Variation in Second Language Spanish Textbooks: A Study of Variable Clitic Placement

Pablo E. Requena, María Victoria Tissera

# Variation in Second Language Spanish Textbooks: A Study of Variable Clitic Placement

**Pablo E. Requena**
*University of Montana*

**María Victoria Tissera**
*University of Illinois at Chicago*

**Abstract:** This study examines how faithfully second language (L2) Spanish textbooks represent the variability found in natural language use with regard to variable clitic placement (VCP). We offer a corpus study of VCP in the language used throughout nine Spanish L2 textbooks, which constitute all the available textbooks designed to teach Rioplatense Spanish. The results show that VCP in the textbooks is not constrained by animacy or register, and they suggest that the L2 textbooks analyzed do not necessarily portray VCP in monolingual Argentine Spanish. Instead, textbooks portray some important aspects of native-like VCP found across dialects, such as the overall frequencies reported for written Spanish and main effect of lexical verb lexeme.

**Keywords:** authenticity/autenticidad, clitics/clíticos, input/input, L2 textbooks/libros de texto de segunda lengua, morphosyntactic variation/variación morfosintáctica

## 1. Introduction

One of the greatest challenges in teaching a second language (L2) is how to expose learners to sufficient authentic L2 input so that they can extract valuable information on native-like patterns of variation in L2 use to develop sociolinguistic competence. In many classrooms around the world, textbooks constitute one of the main sources of L2 input, but it has been claimed that due to simplification of the language that "enters" the L2 textbooks, the input they offer may lack authenticity. Thus, knowledge of whether L2 textbooks provide learners with authentic L2 input becomes crucial for understanding the potential of textbooks in L2 acquisition of native-like variation.

Within variationist linguistics, variation is considered intrinsic to language and is shown to be structured. That is, native speakers (NSs) do not randomly choose between two or more ways of saying the same thing. Instead, the likelihood of occurrence of one variant over another results from the interaction of linguistic and/or social factors (see "variable rules" in Cedergren and Sankoff 1974; Labov 1969). One instance of morphosyntactic variation in Spanish is variable clitic placement (VCP). In modern Spanish, direct-object (DO) (and indirect-object, IO) clitics can variably appear either before (as in 1a) or after (as in 1b) certain verb phrases consisting of a finite verb followed by a nonfinite verb without any major meaning distinction.

(1) (Referent: *una torta de cumpleaños* "a birthday cake")
   a) Proclisis:  *Ella **la** va a decorar con glaseado.*
   b) Enclisis:  *Ella va a decorar**la** con glaseado.*
       She's going to decorate **it** with frosting.

This study analyzes the presence of variation in Spanish L2 textbooks designed to teach Rioplatense Spanish. In particular, it asks whether these Spanish L2 textbooks faithfully represent native-like use of VCP.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 L2 Acquisition of Native-like Variation and the Role of Input

Second-language mastery of native-like variation is considered an important milestone in the development of communicative competence (Canale and Swain 1980). Successful L2 acquisition can be measured, according to Rehner (2002: 15–16), by the 1) use of the same expressions as NSs; 2) native-like frequency in similar discourse situations; and 3) use that is constrained by similar independent factors as those factors constraining NSs' use. Second language acquisition (SLA) research points to L2 learners' sensitivity to native patterns of L2 use and their ability to eventually approximate native-like variability (e.g., Edwards 2011, and references therein; for Spanish, see Geeslin 2011; Gudmestad 2014). When examining variable clitic placement (VCP) in Spanish L2 learners through a picture elicitation task, for example, Thomas (2012) reported that advanced learners of Spanish who began learning the L2 in classroom setting after age 15 and who had studied in a Spanish-speaking country for at least one year performed within the range of variability exhibited by monolingual Spanish speakers (172).

Almost all approaches to SLA acknowledge the importance of input as the primary source of data for SLA (e.g., Long 1982; Gass 1997), and there are no current "best practices" in L2 pedagogy that negate the importance of exposure to the target language. As a consequence, when selecting materials, instructors are urged to choose textbooks that expose learners to valid linguistic data, including "key sociolinguistic concepts and samples of language variation . . . even at the basic levels of instruction" (Gutiérrez and Fairclough 2006: 184). Nevertheless, there has been a widespread assumption in L2 teaching that for learners to be able to interact with the target language (especially at the early stages of L2 development), some degree of simplification of the L2 is required, which has led many instructors and materials designers to adapt and simplify the language they present to L2 learners.

### 2.2 Simplification in L2 Teaching

A traditional idea held in second/foreign language teaching (identified as a *myth* in Zyzik and Polio 2017) has been that most authentic texts require some degree of adaptation to be suitable for L2 learners. With respect to vocabulary, for example, Nation (1990) devotes a whole chapter to the simplification of reading material, explaining how "without simplification, there would be too many unknown words and constructions, and the learners would need to give all their attention to them" (177). Consistent with this view, and also guided by some behaviorist methods in language teaching that emphasized well-crafted texts as recipes for their success (Richards and Rogers 1986), many teachers end up changing vocabulary (e.g., word substitutions), syntax (e.g., changes from passive into active voice), and/or text structure (e.g., elimination of redundant sections) (Young 1999: 364–66). But the adaptation/simplification of authentic materials is also evident in commercially produced materials, such as graded readers (Rodrigo 2016) and textbook series. These include simplified language at the earlier stages, presumably to increase comprehension, lower student anxiety, and increase motivation by providing a sense of accomplishment on the part of novice learners (cf. Mountford 1976; Oguro 2008). An analysis of the sources of eighteen texts extracted from ESL textbooks showed that only two texts appeared in their original form, twelve were at least slightly modified (adapted/simplified), and the remaining six were completely "simulated," a term used to refer to texts produced just for teaching purposes and that reproduce or recreate a real-life genre, but lack an authentic source (Liruso, Bollati, and Requena 2015). This indicates that even when the texts (i.e., articles, essays,

stories, etc.) contained in L2 textbooks have originated from authentic sources, most of them seem to suffer linguistic alterations, resulting in alternative versions of the original text.

A number of studies have analyzed the content of textbooks with specific emphasis on vocabulary and grammar (e.g., Fernández 2011) as well as pragmatics, discourse, and socio-linguistic variation (e.g., García Padilla 2012). Most report that textbooks fall short in accurately portraying native-like language use. For example, Rehner and Mougeon (2003) compared variable use of expressions of consequence (such as *alors* and *donc*, both meaning "therefore") in L2 learners of French in Canada with native-speaker norms as well as with teacher talk and textbooks. The authors interpret inconsistent results in learners' use of these expressions by point-ing to the paucity of classroom input, which does not enable students to infer the sociostylistic values of these forms. The study concludes that "educational input, from both the FL teachers and the teaching materials, fails to provide the students with opportunities to become familiar with the most frequent variant in the speech of native speakers . . ." (276).

Goodall (2010), for example, investigated the presence of Spanish verbal morphology in three Spanish L2 textbooks and found overrepresentation or underrepresentation of forms when compared to native speaker (NS) spoken corpora. Di Vito (1992) studied the explicit descrip-tion of four grammatical features in elementary textbooks and found that, compared to spoken and written corpora, textbooks ignore frequency, contexts, and discourse functions. Similarly, Eisenchlas (2011) reports that Spanish L2 textbooks differ from naturally occurring instances of advice giving by NSs in the structures used and in the distribution of discourse strategies. Along the same lines, Orozco and Thoms (2011) found that the explicit treatment of the variants of futurity offered by the L2 textbook does not reflect NS usage, a conclusion shared by other studies (Bragger and Rice 2000; Gutiérrez and Fairclough 2006; van Naerssen 1995).

One reason for this avoidance of NS usage patterns could be the intuitive assumption that greater variation may be associated with greater difficulty (e.g. in reading comprehension). It is then understandable that the most popular solution has traditionally been text simplification. However, the simplification of material to avoid variation may mask the diversity, intricacy, and reality of language and may also inhibit learners from accessing authentic patterns of language use. It could be hypothesized that such simplification might even lead to altered patterns of vari-able morphosyntax, resulting in a missed opportunity to expose learners to authentic language usage (VCP, for the purposes of this study).

## 2.3 Spanish Variable Clitic Placement (VCP)

One instance of structured and conditioned variation is Spanish variable clitic placement (VCP), by which Spanish direct-object (and indirect-object) clitics may appear either before (proclisis, also known as *clitic climbing*, as in (1a) or after (enclisis, as in (1b)) a number of verbal periphrases without changing the basic meaning of the phrase.

Across dialects, studies of VCP in modern Spanish have revealed greater enclisis in the written register compared to the spoken register (Iglesias 2012). Myhill (1989), for example, found 60% of enclisis in Spanish prose. Davies' (1995) study of several dialects reported even higher rates of enclisis use across dialects in written Spanish (ranging between 72% in Colombia and 86% in Argentina) compared to spoken Spanish (ranging between 34% in Mexico and 59% in Peru). Dialectal variation has also been reported for spoken Spanish in Sinnott and Smith (2007), which reports 18% enclisis in Madrid, compared to 31% in Bogota.

Previous research has consistently identified finite-verb lexeme and animacy of the clitic referent as language internal factors that condition VCP across dialects, with the former exerting the strongest effect on VCP (e.g., Davies 1995; Myhill 1989; Requena 2015; Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2014). The finite-verb lexeme effect is gradient, with some verb lexemes strongly favoring proclisis, such as *ir a* "go to," others strongly favoring enclisis, such as *tener que* "have to," and others showing slightly weaker tendencies toward proclisis or enclisis. Frequency of use

of a verb form (i.e., token frequency) appears to play a role in the verb lexeme effect: Proclisis is more common with highly frequent verbs, whereas enclisis is more common with infrequent verbs (Davies 1998; Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2014).

Animacy of the clitic referent also plays a major role in VCP (Myhill 1988). Specifically, the less animate a clitic referent is, the greater the use of enclisis (Davies 1995; Myhill 1988; Requena 2015, among others; but see Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2014 on Mexican Spanish, in which the pattern is reversed). Thus, the likelihood of enclisis decreases along the following cline: propositional > inanimate (*la torta* "the cake") > animate (*el perro* "the dog") > human (*la niña* "the girl"). An example of a clitic with a propositional referent would be *lo* "it" in *tendría que pensarlo un poco* "I'd have to think about it for a while" where the clitic referent is *hacer un trabajo* "do a job"). In the present study, we focus on Argentine Spanish because in this dialect 3p DO clitics (*lo/la/los/las*) do not overlap with IO clitics (*le/les*) as in *leísta* dialects. In leista dialects the overlap in form between IO and DO clitics might affect the study of the role of animacy in VCP with DOs.

Data on VCP in Argentine Spanish is scarce, but the few studies available report a preference for proclisis. Sitaridou et al. (2015) collected acceptability data of VCP with DO clitics and impersonal and passive *se* through spoken interviews in two instances. Their study showed that enclisis is disfavored across all regions within Argentina: the overall acceptability of enclisis in their Argentine Spanish data was less than 32%. They also report diatopic variation (i.e. variation according to place), as acceptance of enclisis ranged from 9% to 35% in different regions of the country. Despite the strong avoidance of enclisis in their data, the authors reported differences in the acceptability rates of enclisis/proclisis with different finite verbs.

Turning to corpus studies, Davies (1995) reported an overall rate of enclisis of 64% for Argentine Spanish (86% enclisis for the written register and 41% enclisis for the spoken register). Requena (2015) analyzed VCP with third-person direct-object (3p DO) clitics in a corpus of spoken Argentine Spanish and reported 35% enclisis. The results revealed significant effects of finite-verb lexeme and clitic animacy on VCP. Table 1 shows the different rates of enclisis across periphrastic constructions found in Requena (2015). The statistical analysis showed that some verb lexemes (the ones displayed above the solid line in Table 1) favored enclisis in the statistical analysis whereas other verb lexemes (displayed below the solid line in Table 1) disfavored enclisis. With respect to animacy, the results (displayed in Table 2) indicated that enclisis was favored by propositional (46%) and inanimate referents (40%) compared to animate ones (19%).

Table 1. Rates of enclisis by lexical construction in spoken Argentine Spanish (adapted from Requena 2015)

| Finite Verb (+ Nonfinite Form) | Enclisis/Total N of Tokens | % Enclisis |
|---|:---:|:---:|
| *venir (a)* 'come to' + infinitive | 3/4 | 75 |
| *tener (que)* 'have to' + infinitive | 29/39 | 74 |
| *empezar (a)* 'begin to' + infinitive | 6/10 | 60 |
| *deber* 'must' + infinitive | 7/13 | 54 |
| *querer* 'want' + infinitive | 8/18 | 44 |
| *seguir* 'keep' + gerund | 2/6 | 33 |
| *poder* 'can' + infinitive | 24/77 | 31 |
| *estar* 'be' + gerund | 3/17 | 18 |
| *ir (a)* 'go to' + infinitive | 8/68 | 12 |

Table 2. Rates of enclisis by referent animacy in spoken Argentine Spanish (adapted from Requena 2015)

| Type of Clitic Referent | % Enclisis |
|---|---|
| Propositional (N = 39) | 46 |
| Inanimate (N = 146) | 40 |
| Animate (N = 67) | 19 |

Based on the literature just reviewed, we set out to find whether Spanish L2 textbooks faithfully represent native-like distributions of VCP. Given the nature of textbooks as a written genre, we expected faithful representation of native-like VCP to consist of the following:

1. High overall rates of enclisis that would mirror previous data on written Spanish (between 60% and 86%, with rates approaching the higher end if textbooks mirror Argentine written Spanish).
2. A lower rate of enclisis in the audio transcripts (<60%) compared to the rest of the textbook (>60%) as indication of register variation between spoken and written Spanish. If the textbooks are to resemble Argentine Spanish, then <41% enclisis was expected in the audio transcripts and >80% in the rest of the textbook.
3. Greater use of enclisis with verbs known to favor enclisis (*querer* "want" or *tener que* "have to") compared to the rate of enclisis with verbs known to disfavor enclisis (*ir a* "go to" or *estar* "be").
4. Greater use of enclisis with clitics that have inanimate and propositional referents than with clitics that have animate referents. The opposite pattern would reflect an animacy effect reported in other dialects, but not in Argentine Spanish.

Taking into account the long-standing tradition of simplifying teaching materials, we hypothesized that the textbooks might simplify (i.e., use clitics placement categorically) or distort (i.e., not constrain VCP by the same conditioning factors found in natural language) VCP. To test these hypotheses, we conducted quantitative analyses of a corpus of Spanish L2 textbooks, which are presented in the next section.

## 3. Corpus Study

### 3.1 Method

To study whether textbooks faithfully portray native-like VCP, we compiled a corpus of nine textbooks that constitute all the published materials now available that have been designed to teach Rioplatense (Argentine) Spanish in Argentina. This dialect was selected for a study of VCP with third-person direct-object (3p DO) clitics because, for the most part, it does not present *leísmo* (i.e., the use of *le* instead of *lo/la* for DO clitics, as is widespread in other dialects). Three different series (*Aula del Sur 1–3*, *Voces del Sur 1–2*, *Horizonte 1–3*) and one single-volume textbook (*Macanudo*) were included. The first volume in each textbook series (as well as the *Macanudo* textbook) corresponds to the beginner level.

Most textbook research concentrates on the language that textbooks *teach*, and, thus, it analyzes only selected sections of textbooks that contain explicit treatment of a particular linguistic feature (e.g., Orozco and Thoms 2011). Given that the purpose of this study was to analyze the totality of the language that textbooks offer to the students as input, we selected the

entire textbook as a language sample. Texts, instructions, examples, exercises, rules, introductions, and extra material sections were coded as Written register, whereas audio recordings (whenever available) were coded as Spoken register. The rationale for this decision was the assumption that all the language that students interact with for the purpose of comprehension and communication may constitute input (VanPatten 2003), and authentic input is crucial for learners to be able to detect and learn frequencies and patterns of use, i.e., implicit learning of grammar (Celce-Murcia 2002; Ellis 2011; Rebuschat 2015). The present study differs from previous research on variation in L2 textbooks by examining the language used throughout the textbooks, language that can constitute the foundation for implicit learning of VCP even in the absence of explicit treatment.

All instances of 3p DO clitics (*lo*/*la*/*los*/*las*) used in constructions consisting of a finite verb followed by a nonfinite verb and that allowed variable placement of the clitic constituted the variable context and were identified through careful reading of each textbook (see examples 2 and 3). The decision to concentrate on 3p DO clitics was motivated by the fact that other grammatical persons (first- and second-person DO clitics) as well as IO clitics tend to have animate referents. By concentrating on 3p DO clitics, we are able to examine the role of animacy given that 3p DO clitics allow animate and inanimate referents.

> (2)  *también **los** puede usar el profesor en clase* . . .
>       the professor can also use **them** in class (*Aula del Sur 2* 2009: 105)

> (3)  . . . *puede usar**los** varias veces*
>       . . . (you) may use **them** several times (*Macanudo* 2007: 38)

We included in the analysis only those instances that fell within the envelope of variation (i.e., those 3p DO clitics used in constructions that allow variable clitic placement as attested in previous empirical research). Instances where the DO clitic was preceded by an IO clitic, as in (4), were excluded due to the challenge of determining the extent to which the IO clitic played a role in determining the placement of the clitic cluster.

> (4)  *No, todavía no **se lo** comenté.* . . .
>       No, I did not comment on it to him/her/them. . . . (*Aula del Sur 3* 2009: 118)

A total of 243 instances of VCP were included in the analysis. The overall low frequency of contexts of VCP has been attested also in previous studies, where instances of VCP make up <0.5% of the number of words in the corpus under analysis (e.g., Davies 1995, Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2014). To test whether VCP in the textbooks is constrained by the same variables that affect VCP in native-speaker Spanish, each token was coded for 1) position of the clitic (enclisis versus proclisis); 2) the textbook in which the token appeared (e.g., *Aula del Sur 1* 2009; *Aula del Sur 2* 2009; etc.); 3) the section within the textbook where the token appeared (audio transcripts, texts, exercises, examples, rules, etc.); 4) register (written versus spoken); (v) Finite-verb lexeme (*querer*, *poder*, etc.); and 5) animacy of the clitic referent (animate, inanimate, and propositional).

Quantitative analysis of the data followed the type of analyses used in variationist sociolinguistics (e.g., Tagliamonte 2006). This included not only the description of overall distribution of clitics in different contexts by performing crosstabulations (e.g., cases of enclisis with particular finite-verb lexemes), but also the use of multivariate analysis to determine the factors that contribute statistically significant effects to VCP and the relative magnitude of each of these effects. Visual exploration of the data revealed uneven distribution of instances in the corpus especially with respect to finite-verb lexeme. A number of verb lexemes (N = 25) occurred very few times compared to a handful of very frequent verb lexemes (*poder*, *ir a*, *querer*, *tener*, *estar*). For statistical analysis, we grouped together those finite-verb lexemes that appeared fewer than

ten times in the corpus into an "Other" level [a similar procedure was used in Davies (1998); see also Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos (2014) for a discussion on differences in VCP based on frequency.] A binary logistic regression was performed in *Rbrul* (Johnson 2009), including clitic placement (enclisis versus proclisis) as the dependent variable and the following predictors: finite verb (*poder*, *ir a*, *querer*, *tener*, *estar*, Other), animacy (animate, inanimate, and propositional), and register (written versus spoken). The model also included Textbook as a random variable, which resembles the inclusion of individual speaker as a random factor in mixed models as a way to account for individual variation in the data.

## 3.2 Results

The overall rate of enclisis was 62% (151/243). This is much lower than the one reported for written Argentine Spanish (86%) (Davies 1995). However, it mirrors the rate of enclisis (60%) reported by Myhill (1989) for Spanish prose. Despite this rate being toward the lower end of the continuum of expected enclisis for written register across dialects (60%–86%), it is higher than the rates reported for spoken Spanish across dialects (35%–59%) or for spoken Argentine Spanish, in particular (41% in Davies 1995, or 35% in Requena 2015). However, the rate of enclisis varied by textbook series and by section in which a particular token of VCP appears in the textbook. Figure 1 shows that, with the exception of one textbook (*Macanudo*), use of enclisis exceeds 50% of the contexts of VCP. In some textbooks, that rate reaches 75%, approximating the rates found for written Spanish in Davies (1995). Another finding illustrated in Figure 1 is the close resemblance of rates of enclisis in textbooks that belong to the same series.
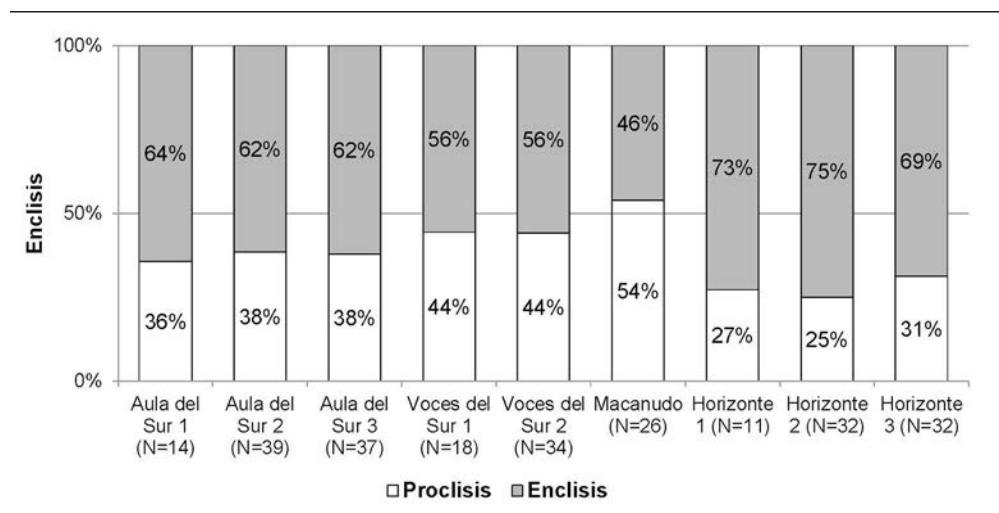


**Figure 1. Clitic placement in variable contexts in each Spanish L2 textbook in the corpus**

Previous studies have reported an effect of register on VCP consisting of greater enclisis in written Spanish compared to spoken Spanish. Table 3 reveals slightly greater use of enclisis in the written register (63%, 135/215) than in the spoken register (57%, 16/28). Even though this distribution is in the anticipated direction, the difference in enclisis across registers may not be strong enough to help learners detect a clear difference between registers.

As to the main conditioning factor affecting VCP, namely, finite-verb lexeme, Table 4 shows that constructions known to favor enclisis (e.g., *tener que* "have to," *querer* "want") display high rates of enclisis in the textbooks (79% and 77%, respectively) (as in 5). Constructions that tend

Table 3. Rates of enclisis in variable contexts by register in Spanish L2 textbooks

| Register | % Enclisis |
|---|---|
| Written (N = 215) | 63 |
| Spoken (N = 28) | 57 |

to locate themselves halfway in the continuum ranging from high rates of proclisis to high rates of enclisis (e.g., *poder* "can/may") exhibit more balanced distributions of clitic placement in the textbooks (61%), and constructions known to favor proclisis (e.g., *ir a* "go to," *estar* "be") behave accordingly in the textbooks (37% and 20%, respectively) (as in 6).

(5)   *Tienen que leer**los** y adivinar de quién se trata.*
     You have to read **them** and guess who it is about (*Macanudo* 2007: 81)

(6)   *Si hubiera sabido que **los** ibas a leer . . .*
     Had I known you were going to read **them** . . . (*Voces del Sur 2* 2004: 17)

Table 4. Rates of enclisis by lexical construction in Spanish L2 textbooks

| Finite-Verb Lexeme | % Enclisis |
|---|---|
| Other (N = 42) | 81 |
| *tener (que)* 'have to' + infinitive (N = 19) | 79 |
| *querer* 'want' + infinitive (N = 30) | 77 |
| *poder* 'can' + infinitive (N = 104) | 61 |
| *ir (a)* 'go to' + infinitive (N = 38) | 37 |
| *estar* 'be' + gerund (N = 10) | 20 |

     Animacy, however, showed an unexpected pattern (see Table 5). The rate of enclisis was higher with animate clitics (70%) (as in 7), where the clitic referent is a man, than with inanimate (61%) or propositional (54%) referents (as in 8), where the clitic referent is a soccer game. This high use of enclisis with animate referents was not predicted based on the animacy effect reported by Davies (1995) across dialects and by Requena (2015) for Argentine Spanish. This finding, however, resembles the "inanimacy effect" reported for other dialects (Gudmestad 2005; Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2014).

(7)   *Sabés que no quiero ver**lo**.*
     You know I don't want to see **him** (*Voces del Sur 2* 2004: 91)

(8)   *Usted quiere ver**lo**, pero se superpone con su horario de trabajo.*
     You want to watch **it**, but it overlaps with your working hours (*Horizonte 3* 2014: 120)

     To test whether register, finite-verb lexeme, and animacy (independent variables) significantly affect VCP in the textbooks (dependent variable), we now present the results of a binary logistic regression analysis. This analysis allows us to examine whether each independent

Table 5. Rates of enclisis by referent animacy in Spanish L2 textbooks

| Animacy of Clitic Referent | % Enclisis |
|---|---|
| Animate (N = 50) | 70 |
| Inanimate (N = 169) | 61 |
| Propositional (N = 24) | 54 |

variable significantly predicts VCP while controlling for the other independent variables. Table 6 shows that finite-verb lexeme significantly favors enclisis in the textbooks analyzed (p. < .05). Moreover, the continuum-like distribution of finite verbs that favor enclisis versus those that disfavor enclisis is consistent with previous studies. Clitic referent animacy and register did not reach significance. To examine the direction of the effect for each of the levels (variant) of an independent variable, we can observe the factor weight column, where weights over 0.50 indicate that a variant favors enclisis while weights below 0.50 indicate that a variant disfavors enclisis. Additionally, this information is also evident in the positive or negative value of Log-odds, where positive values favor enclisis and negative values disfavor it.

Table 6. Binary logistic regression of VCP in textbook corpus
(application value = enclisis)

| Factor Group | Factor Weight | Log-odds | Percent | N |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Finite-Verb Lexeme** | | | | |
| Other | .75 | 1.108 | 81 | 42 |
| *tener (que)* 'have to' + infinitive | .72 | 0.937 | 79 | 19 |
| *querer* 'want' + infinitive | .67 | 0.690 | 77 | 30 |
| *poder* 'can' + infinitive | .51 | 0.047 | 61 | 104 |
| *ir (a)* 'go to' + infinitive | .27 | −0.971 | 37 | 38 |
| *estar* 'be' + gerund | .14 | −1.811 | 20 | 10 |
| *Range* | *61* | | | |
| **Register** | | | | |
| Written | [.57] | 0.281 | 63 | 215 |
| Spoken | [.43] | −0.281 | 57 | 28 |
| *Range* | *14* | | | |
| **Animacy** | | | | |
| Animate | [.54] | 0.150 | 70 | 50 |
| Inanimate | [.50] | 0.009 | 61 | 169 |
| Propositional | [.46] | −0.159 | 54 | 24 |
| *Range* | *8* | | | |
| **Sample (Textbook)** | Random Factor (not tested) | | | |

Log-Likelihood: −145.335, Input Probability: 0.542, Total N: 243, Overall Enclisis: 62%

*Note*: Square brackets [ ] indicate that this effect does not reach statistical significance.

By looking at Table 6, we see that the only significant effect found is that of finite-verb lexeme. The direction of the effects found in the current study aligns with the one reported in previous studies: as factor weights indicate, all infrequent verb lexemes combined strongly favor enclisis (0.75). *Tener que* (0.72) as well as *querer* (0.67) also favor enclisis in the textbook corpus. The verb *poder* does not show a strong effect either favoring or disfavoring enclisis. The least favorable contexts for enclisis to appear in textbooks are the same that have been previously described in NSs, with *ir a* and *estar* exhibiting the lowest probability of enclisis. One hypothesis for the low likelihood of enclisis with *ir a* and *estar* posits that they correspond to more grammaticalized verbs (i.e. lexical verbs that have acquired grammatical meanings with the passing of time) when used in these complex verb phrases (*ir a* + infinitive = future reference, and *estar* + gerund = progressive action). Due to grammaticalization of these verbs in such contexts, Myhill (1988) proposed that increased unithood would result in speakers treating these complex verb phrases as single finite verbs, for which only preverbal clitics are grammatical in modern Spanish (*la voy a traer* "I'm going to bring it" would be treated as analogous to *la traigo* "I bring it"). In the case of *estar*, we note how verb phrases with gerunds have also been shown to disfavor enclisis (Davies 1998; Torres Cacoullos 1999). The analysis shows that register and animacy do not constrain VCP in the textbooks analyzed. The results for register contrast with those of corpus studies that indicate that enclisis is favored in written Spanish and disfavored in conversation. Similarly, animacy does not have an effect on VCP in the L2 textbooks even though it plays an important role in NS use. In summary, the overall rate of enclisis in the textbooks analyzed (62%) is lower than expected based on corpus data for Argentine Spanish, but within the range attested across dialects. With respect to the conditioning factors, our results show that VCP in the Spanish L2 textbooks we analyzed is lexically conditioned as in NS Spanish, but it is not conditioned by register or by the animacy of the clitic referent. The direction of the nonsignificant effects aligns with previous research across dialects (Davies 1995). In the next section, we discuss these results from the perspective of how faithfully the Spanish L2 textbooks analyzed here portray VCP.

## 4. Discussion

The goal of this study was to analyze whether the language used in Spanish L2 textbooks designed to teach Rioplatense Spanish faithfully represents native-like distributions of VCP. We posited that such faithful representation would take the form of (a-d) in Section 2.3. In contrast with previous studies that have researched the contents "taught" by L2 textbooks, e.g. the grammar points explicitly addressed in certain chapters, the present study has analyzed how nine Spanish L2 textbooks use the target language throughout their pages (in texts, examples, instructions, audio material, etc.). By doing this, we have been able to better capture all the input that learners may receive as they navigate through the L2 textbook. The results have shown that even though textbooks do not completely portray monolingual VCP for Argentine Spanish (in that they exhibit non-native-like VCP across registers and with different referents based on animacy), they faithfully portray three main aspects of VCP across dialects of Spanish, namely the overall variable nature, the enclisis bias expected for written Spanish, and the finite verb lexeme constraint. This study thus adds an important piece of evidence about the nature of classroom input when it comes to the presence of variable morphosyntax in L2 textbooks. The findings have implications for materials design and for the teaching of variation in the L2.

### 4.1 Shortcomings in L2 Textbook Input

The results of this study have indicated that the textbooks analyzed fail to accurately represent native-like VCP in Argentine Spanish. The average rate of enclisis across textbooks was 62%, whereas the overall rate reported for written Argentine Spanish is 86% (Davies 1995). Only

one textbook series (*Horizonte*) displays rates of enclisis (69%, 73%, and 75%) that approximate the predicted rate for the Argentine dialect. In addition, neither animacy nor register condition VCP in the textbooks analyzed, which was expected based on cross-dialectal studies of corpora. All these findings point to use of VCP in L2 textbooks that falls short of faithfully portraying the use of these variable forms by Argentine NSs.

The overall lower rate of enclisis in the Spanish L2 textbooks as well as the lack of effect of register can be interpreted in the light of the observation that the textbook norm lies between spoken and written registers and this might result from textbooks becoming more like compendia/portfolios of multiple modes of communication, including a multiplicity of genres with particular emphasis on oral/conversational language even when they use predominantly the written medium (Römer 2007: 356). It is important to also bear in mind that the oral samples included in audio recordings that accompany textbooks are usually scripted, thus not fully resembling naturalistic speech (Lewis 1993; Römer 2005). The lack of effect of animacy is hard to independently motivate since it could also result from the particular nature of the pedagogical discourse in textbooks, which could lack the topic continuity component that has been linked to the effect of animacy in prose and oral naturalistic interaction (Schwenter and Torres Cacoullos 2014).

The finding that certain aspects of VCP in which the L2 textbooks analyzed here do not completely reflect native-like variation has implications for materials development and L2 teaching of variable morphosyntax. It has been acknowledged that in order to create authentic language teaching materials, pedagogy specialists need to embrace research from other areas, such as language variation and sociolinguistics (Gilmore 2007: 97; Matsumoto and Okamoto 2003: 43; Shenk 2014: 368). Embracing such research should result in the selection of more authentic (spoken and written) texts as well as in foregrounding variable morphosyntax in the explicit teaching of grammar. For example, by raising awareness of the high rate of enclisis in audio recorded input in the present study, this study may prompt textbook designers to explore ways of increasing the amount of authentic aural input included in textbooks. Teachers may decide to overcome this shortcoming of Spanish L2 textbook input by exposing students to additional authentic spoken input from radio podcasts that include unscripted interviews or videos where NSs engage in authentic interaction, where VCP is characterized by more proclisis.

## 4.2 Capitalizing on L2 Textbook Input

Despite those aspects where the L2 textbooks analyzed here do not faithfully portray native-like VCP, the present study finds three areas in which the textbook input is indeed native-like. First, none of the textbooks in the corpus makes categorical use of VCP. Clitic placement remains variable not only overall, but also with all the frequent verb lexemes and with clitic referents that differ in animacy. This simple observation of what could have been found but was not found reveals that these Spanish L2 textbooks acknowledge the variation in their placement of clitics in variable contexts. Even when few contexts of VCP have been attested in a particular textbook, our study has found evidence of variable use. What is more, for most of the textbooks in our corpus (6/9), the overall rate of enclisis falls within the range attested for written Spanish across dialects (i.e. between 60% in Myhill 1989, and 86% in Davies 1995). This indicates that these Spanish L2 textbooks faithfully represent the variable nature of clitic placement across Spanish dialects. Second, this study has shown that the textbooks that were subject to analysis here faithfully represent the most important constraint to VCP in monolingual Spanish, namely the finite verb lexeme constraint. Quantitative analyses revealed that the same finite verbs that favor enclisis in NSs (*tener que* "have to," and *querer* "want") also favor enclisis in the textbooks, and the same finite verbs that disfavor enclisis in NSs (*ir a* "go to," and *estar* "be") also disfavor enclisis in the L2 textbooks. This result shows that textbooks faithfully portray the lexical

conditioning on native-like VCP. We do not suggest that this is accomplished by careful control of these constraints during textbook design, but by the effort of modern-day textbooks to include authentic texts, or at least samples of language adapted from authentic sources.

Awareness of the presence and representation of VCP in the L2 textbooks has implications for classroom-based acquisition of morphosyntactic variation and sociolinguistic competence because it allows teachers to rely on textbook input when they design L2 grammar instruction that brings these main aspects of VCP to learners' attention. After drawing students' attention to VCP, students could engage in pattern detection and co-construction of the patterns of use of VCP by NSs of Spanish attested in the textbook (for an example of a sociolinguistic approach used to teaching variable grammar, see Shin and Hudgens Henderson 2017). In this way, the findings of the present study not only seek to raise awareness of the presence of some native-like patterns of VCP in Spanish L2 textbooks (and thus vindicating the use of the textbook as a valid source of input), but also encourage teachers to exploit textbook input to teach variable patterns in Spanish grammar.

## 5. Conclusion

This study was motivated by literature on textbook input that points to an excess of inauthentic, simplified, and bland language. We understand variation as inherent to language. Thus, exposing learners to authentic language means exposing them to language that follows the variable patterns and distributions found in naturalistic language production. The goal of this study was to determine whether Spanish L2 textbooks expose learners to authentic patterns of morphosyntactic variation found in monolingual language use. The answer to our research question is far from simple. The textbooks analyzed do not perfectly replicate the rate of enclisis or all the constraints on the variation that have been reported for Rioplatense Spanish. However, those same textbooks faithfully portray distributions attested across dialects, as well as the lexical conditioning that has been found to be the main factor affecting VCP in NSs. That textbooks portray some key aspects of the native-like patterns of variation in clitic placement presents opportunities for foregrounding this instance of language variation in language teaching and for teachers to design instructional practices that go beyond meaning and form and focus learners' attention on use.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## WORKS CITED

Autieri, Beatriz, et al. (2002). *Voces del Sur 1*. Lamsas.
———. (2004). *Voces del Sur 2*. Lamsas.
Bianco, Florencia, and Juan José Rodríguez. (2014). *Horizonte ELE 3 Nivel inicial*. UNC.
Bragger, Jeannette D., and Donald B. Rice (2000). "Foreign Language Materials: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow." *Agents of Change in a Changing Age: Northeast Conference Report*, edited by Robert M. Terry. National Textbook, pp. 107–40.
Canale, Michael, and Merrill Swain. (1980). "Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing." *Applied Linguistics*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1–47.
Cedergren, Henrietta, and David Sankoff. (1974). "Variable Rules: Performance as a Statistical Reflection of Competence." *Language*, vol. 50, pp. 333–55.
Celce-Murcia, Marianne. (2002). "Why It Makes Sense to Teach Grammar in Context and through Discourse." *New Perspectives on Grammar Teaching in Second Language Classroom*, edited by Eli Hinkel and Sandra Fotos. Erlbaum, pp. 119–34.

Corpas, Jaime, et al. (2009a). *Aula del Sur 1*. Voces del Sur.

———. (2009b). *Aula del Sur 2*. Voces del Sur.

———. (2009c). *Aula del Sur 3*. Voces del Sur.

Davies, Mark. (1995). "Analyzing Syntactic Variation with Computer-based Corpora: The Case of Modern Spanish Clitic Climbing." *Hispania*, vol. 78, no. 2, pp. 370–80.

———. (1998). "The Evolution of Spanish Clitic Climbing: A Corpus-based Approach." *Studia Neophilologica*, vol. 69, no. 2, pp. 251–63.

Di Vito, Nadine O. C. (1992). "Looking at and Towards the Future in French Textbooks." *Linguistics and Language Pedagogy: The State of the Art*, Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics (GURT) 1991, edited by James E. Alatis. Georgetown UP, pp. 250–59.

Edwards, Jette G. Hansen. (2011). "Deletion of /t, d/ and the Acquisition of Linguistic Variation by Second Language Learners of English." *Language Learning*, vol. 61, no. 4, pp. 1256–1301.

Eisenchlas, Susana A. (2011). "On-line Interactions as a Resource to Raise Pragmatic Awareness." *Journal of Pragmatics*, vol. 43, no. 1, pp. 51–61.

Ellis, Nick. (2011). "Implicit and Explicit SLA and Their Interface." *Implicit and Explicit Language Learning*, edited by Cristina Sanz and Ronald Leow, Georgetown UP, pp. 35–47.

Fernández, Claudia. (2011). "Approaches to Grammar Instruction in Teaching Materials: A Study in Current L2 Beginning-level Spanish Textbooks." *Hispania*, vol. 94, no. 1, pp. 155–70.

García Padilla, Xose A. (2012). "¿Qué tienen de 'conversación coloquial' los diálogos que aparecen en los libros de ELE?" *Verba: Anuario galego de filoloxía*, vol. 39, pp. 83–106.

Gass, Susan M. (1997). *Input, Interaction, and the Second Language Learner*. Elrbaum.

Geeslin, Kimberly L. (2011). "The Acquisition of Variation in Second Language Spanish: How to Identify and Catch a Moving Target." *Handbook of Spanish Sociolinguistics*, edited by Manuel Díaz-Campos, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 303–20.

Gilmore, Alex. (2007). "Authentic Materials and Authenticity in Foreign Language Learning." *Language Teaching*, vol. 40, pp. 97–118.

Goodall, Grant. (2010). "Input from Spanish Textbooks: Two Case Studies of Poverty/Richness of the Stimulus." *Selected Proceedings of the 12th Hispanic Linguistics Symposium*, edited by Claudia Borgonovo, Manuel Español-Echevarría, and Philippe Prévost, Cascadilla Proceedings Project, pp. 260–69.

Gudmestad, Aarnes. (2005). "Clitic Climbing in Caracas Spanish: A Sociolinguistic Study of Ir and Querer." *Indiana U Linguistics Club Working Papers*, vol. 6, pp. 1–14.

———. (2014). "Variationist Approaches to Second Language Spanish." *The Handbook of Spanish Second Language Acquisition*, edited by Kimberly L. Geeslin, Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 80–95.

Gutiérrez, Manuel J., and Marta Fairclough. (2006). "Incorporating Linguistic Variation into the Classroom." *The Art of Teaching Spanish*, edited by Rafael Salaberry and Barbara Lafford, Georgetown UP, pp. 173–91.

Iglesias, Olivier. (2012). "Le placement des clitiques dans les complexes verbaux en espagnol: Une nouvelle approche de la question." Diss. U of Vincennes in Saint-Denis.

Johnson, Daniel E. (2009). "Getting off the GoldVarb Standard: Introducing Rbrul for Mixed-Effects Variable Rule Analysis." *Language and Linguistics Compass*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 359–83.

Labov, William. (1969). "Contraction, Deletion and Inherent Variability of the English Copula." *Language*, vol. 45, pp. 715–62.

Lewis, Michael. (1993). *The Lexical Approach: The State of ELT and the Way Forward*. Language Teaching.

Liruso, Susana, Marisel Bollati, and Pablo E. Requena. (2015). "What do Genres do in the EFL Coursebook?" *EFL Classrooms in the New Millennium: Selected Papers from the 40th FAAPI Conference*, edited by Liliana Anglada, et al., Asociación Cordobesa de Profesores de Inglés, pp. 203–14. http://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/72522/. Accessed 20 Dec. 2017.

Long, Michael H. (1982). "Native Speaker/Non-Native Speaker Conversation in the Second Language Classroom." *Methodology in TESOL: A Book of Readings*, edited by Michael H. Long and Jack C. Richards. Newbury, pp. 339–54.

Malamud, Elina, and María José Bravo. (2007). *Macanudo: Español lengua extranjera desde el Río de la Plata*. Libros de la Araucaria.

Matsumoto, Yoshiko, and Shigeko Okamoto. (2003). "The Construction of the Japanese Language and Culture in Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language." *Japanese Language and Literature*, vol. 37, no. 1, pp. 27–48.

Mountford, Alan. (1976). "The Notion of Simplification and Its Relevance to Materials Preparation for English for Science and Technology." *Teaching English for Science and Technology*, edited by Jack C. Richards, Singapore UP, pp. 9–20.

Myhill, John. (1988). "The Grammaticalization of Auxiliaries: Spanish Clitic Climbing." *Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society*, vol. 14, pp. 352–63.

———. (1989). "Variation in Spanish Clitic Climbing." *Synchronic and Diachronic Approaches to Linguistic Variation and Change*, Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics, edited by Thomas J. Walsh, Georgetown UP, pp. 227–50.

Nation, Paul. (1990). *Teaching and Learning Vocabulary.* Heinle.

Oguro, Yasue. (2008). "English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Reading Textbooks in Japan." Diss. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State U.

Orozco, Rafael, and Joshua J. Thoms. (2014). "The Future Tense in Spanish L2 Textbooks." *Spanish in Context*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 27–49.

Rebuschat, Patrick, editor. (2015). *Implicit and Explicit Learning of Languages*. John Benjamins.

Rehner, Katherine. (2002). "Aspects of the Development of Linguistic and Discourse Competence by Advanced Second Language Learners of French." Diss. OISE/U of Toronto.

Rehner, Katherine, and Raymond Mougeon. (2003). "The Effect of Educational Input on the Development of Sociolinguistic Competence by French Immersion Students: The Case of Expressions of Consequence in Spoken French." *The Journal of Educational Thought (JET)/Revue de la pensée educative*, vol. 37, pp. 259–81.

Requena, Pablo E. (2015). "Direct Object Clitic Placement Preferences in Argentine Child Spanish." Diss. Penn State U. Accessed 1 Jan. 2018.

Richards, Jack C., and Theodore S. Rodgers. (2000). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge UP.

Rodrigo, Victoria. (2016). "Graded Readers: Validating Reading Levels across Publishers." *Hispania*, vol. 99, no. 1, pp. 66–86.

Römer, Ute. (2005). "Shifting Foci in Language Description and Instruction: Towards a Lexical Grammar of Progressives." *Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik*, vol. 30, no. 1–2, pp. 127–42.

———. (2007). "Learner Language and the Norms in Native Corpora and EFL Teaching Materials: A Case Study of English Conditionals." *Anglistentag 2006 Halle. Proceedings*, edited by Sabine Volk-Birke and Julia Lippert, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, pp. 355–63.

Schwenter, Scott A., and Rena Torres Cacoullos. (2014). "Competing Constraints on the Variable Placement of Direct Object Clitics in Mexico City Spanish." *Revista española de lingüística aplicada*, vol. 27, no. 2, pp. 514–36.

Seguí, Verónica. (2014). *Horizonte ELE 1 Nivel inicial*. UNC.

Shenk, Elaine M. (2014). "Teaching Sociolinguistic Variation in the Intermediate Language Classroom: Voseo in Latin America." *Hispania*, vol. 97, no. 3, pp. 368–81.

Shin, Naomi L., and Mary Hudgens Henderson. (2017). "A Sociolinguistic Approach to Teaching Spanish Grammatical Structures." *Foreign Language Annals*, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 195–213.

Sinnott, Sarah, and Ella Smith. (2007). "¿Subir o No Subir? A Look at Clitic Climbing in Spanish." 36th New Ways of Analyzing Variation Conferece, U of Pennsylvania, 12 Oct. 2007.

Sitaridou, Ioanna, Helen Whimpanny, and Laura Ayres. (2015). "Variation and Optionality in Clitic Climbing in Argentinean Spanish." *Isogloss: A Journal on Variation of Romance and Iberian Languages*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 247–91.

Tagliamonte, Sali A. (2006). *Analysing Sociolinguistic Variation*. Cambridge UP.

Thomas, Danielle L. T. (2012). "Grammatical Optionality and Variability in Bilingualism: How Spanish-English Bilinguals Limit Clitic-Climbing." Diss. U of Toronto.

Torres Cacoullos, Rena. (1999). "Construction Frequency and Reductive Change: Diachronic and Register Variation in Spanish Clitic Climbing." *Language Variation and Change*, vol. 11, no. 2, pp. 143–70.

Valles, Verónica, and Verónica Gebauer. (2014). *Horizonte ELE 2 Nivel inicial*. UNC.

van Naerssen, Margaret M. (1995). "The Future of the Future in Spanish Foreign Language Textbooks." *Studies in Language Learning and Spanish Linguistics in Honor of Tracy Terrell*, edited by Peggy Hashemipour, Ricardo Maldonado, and Margaret van Naersen. McGraw-Hill, pp. 457–70.

VanPatten, Bill. (2003). *From Input to Output: A Teacher's Guide to Second Language Acquisition*. McGraw-Hill.

Young, Dolly N. (1999). "Linguistic Simplification of SL Reading Material: Effective Instructional Practice?" *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. 83, no. 3, pp. 350–66.

Zyzik, Eve, and Charlene Polio. (2017). *Authentic Materials Myths: Applying Second Language Research to Classroom Teaching*. U of Michigan P.