriented communication in the TL beyond the scant opportunity to do so in the traditional educational context. At the same time, the program provided the R3 students with the possibility to practice their teaching skills.

3.3. Participants

The participant sample (N = 69) consisted of two groups of undergraduate students, 15 mentors who studied Second Language Teaching at R3, and 54 mentees, first-year Italian language students at CSULB attending two dif-

ferent courses: ITA100A "Fundamentals of Italian for Spanish Speakers", (N = 30); and ITA 101A, a regular beginner course of Italian (N = 24). ITA100A was specifically designed for heritage speakers of Spanish (HSS), and therefore, only students who self-declared as Spanish speakers were allowed to enrol in this course. The curriculum for ITA100A incorporated course materials and teaching strategies, based on intercomprehension, aimed at utilizing the students' entire linguistic repertoires in acquiring Italian, with a particular focus on Spanish as a pivot language in the learning process (Donato, 2017; Travers, 2017). The use of intercomprehension as a methodological approach has gained backing through the creation of instructional materials and teacher preparation at CSULB (Donato et al., 2020). This support aims to cultivate cross-linguistic and cross-cultural parallels between Spanish, Italian, and English within the Italian for Spanish Speakers language learning program. This program spans three semesters and has garnered national recognition (Looney et al., 2021).

The ages of the CSULB students ranged from 19 to 24 years old, while the R3 students were pursuing their Master's degrees and were between 23 and 28 years old. Within the CSULB Spanish-speaking population, they could be classified as belonging to either the regular or limited cases of multilingualism categories (see section 1). These students demonstrated English dominance due to their education in English-medium schools, while varying degrees of proficiency in Spanish allowed for extensive language use and linguistic variation in Spanish. However, proficiency in Spanish was not tested. The R3 students were speakers of English as L2. No other language was self-declared.

All the mentors identified as women, whereas only three participants from CSULB identified as men. Every mentor was randomly assigned three or four mentees. Mentors and mentees met eight times during the semester through Zoom©. These 45-minute to one-hour meetings were designed to help the learners of Italian complete homework assignments while being exposed to as much target language input as possible.

3.4. Methodology

For the purpose of this study, we selected 10 dyads: five dyads in which the CSULB student was a HSS (ITA 100A); and five dyads with NHSS (ITA101A). HSS declared that they only spoke English and Spanish, while NHSS did not speak any other language besides English.

In Table 1 the participants are presented, specifying the dyad, the group (HSS and NHSS) and the role (mentors and mentees). Note that in the table below more than one student was assigned to mentors AC, BB and GM. This is due to the higher number of mentees compared to mentors. For the purpose of this study, we did not consider this an obstacle in the observation of spontaneous linguistic exchange, since our aim was to analyse what was produced during their interactions.

Table 1
Participants in dyads
Ispitanici u dijadama

Dyad#	Group	Role	Code
Dyad1	ITA 100A – HSS	Mentor	AC
		Mentee	DCS
Dyad2	ITA 100A – HSS	Mentor	AC
		Mentee	ZA
Dyad3	ITA 100A – HSS	Mentor	AKS
		Mentee	DTJ
Dyad4	ITA 100A – HSS	Mentor	BB
		Mentee	CJA
Dyad5	ITA 100A – HSS	Mentor	BB
		Mentee	RPA
Dyad6	ITA 101A – NHSS	Mentor	AC
		Mentee	CD
Dyad7	ITA 101A – NHSS	Mentor	BB
		Mentee	CM
Dyad8	ITA 101A – NHSS	Mentor	GM
		Mentee	LC
Dyad9	ITA 101A – NHSS	Mentor	GM
		Mentee	MJ
Dyad10	ITA 101A – NHSS	Mentor	MS
		Mentee	CDS

As the primary objective of the mentoring sessions was to provide an opportunity for mentees to practice Italian and receive assistance the mentors tended to focus more on linguistic forms than meaning during these sessions. To examine the NoM, while excluding the negotiation of form (which was not the primary focus of this study), we specifically selected the initial and final segments of each session. This decision was based on the observation that greetings and small talk occurred more frequently during these moments of the video sessions. To ensure comparability in terms of session length, we transcribed and coded the first and last 5 minutes of each session for every dyad. As a result, the data collected encompassed

approximately 13 hours of recorded videoconferencing, which was subsequently transcribed and coded.

All sessions were recorded and transcribed employing a simplified version of the Jeffersonian transcription system (Jefferson, 1983). Subsequently, these transcriptions underwent coding using QSR NVivo 1 software. During the initial phase, a small subset of the data was collaboratively coded to ensure alignment with the coding criteria. This collaborative process of dialogue and deliberation among the researchers ultimately led to the finalization of the coding framework. In the second phase, each researcher independently completed the coding process for their designated data segments, punctuated by periodic meetings to ensure adherence to the predefined coding schema. Any uncertainties that arose were deliberated until a consensus was reached. To ensure data quality, a dedicated researcher cross-validated the data and formulated the queries used for the analysis.

To address our research questions, the researchers coded the NoM episodes, which included confirmation checks, clarification requests, and comprehension checks. Additionally, they coded the languages used in the data. Subsequently, we calculated the number of tokens (i.e., transcribed words) produced by every dyad (both HSS and NHSS), in every language. Therefore, every time the participants used a word or a phrase in one of the languages: English, Spanish, and Italian. The decision to quantify tokens rather than utterances was deliberate, as the latter holds a more indistinct definition, varying between a single word, a phrase, or an entire sentence.

Here we propose some examples of the NoM episodes coded. Example (1) is a clarification request, where the student (DTJ) struggles to understand the question and uses her English to continue the conversation with her mentor (AKS).

Example (1)

```
41      AKS:  ah veramente?
              (oh really?)²
42      DTJ:  Italia
              (Italy)
43      AKS:  eh # sei: già stata in Italia? ###
                  (eh have you been to Italy yet?)
44      DTJ:  em: ## what does that mean sorry?
45      AKS:  eh have you been in Italy?
46      DTJ:  no I have not
```

---

² Enclosed within parentheses and presented in italics are English translations of the Italian discourse.

In Example 2, we illustrate a confirmation check. This episode took place as the mentee (DCS) was recounting having gone to bed early the previous day. The mentor (AC) subsequently inquired whether she accurately grasped the mentee's account, seeking to verify her understanding.

Example (2)

```
18      DCS:  ieri # ok ieri sono andare alla:: ## d- dieci e
              mezza ##
              (yesterday # ok yesterday I went at ## t- ten and
              a half)
              u::hm ma:: ## ieri ieri muy po- muy poco u::hm
              sleep how
              (u::hm but ## yesterday yesterday very li- little)
              do you s- how do you say sleep?
19      AC:   e:: dormire
              (e:: sleep)
20      DCS:  dormire ok oh it's so soon jeez ((ridendo))
              (sleep ok oh)
21      AC:   <ah ok quindi>
              (ah ok so)
22      DCS:  <u::hm>
              (u::hm)
23      AC:   se ho capito bene ieri sei andato a dormire presto
              # alle dieci e mezza
              (if I understand you correctly yesterday you went
              to bed early # at ten thirty)
24      DCS:  sì
              (yes)
```

In Example (3), we present a comprehension check. This episode took place after the mentor asked the mentee if she had already had dinner (n. 15). The exchange shows that the student (ZA) understood the question but needed confirmation and thus used English. Therefore, in order to negotiate meaning, participants use their English rather than producing in the TL, Italian.

Example (3)

```
15      AC:   ok hai cenato o quella è la tua cena?
              (ok have you had dinner or is that your dinner?)
16      ZA:   ehm::: cenato
              (ehm::: dinner+PAST.PART.)
17      AC:   ok do you know what it- lo sai cosa significa?
18      ZA:   ehm::: to eat dinner right?
```

In Example (4), we show how languages were coded. In the excerpt, the mentor (GM) inquired of the mentee (LC) whether she had already com-

menced recording the video session. This question in Italian triggered a NoM episode that spanned 16 turn takings. Within this transcript, the text coded as Italian is visually emphasized in grey, while the portions coded as English are displayed in black.

Example (4)

```
41      GM:     okay ### so # okay sei pronta?
                        (OK ### so # ok are you ready?)
42      LC:     ## I'm sorry?
43      GM:     sei pronta?
                        (are you ready?)
44      LC:     sei pronta?
                        (are you ready?)
45      GM:     pronta is ready
46      LC:     bronta
47      GM:     pronta
48      LC:     bronta means ready?
49      GM:     pro- I write ((she writes))
50      LC:     okay
51      GM:     yeah # pronta and the question i:s
52      LC:     <pronta>
53      GM:     sei pronta
                        (you are ready)
54      LC:     ((reading)) sei pronta? #((laughing)) sì
                        (are you ready? yes)
55      LC:     okay brava ((laughing))
                        (OK good)
56      GM:     ### okay
```

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, we will present the results of the study, addressing the research questions. To delve into the RQ1 ("How do participants utilize their linguistic repertoire in mentoring sessions?), a detailed analysis was conducted on a total of 49,603 tokens, which are documented in Table 2. The distribution of these tokens across various languages utilized during the sessions is also presented for reference.

Table 2
Languages used in the dataset – Tokens per language
Pojavnice u svakom jeziku

Languages	Mentors		Mentees		Total	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
English	13,275	46.97	15,528	71.47	28,803	58.07
Italian	14,974	52.98	5,772	26.57	20,746	41.83
Spanish	14	0.09	421	6.79	435	0.23
French	0	0	6	0.02	6	0.01
Total	28,263	100	21,727	100	49,603	100

Overall, English was the most used language, accounting for 58.07% of the total number of tokens. It was followed by Italian, the language studied by the mentees, which made up 41.83% of the tokens. Spanish was the least frequently used language, representing only 0.23% of the tokens. It's worth noting that although they did not self-declare Spanish as a language they spoke, some mentors still used it (14 tokens). Likewise, one of the mentees (RPA from Dyad4), who did not indicate her proficiency in French, occasionally used this language, albeit infrequently (6 tokens). The distribution of the language used according to the informant's role in the dyad (i.e., mentor or mentee) is radically different for mentors who used Italian and English with almost the same percentage: (52.98 vs 46.97%). Mentees, instead, used mostly English (71.47%), followed by Italian (26.57%).

The NoM episodes were also analysed. In the Table 3, the three types of NoM episodes, namely clarification requests, comprehension checks, and confirmation checks, are shown in relation to the number of tokens in each language.

Table 3
Number of tokens used per NoM episodes and language
Broj pojavnica prema vrsti pregovaranja o značenju u svakom jeziku

Languages	Clarification Requests		Comprehension Checks		Confirmation Checks		Total	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
English	1,784	67.32	225	39.13	441	50.06	**2,450**	**59.67**
Italian	684	25.81	275	47.83	373	42.34	**1,332**	**32.44**
Spanish	182	6.87	75	13.04	67	7.60	**324**	**7.89**
Total	**2,650**	**100**	**575**	**100**	**881**	**100,00**	**4,106**	**100**

In the NoM episode, the language most frequently used was English (59.67%), followed by Italian (32.44%), and Spanish (7.89%). In their con-

versations, mentors and mentees tended to use English more frequently for clarification requests (67.32%) and confirmations checks (50.06%). Comprehension checks took place more frequently in Italian (47.83%).

The second research question asked was whether there were differences between the HSS group and the NHSS group and if intercomprehension competence influenced their telecollaborative sessions in any way. In order to answer this question, we compared the number of tokens produced by every dyad in every language in each group.

Table 4
Number of tokens per language:HSS Group
Broj pojavnica po jeziku: HSS

Languages	Mentors		Mentees		Total	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
English	4,406	30.53	5,449	58.01	**9,855**	**41.37**
Italian	10,012	69.38	3,564	37.95	**13,576**	**56.98**
Spanish	13	0.09	374	3.98	**387**	**1.62**
French	0	0	6	0.06	**6**	**0.2**
Total	**14,431**	**100**	**9,393**	**100**	**23,824**	**100**

Table 4 provides an overview of the distribution of tokens used by mentors and mentees in the HSS group, revealing that mentors, on the whole, employed a greater number of tokens in comparison to their respective mentees. The languages employed by both mentors and mentees included English, Italian, and Spanish. Out of the total number of tokens Italian accounted for the highest proportion at 56.98%, followed by English at 41.37%, and lastly, Spanish at 1.62%. Mentees used English more frequently than their mentors (58.01% vs. 30.53%), while the mentors used Italian extensively when interacting with their mentees (69.38% vs. 37.95%), aligning with expectations due to their role in utilizing the TL.

Table 5
Number of tokens per language:NHSS Group
Broj pojavnica po jeziku: NHSS

Languages	Mentors		Mentees		Total	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
English	8,869	64.12	10,079	81.72	**18,948**	**72.41**
Italian	4,962	35.87	2,208	17.96	**7,170**	**27.5**
Spanish	1	0.01	47	0.32	**48**	**0.09**
Total	**13,832**	**100**	**12,334**	**100**	**26,166**	**100**

In the NHSS group, as shown in Table 5, mentors and mentees demonstrated a similar token count, with 13,832 tokens produced by mentors and 12,334 tokens by mentees. Notably, mentees exhibited a higher frequency of English usage compared to their counterparts (81.72%). Conversely, mentors used Italian more frequently (64.12%). Surprisingly, Spanish was also used within this group, albeit in minimal quantities (0.09%). It is important to note that this group belonged to the standard course, specifically catering to mentees who did not speak Spanish. The occurrence of Spanish can possibly be attributed to the sociolinguistic context, as these learners may have some level of familiarity with Spanish words due to their exposure to Spanish while living in Southern California.

Noteworthy differences are evident between the two groups, particularly regarding the usage of Italian and English. It is noteworthy to observe that Spanish, which one might assume to have a higher occurrence due to its presence in the linguistic repertoire of HSS group mentees, was not as frequently employed. Upon conducting an inter-group comparison, it becomes evident that the HSS group employed Italian significantly more often than the NHSS group (57.50% vs. 27.95%). This suggests that the inter-comprehension competence of the HSS group might lead to an increased use of Italian and their capacity to smoothly transition to Italian right from the beginning. This may be facilitated by the HSS students' ability to leverage their heritage language, Spanish, while negotiating meaning. The HSS group consistently exhibited a considerably higher frequency of Italian usage in comparison to the NHSS group, which predominantly relied on English.

The following examples aim to show some of the differences between the two groups. Example (5), taken from a dyad in the HSS group, shows how the NoM and the usage of Spanish helped the mentee in the conversation. At first, she used English to ask for a word, but soon after she successfully attempted to say it in Italian. She also used Spanish while talking about clothes, possibly because she assumed that the word "ropa" (Eng. "clothes") might be similar to the Italian word "vestiti".

Example (5)

```
23      DCS:  how do you say physical x?
24      AC:   physical?
25      DCS:  a:: just it? fisica chimica? <Chimica fisica?>
                          (physical chemistry)
26      AC:   <yeah> sì chimica fisica sì
                    (yes physical chemistry yes)
```

```
27      DCS:  <ok ok>
28      AC:   sì sì eh::: com'è andato il corso di italiano sta
              settimana?
              (yes yes eh::: how was your Italian class this
              week?)
29      DCS:  um bene eh:: um # iniziamo::s la:- la:: ro-
              ropa?((indicating the t-shirt)right?
              (uhm well eh::: uhm # let's start la la [in Span-
              ish.] the clothes
30      AC:   i vestiti? Ok
              (clothes? Ok)
31      DCS:  i vestiti scusa <um>
              (clothes sorry)
```

To delve deeper into the use of the languages, we conducted an analysis of the number of tokens generated by each type of NoM episode across different languages within the two participant groups. We have chosen not to differentiate between the number of tokens used by mentors and mentees, as the NoM is a complex conversational phenomenon, and we believe it is more informative to not present them separately. Table 6 presents the distribution of NoM episodes per language within the HSS group, while Table 7 illustrates the distribution within the NHSS group.

Table 6
Number of Tokens per NoM type produced in every language: HSS Group
Broj pojavnica u pregovaranju o značenju u svakom jeziku: HSS

Languages	Clarification request		Comprehension check		Confirmation Check		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	**n**	**%**
English	1,077	61.16	182	35.27	305	58.10	**1,564**	**55.82**
Italian	529	30.04	261	50.58	171	32.57	**961**	**34.30**
Spanish	155	8.80	73	14.15	49	9.33	**277**	**9.89**
Total	**1,761**	**100**	**516**	**100**	**525**	**100**	**2,802**	**100**

Table 6 shows that the HSS group used mostly English (55.82%) to negotiate their meaning during communication breakdowns, especially during clarification requests and confirmation checks. However, Italian was also frequently used, particularly in the comprehension checks (50.58%). Spanish was rarely used overtly, but when used, it was used mostly for clarification requests.

Table 7

Number of Tokens per NoM type produced in every language in NHSS Group
Broj pojavnica u pregovaranju o značenju u svakom jeziku:NHSS

Languages	Clarification Requests		Comprehension Check		Confirmation Check		Total	
	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%	n.	%
English	707	79.53	43	72.88	136	38.20	**886**	**67.94**
Italian	155	17.44	14	23.73	202	56.74	**371**	**28.45**
Spanish	27	3.04	2	3.39	18	5.06	**47**	**3.60**
Total	**889**	**100**	**59**	**100**	**356**	**100**	1,304	100

Table 7 shows that the NHSS group also used mostly English during the NoM (67.94%). Participants spoke mostly in English, especially during clarification requests and comprehension checks. Confirmation checks were produced mostly in Italian (56.74%). As we would expect, Spanish was rarely used by this group, but when used, it was mostly for clarification requests.

In comparison, the HSS produced more tokens when negotiating meaning (2,822) in relation to the NHSS (1,304). Both groups tended to negotiate frequently in English, but the HSS group produced more tokens in Italian (961) than their counterpart (371). Evidence of intercomprehension competence among the HSS group is demonstrated by the fact that Italian was frequently used by both mentors (69.38%) and mentees (37.95%). The situation was completely different in the NHSS group, in which Spanish was not part of the learner's linguistic repertoire. The most frequently used language in this group was English, by both mentors (64.12%) and mentees (81.72%) alike.

Upon examining the data presented in both Table 6 and Table 7, a notable distinction arises regarding the frequency of NoM episodes used by the two groups. As previously mentioned, the HSS group demonstrated a higher incidence of NoM episodes, indicating a greater need for meaning clarification and comprehension during their interactions. The greater need possibly reflects a greater desire and motivation for clarification, since they realized they were getting closer to comprehension, and thus activated a bridge, or pivot, for doing so. This observation suggests that the HSS group engaged in more frequent instances of language negotiation, subsequently creating additional opportunities for language learning within their interactions because Spanish as a pivot language brought them closer to successful comprehension.

Aligned with Grosjean's language mode hypothesis (2013), the observation indicated a consistent pattern where English predominantly served as the language for clarification requests. This suggests that participants leaned on their first language (L1), rather than their heritage language (Spanish in the case of the HSS group), for negotiating and making conversational adjustments. However, Italian was also frequently used. This suggests that Spanish does not emerge as a productive language in terms of participants using it extensively to solve communication problems. Instead, Spanish functions as a pivot language, serving as a supportive tool that aids in understanding Italian, the target language (TL). This analysis offers valuable insights that align with previous observations (e.g., Ard & Homburg, 1983; Kellerman & Sharwood Smith, 1986; Odlin, 1989) on the beneficial impact that a typologically similar language might have on the acquisition of an L3.

5. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

In this paper, we conducted an exploratory study of language use within the context of telecollaborative mentoring. Our findings revealed that the mentees predominantly used English during the analysed conversations. This observation can be attributed to the fact that all the mentees were in their first semester of learning Italian. However, while non-heritage Spanish speakers (NHSSs) mainly relied on English, heritage Spanish speakers (HSSs) actively engaged with the target language by frequently incorporating Italian into their conversations. Although Spanish was seldom employed as a means of communication, it assumed a pivotal role in facilitating comprehension of Italian, rather than being extensively relied upon to address communication difficulties. We note, then, that the HSS group exhibited a superior ability to grasp and communicate effectively in Italian compared to the NHSS group. This ability was possibly a result of the adept use of both Spanish and English, a skill with noteworthy implications for Italian acquisition.

However, the linguistic behaviour within the HSS group did exhibit certain variations, also influenced to some extent by the mentors' tendency to consistently use English. Such variations could be mitigated through minimal pre-dyad training to raise tutors' awareness of their role in the telecollaboration activity, namely, by providing more opportunities for exposure and negotiation of input, as well as encouraging their mentees to produce output. By making mentors aware of the enhanced potential the Spanish language brings to HSS learners, they can take on a more dynamic role in

the mentoring activity, fostering intercomprehension and generating inter-action with their mentees. To achieve this, input-based tasks that promote Italian language comprehension from the HSS group should be designed and proposed. An input-based task is a type of focused task in which learn-ers process input through listening or reading. While L2 production from learners is not mandatory, it is not prohibited either (Ellis, 2009). Such tasks are typically designed with two main purposes: a) engaging learners in understanding the input; and b) drawing learners' attention to specific linguistic features within a meaningful context.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the impact of the course ma-terials and the methodological approach employed in ITA100A, "Funda-mentals of Italian for Spanish Speakers", cannot be definitively established at this time. While it is our contention that these instructional components exert a favourable influence, their efficacy warrants validation through sub-sequent research endeavours.

As emphasized, the intricate interplay between pivot language and in-tercomprehension within third language acquisition warrants attention in the realm of multilingual education. This domain presents an exciting ave-nue for both research and practical implementation within the paradidactic setting of telecollaboration, offering valuable insights for heritage language and third language acquisition.

To conclude, we would also like to acknowledge the unique situation of the Spanish heritage speakers in our study, noting that the inclusion of heritage speakers and their repertoires in L3 studies is a new frontier that scholars have only recently begun to explore. As migrations and mobilities bring increasing numbers of heritage speakers into contact zones where L3 acquisition is taking place, heritage speakers as multilingual subjects are destined to become an ever-increasing source of data on L3 acquisi-tion. This study, which addressed the linguistic repertoire and dynamics of language use of HSS at CSULB, has been conducted within the emerging purview of the rich complexity heritage speakers bring to research on L3 acquisition. It is hoped that this work may serve as a model going forward.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

REFERENCES

Akiyama, Y. (2018). Synthesizing the Practice of SCMC-based Telecollaboration. *A Scoping Review. CALICO Journal, 35* (1), 49-76.

Ard, J. & Homburg, T. (1983). Verification of language transfer. In: S. Gass & L. Selinker (Eds.), *Language transfer in language learning* (157-176). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Aronin, L. & Jessner, U. (2014). Methodology in Bi- and Multilingual Studies. From simplification to complexity. *AILA Review 27*, 56-79. DOI: 10.1075/aila.27.03aro

Baker, C. & Jones, S. P. (Eds.) (1998). *Encyclopedia of bilingualism and bilingual education.* Clevedon /Buffalo /Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

Berthele, R. (2020). The selective celebration of linguistic diversity: evidence from the Swiss language policy discourse. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 42*, 1-12. DOI: 10.1080/01434632.2020.1715989.

Bonvino, E. (2015). Intercomprehension studies in Europe: history, current methodology and future developments. In: R. Dolci (Ed.) *Intercomprehension and Plurilingualism: an asset for Italian in the USA* (9-59). New York: John D. Calandra Italian American Institute Queens College, CUNY.

Brown, J. R. & Bousquette, J. (2018). Heritage Languages in North America. *Sociolinguistic Approaches, Journal of Language Contact, 11*(2), 201-207. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/19552629-01102002

Carvalho, A.M. Freire, J. L. & Da Silva A. J. B. (2010) Teaching Portuguese to Spanish Speakers: A case of Trilingualism. *Hispania, 93*(1), 70-75.

Carvalho. A.M. & Child, M.W. (2018). Expanding the multilingual repertoire: Teaching cognate languages to heritage Spanish speakers. In: K. Potowski (Ed.) *Handbook of Spanish as a heritage or minority language.* New York: Routledge.

Chun, D. M. (1994). Using computer networking to facilitate the acquisition of interactive competence. *System, 22*, 17-31.

Clavel-Arroitia, B. (2019). Analysis of Telecollaborative Exchanges among Secondary Education Students: Communication Strategies and Negotiation of Meaning. *Porta Linguarum, 31*, 97-116.

Cortés Velásquez, D. & Nuzzo, E., (2021a). Editorial. *ISLA,* 5 (2), 169-179.

Cortés Velásquez, D. & Nuzzo, E. (2021b). Minding the gap: A small-scale study on negotiation of form in telecollaborative tasks. *ISLA, 5* (2), 232-257.

Donato, C. Oliva, C. Romero, M. & Zappador-Guerra, D. (2020). *Juntos: Italian for Speakers of English and Spanish.* Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

Donato, C. (2017). Polyglots, Multilinguals, and Translanguagers: Spanish as a Gateway Language. Rejoinder Article to "Spanish as a Pivot Language for L3 Learning in the United States," *Hispania, 100* (5) Centenary Issue, 285-287.

Ellis, R. (2009). Task-based language teaching: sorting out the misunderstandings. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 19* (3), 221-246.

Grosjean, F. (2013). Bilingual and monolingual language modes. In: C. A. Chapelle (Ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. DOI: 10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0090

Gundel, J. K. & Tarone, E. (1992). Language transfer and the acquisition of pronouns. In: S. M. Gass & L. Selinker (Eds.), Language transfer in language learning (87-100). Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Hammarberg, B. & Hammarberg, B. (1993). Articulatory re-setting in the acquisition of new languages. Reports from the Department of Phonetics, University of Umea, *PHONUM*, *2*, 61-67.

Heeringa, W. Golubovic, J. Gooskens, C. Schüppert, A. Swarte, F. & Voigt, S. (2013). Lexical and orthographic distances between Germanic, Romance and Slavic languages and their relationship to geographic distance. In: C. Gooskens & R. van Bezooijen (Eds.) *Phonetics in Europe: Perception and Production* (99-137). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Jefferson, G. (1984). Transcript notation. In: J. Maxwell Atkinson & J. Heritage (Eds*.), Structures of Social Action. Studies in Conversation Analysis*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, ix-xvi.

Kellerman, E. & Sharwood Smith, M. (1986). *Crosslinguistic influence in second language acquisition*. New York: Pearson.

Kern, R. (1995). Restructuring classroom interaction with networked computers: Effect on quantity and characteristics of language production. *Modern Language Journal, 79* (15), 457-478.

Lee, L. (2007) Fostering second language oral communication through constructivist interaction in desktop videoconferencing. *Foreign Language Annals 40*(4), 635-49. DOI:https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2007.tb02885.x

Long, M. H. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In: W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.) *Handbook of second language acquisition* (413-468). San Diego, CA: Academic Press, Inc.

Looney, D., Lusin, L. & Granacchi, G. (2021). Italian Enrollments: Trends and Concerns. *Italica*, *98* (2), 428-41.

Meissner, F.J. & Burk, H. (2001). Hörverstehen in einer unbekannten romanischen Fremdsprache und methodische Implikationen für den Tertiärsprachenerwerb. *Zeitschrift für Fremdsprachenforschung 12* (1), 2001, 63-102.

Meissner, F.J., Klein, C., Horst, G. & Stegmann, T.D. (2004). *EuroComRom. Lire les langues romanes dès le depart. Avec une introduction à la didactique de l'eurocompréhension.* Aachen: Shaker Verlag.

Mieszkowska, K. & Otwinowska-Kasztelanic A. (2015). Is A2 in German better than B2 in French when Reading Danish? The Role of Prior Language Knowledge when Faced with an Unknown Language. In: G. De Angelis, U. Jessner & M. Kresić (Eds.) *Crosslinguistic Influence and Crosslinguistic Interaction in Multilingual Language Learning* (199-230). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Montrul, S. (2016). *The Acquisition of Heritage Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Montrul, S. & Polinsky, M. (Eds.) (2021). *Heritage Languages and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Muñoz, C., Cadierno, T. & Casas, I. (2018). Different Starting Points for English Language Learning: A Comparative Study of Danish and Spanish Young Learners. *Language Learning*, 68, 1076-1109. https://doi-org.biblio-proxy.uniroma3.it/10.1111/lang.12309

Möller, R. & Zeevaert, L. (2015). Investigating word recognition in intercomprehension: Methods and findings. *Linguistics, 53*(2), 313-352.

O'Dowd, R. (2006). *Telecollaboration and the development of intercultural communicative competence*. Munich: Langenscheidt.

Odlin, T. (1989). *Language transfer: Cross-linguistic influence in language learning*. Cambridge: University Press.

Oliva, C. J., Donato, C. & Ricciardelli, F. (2020). Translation and Translanguaging Pedagogies in Intercomprehension and Multilingual Teaching. *OLBI Journal*, *10*. https://doi.org/10.18192/olbiwp.v10i0.3543

Peyer, E., Kaiser, I. & Berthele, R. (2010). The multilingual reader: advantages in understanding and decoding German sentence structure when reading German as an L3. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 7*(3). 225-239.

Pica, T. (1987). Second-language acquisition, social interaction, and the classroom. *Applied Linguistics*, 8, 3-21.

Polinsky, M. (2018). *Heritage Languages and Their Speakers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Potowski, K. (Ed.) (2018). *Handbook of Spanish as a Heritage Language*. London: Routledge.

Rothman, J. (2009). Understanding the nature and outcomes of early bilingualism: Romance languages as heritage languages. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *13* (2), 155-163.

Rothman, J. (2011). L3 syntactic transfer selectivity and typological determinacy: The typological primacy model. *Second Language Research*, *27* (1), 107-127.

Safont Jordà, M. P. (2005). *Third Language Learners. Pragmatic Production and Awareness*. Clevedon /Buffalo /Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

Schenker, T. (2017). Synchronous Telecollaboration for Novice Language Learners: Effects on Speaking Skills and Language Learning Interests. *ALSIC: Language Learning and Information and Communication Systems, 20*, 1-15. DOI: https://doi.org/10.4000/alsic.3068

Schepens, J. Van der Slik, F. & Van Hout, R. (2013a). Learning complex features: A morphological account of L2 learnability. *Language Dynamics and Change*, *3*, 218-244. DOI:0.1163/22105832-13030203

Schepens, J. Van der Slik, F. & Van Hout, R. (2013b). The effect of linguistic distance across Indo-European mother tongues on learning Dutch as a second language. In: L. Borin & A. Saxena (Eds.) *Approaches to measuring linguistic differences* (p.199-230). Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs [TiLSM] 265. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Schepens, J. Van der Slik, F. & Van Hout, R., (2016). L1 and L2 Distance Effects in Learning L3 Dutch. *Language Learning: A Journal of Research in Language Studies*, *66* (1), 224-256.

Smidfelt, L. & Van De Weijer, J. (2019). Prior language knowledge and intercomprehension at the first encounter of Italian as an additional language: A translation task. *Moderna Spark*, *1*, 2-24.

Smidfelt, L. (2015). Il processo delle inferenze lessicali in italiano L3: Il ruolo delle lingue apprese in precedenza e altre strategie di comprensione. Licenciate Thesis. Lund: Lund University.

Swarte, F. Schüppert, A. & Gooskens C. (2015). Does German help speakers of Dutch to understand written and spoken Danish words? The role of non-native language knowledge in decoding an unknown but related language. In: G. De Angelis, U. Jessner & M. Kresic (Eds.) *Crosslinguistic influence and crosslinguistic interaction in multilingual language learning* (173-197). London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Thorne, S. L. (2006). Pedagogical and Praxiological Lessons from Internet-Mediated Intercultural Foreign Language Education Research. In: J. A. Belz & S. L. Thorne (Eds.)

Internet-Mediated Intercultural Foreign Language Education (2-30). Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Travers, W. (2017). Spanish as a Pivot Language for L3 Learning in the United States. *Hispania*, Volume *100* (5), Centenary Issue, 279-284.

Van Bezooijen, R. & Gooskens, C. (2007). Interlingual text comprehension: Linguistic and extralinguistic determinants, in: D. T. Thije & L. Zeevaert (Eds.) *Receptive Multilingualism. Linguistic analyses, language policies and didactic concepts* (249-263). Amsterdam: Benjamins.

van der Zwaard, R. & Bannink, A. (2016). Nonoccurrence of Negotiation of Meaning in Task-Based Synchronous Computer-Mediated Communication. *The Modern Language Journal, 100* (3), 625-640. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44135010.

Ware, P. & O'Dowd, R. (2008). Peer feedback on language form in telecollaboration. *Language Learning & Technology*, *12* (1), 43-63.

Warschauer, M. (1996). Comparing face-to-face and electronic discussion in the second language classroom. *CALICO Journal, 13*, 7-26.

Williams, S. & Hammarberg, B. (1998). Language switches in L3 production: Implications for a polyglot speaking model. *Applied Linguistics, 19*, 295 -333.

Yuksel, D. & Banu I. (2014). The Effects of Communication Mode on Negotiation of Meaning and Its Noticing. *ReCALL, 26* (3), 333–54. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344014000147.

Uso linguistico e intercomprensione nella telecollaborazione tra mentori e apprendenti di italiano L2 parlanti di spagnolo come lingua di origine

Diego Cortés Velásquez
Roma Tre University

Clorinda Donato
California State University, Long Beach

Francesca Ricciardelli
University of Southern California and Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Questo contributo presenta uno studio sul plurilinguismo nell'ambito paradidattico della telecollaborazione. Durante l'anno accademico 2018/2019 è stato implementato un programma di telecollaborazione con studenti dell'Università Roma Tre (R3) che hanno svolto il ruolo di tutor madrelingua italiani e studenti iscritti a corsi di italiano presso la California State University, Long Beach (CSULB). La CSULB offre corsi mirati di apprendimento dell'italiano per i parlanti di spagnolo come lingua di origine (HSSs) al fine di sfruttare la prossimità tipologica tra l'italiano e lo spagnolo attraverso l'intercomprensione. Il programma di telecollaborazione è stato implementato in due diverse modalità: tutoraggio e partnership. In questo studio ci concentriamo sul tutoraggio, al quale hanno partecipato 69 studenti: 15 tutor madrelingua italiani (studenti di didattica delle lingue presso Roma Tre) e 54 tutorati (studenti di primo anno di italiano presso CSULB, alcuni dei quali parlanti di spagnolo). Il nostro obiettivo era investigare l'uso delle lingue nel repertorio linguistico partecipanti per determinare se ci fossero differenze significative tra coloro che avevano o non avevano lo spagnolo come lingua di origine nel loro repertorio linguistico. Per fare ciò, abbiamo osservato l'occorrenza di episodi di negoziazione del significato e l'uso delle lingue in 60 sessioni di tutoraggio su Zoom registrate su video, delle quali i primi e gli ultimi cinque minuti sono stati trascritti e codificati. I risultati mostrano che gli HSSs traggono beneficio dalla presenza dello spagnolo nel loro repertorio linguistico, poiché possono utilizzarlo come lingua ponte durante l'apprendimento dell'italiano.

Parole chiave: *parlanti di lingua d'origine, intercomprensione, telecollaborazione, apprendimento di una L3, lingua ponte*

Uporaba jezika i međurazumljivost u telekolaboraciji na tečaju talijanskoga jezika između izvornih govornika talijanskoga i nasljednih govornika španjolskoga jezika

Diego Cortés Velásquez
Roma Tre University

Clorinda Donato
California State University, Long Beach

Francesca Ricciardelli
University of Southern California and Universitat Pompeu Fabra

Istraživanje se bavi višejezičnošću u okviru paradidaktičkoga okružja telekolaboracije. Tijekom dvaju semestara 2018./2019. godine na sveučilištu California State University (CSULB) provodio se telekolaboracijski projekt u kojem su studenti sa sveučilišta Roma Tre bili mentori studentima na CSULB-u u tečaju talijanskoga jezika. Sveučilište nudi tečajeve talijanskoga jezika populaciji nasljednih govornika španjolskoga jezika u kojem se pomoću pristupa međurazumljivosti jezika (engl. *intercoprehension*) pokušava profitirati od tipološke sličnosti između talijanskoga i španjolskoga jezika. Program se provodio u dva različita modaliteta: mentorstvo i partnerstvo. U ovom je istraživanju naglasak na mentorstvu u kojem je sudjelovalo ukupno 69 sudionika: 15 mentora, izvornih govornika talijanskoga jezika (studenata druge godine nastavničkoga smjera na sveučilištu Roma Tre) i 54 učenika (studenti prve godine od kojih su neki bili nasljedni govornici španjolskoga jezika). Cilj istraživanja bio je ispitati uporabu različitih jezika u interakciji između mentora i učenika i utvrditi postoje li razlike u jezičnom ponašanju nasljednih govornika španjolskoga jezika. Kako bi se ostvario navedeni cilj, zabilježena je pojavnost pregovaranja o značenju i jezik koji se pritom koristio u prvih i posljednjih 5 minuta na 60 videosnimaka mentorskih sesija preko Zoom platforme. Rezultati su pokazali da nasljednim govornicima španjolskoga jezika taj jezik donosi prednost u obliku jezika posrednika u procesu učenja talijanskoga jezika.

Ključne riječi: *nasljedni govornici, međurazumljivost jezika, telekolaboracija, učenje trećeg jezika, jezik posrednik*