

Progressive gerund and present participle constructions

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PaLaFra meeting
May 4, 2018



Some examples

| | | | |
|-----------|---|------------------------------|---|
| Eng. | / | <i>am speaking</i> | <i>about progressive constructions.</i> |
| Sp. | Ø | <i>Estoy hablando</i> | <i>de construcciones progresivas.</i> |
| It. | Ø | <i>Sto parlando</i> | <i>di costruzioni progressive.</i> |
| Br. Port. | Ø | <i>Estou falando</i> | <i>de construções progressivas.</i> |

Meaning: X is in the middle of performing an action

= The “progressive construction” (Squartini 1998, Bertinetto *et al.* 2000)

Latin?

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| Classical Lat. | Ø | <i>Loquor</i> | <i>de constructionibus progressivibus.</i> |
| Vulgar Lat. | Ø | <i>Sum loquens</i> | <i>de constructionibus progressivibus.</i> |

Traditional claims about the Latin PC:

- Exploratory construction:
 - Very rare until the 3th c. AD (Eklund 1970, Pinkster 1998)
 - Increasing frequency in Late Latin (Eklund 1970, Pinkster 1998, Haverling 2010)
- Vulgarism (Eklund 1970, Pinkster 1998)
- Influenced by Biblical Greek (Amenta 2003, Haverling 2010)

French?

| | | | |
|------------|-----------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Modern Fr. | <i>Je</i> | <i>suis en train de parler</i> | <i>de constructions progressives.</i> |
| Old Fr. | <i>Je</i> | <i>vais parlant</i> | <i>de constructions progressives.</i> |

Traditional claims about the French PC:

- Medievalism (Gougenheim 1929; Schøsler 2004, 2005, 2007; Becker 2005)
- Replaced by the infinitival PC (Schøsler 2004, 2005, 2007)
- Some lexicalized traces: *il est bien portant, son habilité va croissant*, etc.
- Low register > higher register (Gougenheim 1929; Schøsler 2004, 2005, 2007)
- Poetry rather than prose (Gougenheim 1929; Schøsler 2004, 2005, 2007)

The rise of the PC

| | What? | When? |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| Traditional hypothesis | Grammaticalization | Romance |

(Schøsler 2004, 2005, 2007; Becker 2005; Haverling 2010)

| | What? | When? |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| My hypothesis | Constructionalization | (Late) Latin |

The rise of the PC

Source construction: the “complex adjunct construction”:

(1) *Et post dies quinque [orando dominum] emisit spiritum.*

‘After five days, he died while he was praying to God’ (*Passio Pimenii* 1.4.4)

| V1 | V2 |
|-----------|---------|
| Main verb | Converb |

Target construction: the progressive construction:

(2) [...] *cum prope siluam uenisset [...] stetit dux diu [cunctando].*

‘When he had come to a forest, he stood in hesitation for some time’

(Ammianus, *Historiae* 17.1.8)



| V1 | V2 |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Grammatical marker | Main verb |

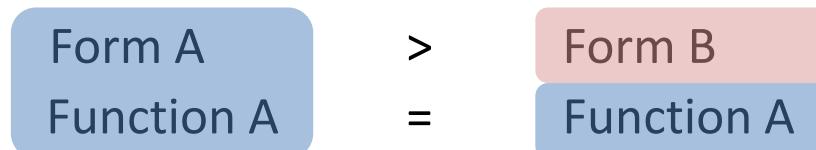
Reanalysis

Theoretical framework

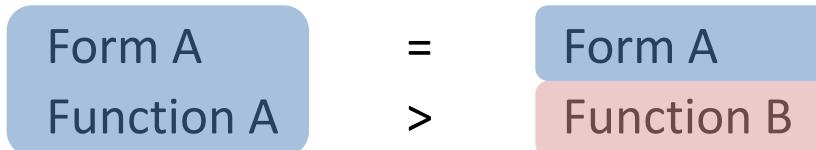
Diachronic Construction Grammar:

- Constructions can evolve in two ways (Traugott & Trousdale 2013):
 - Constructional change = change of the formal **OR** functional part of an existing construction:

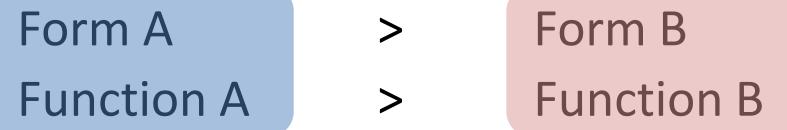
Formal change:



Functional change:



- Constructionalization = change of the formal **AND** functional part of an existing construction:

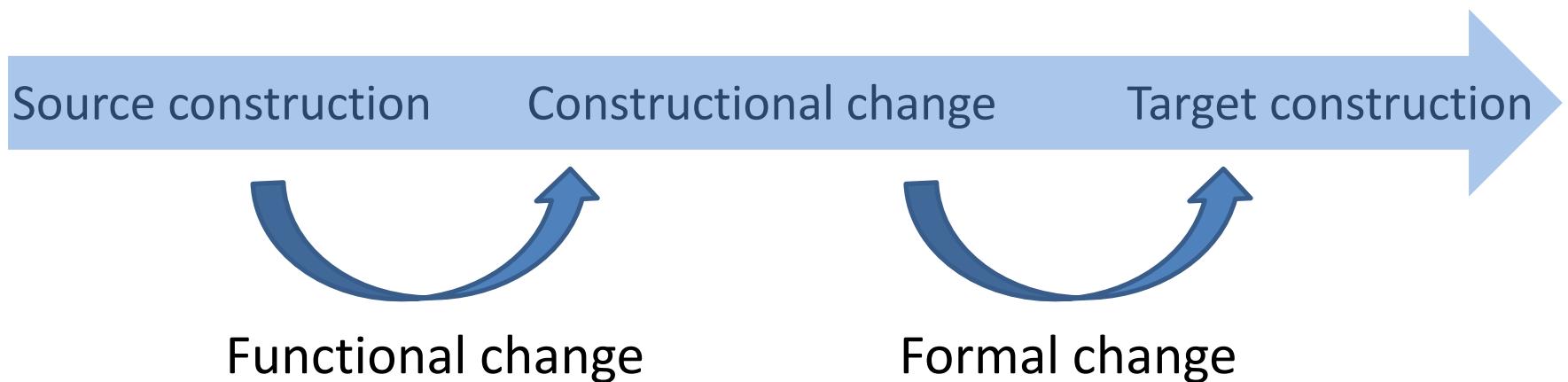


Theoretical framework

Himmelmann's (2004) hypothesis of language change:

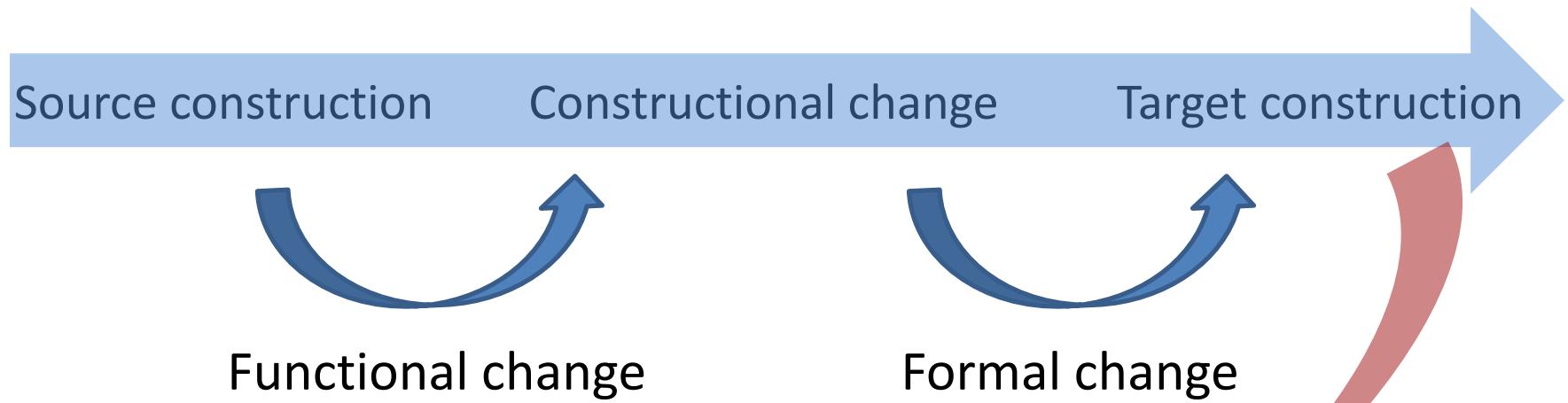
Semantic change > Syntactic change > Morphosyntactic change

Constructionalization as a double constructional change:

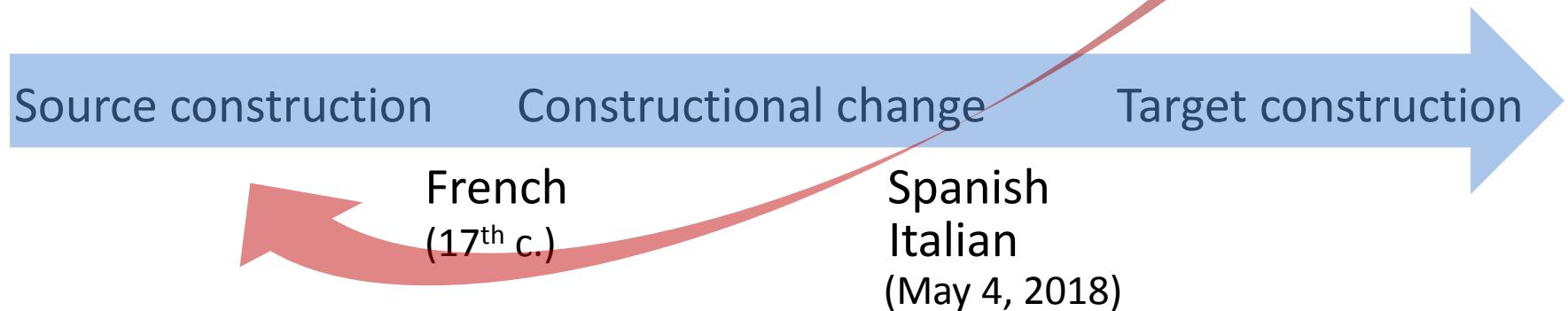


Hypothesis

The emergence of the PC takes place in Latin:



In Romance, the PC undergoes formal constructional change:



Research questions

2 types of questions:

- What are the properties of V1? Of V2? Of the complex predicate V1-V2?
- How do these properties develop over time? In Latin? In French?

Preliminary corpus

Latin:

| Century | Token frequency |
|---------|-----------------|
| 4 | 3 |
| 6 | 13 |
| 7 | 2 |
| 8 | 2 |
| 9 | 3 |
| 10 | 4 |

Preliminary corpus

French:

| Century | Token frequency |
|---------|-----------------|
| 10 | 14 |
| 12 | 298 |
| | 312 |

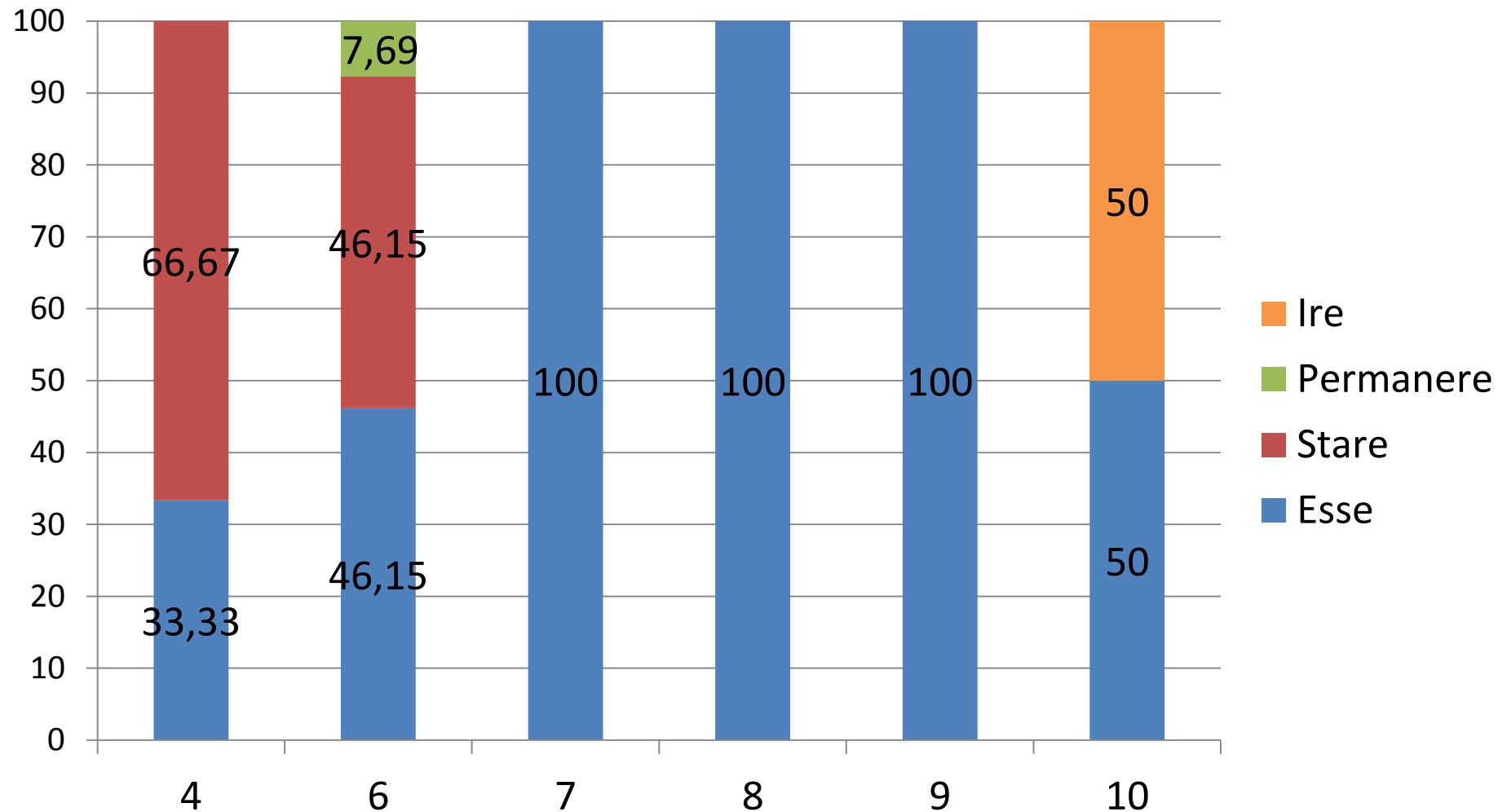
What are the properties of V1?

Lexical variation:

- What is the lexical variation of V1?
- What is the distribution of the lexemes occurring as V1?

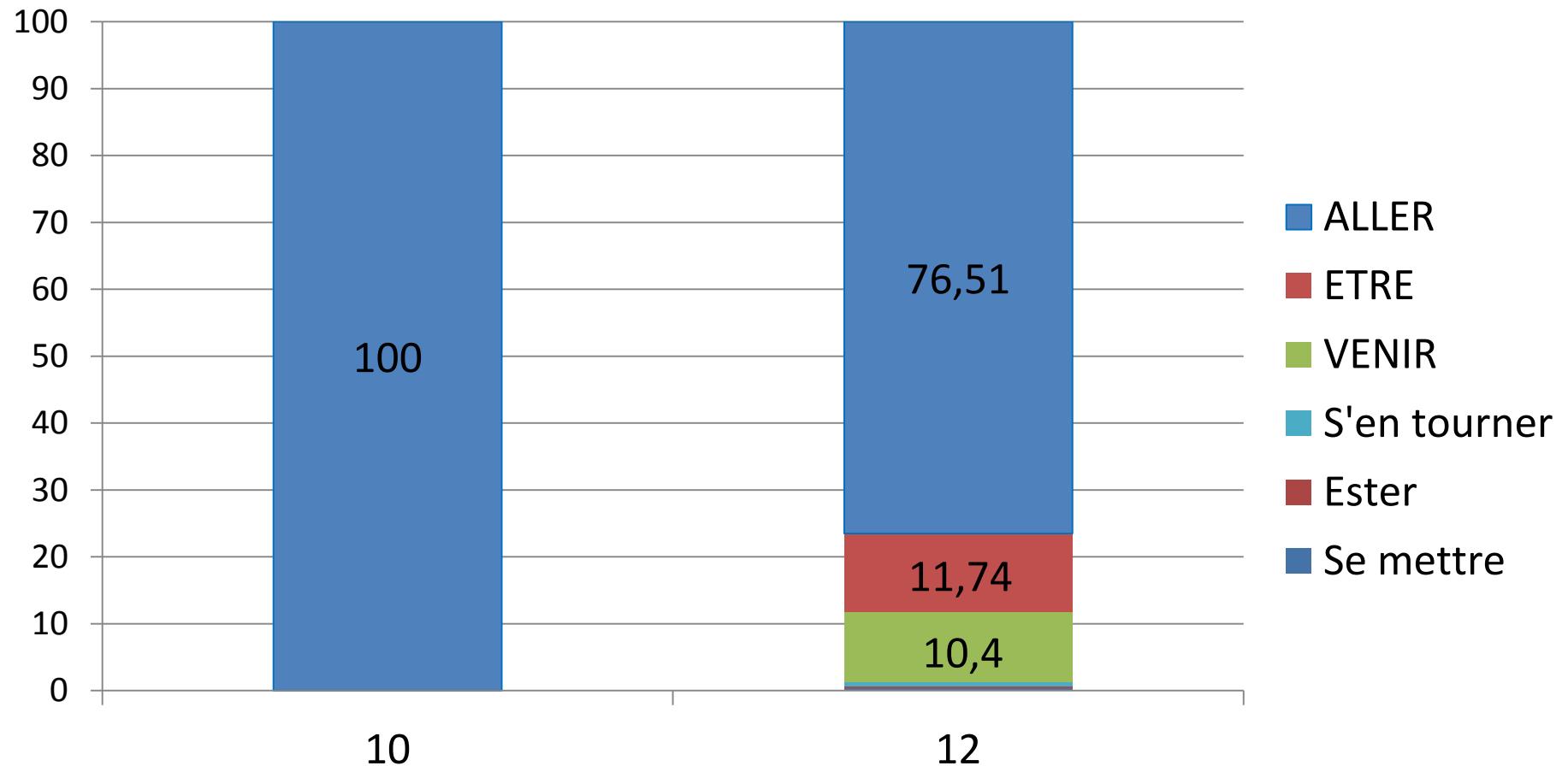
Lexical variation of V1

Latin:



Lexical variation of V1

French:



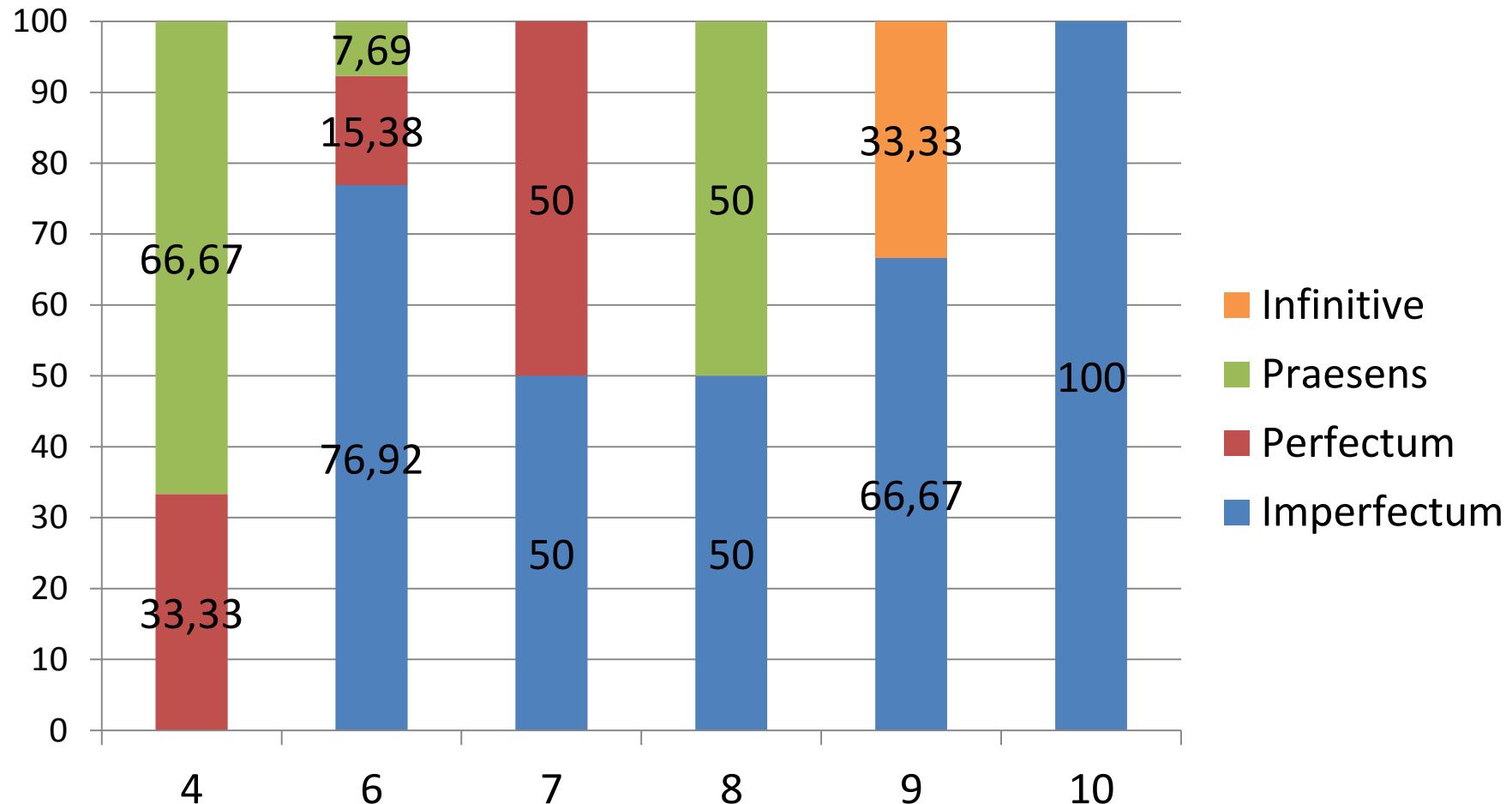
What are the properties of V1?

Aspectual variation:

- What is the aspectual variation of V1?

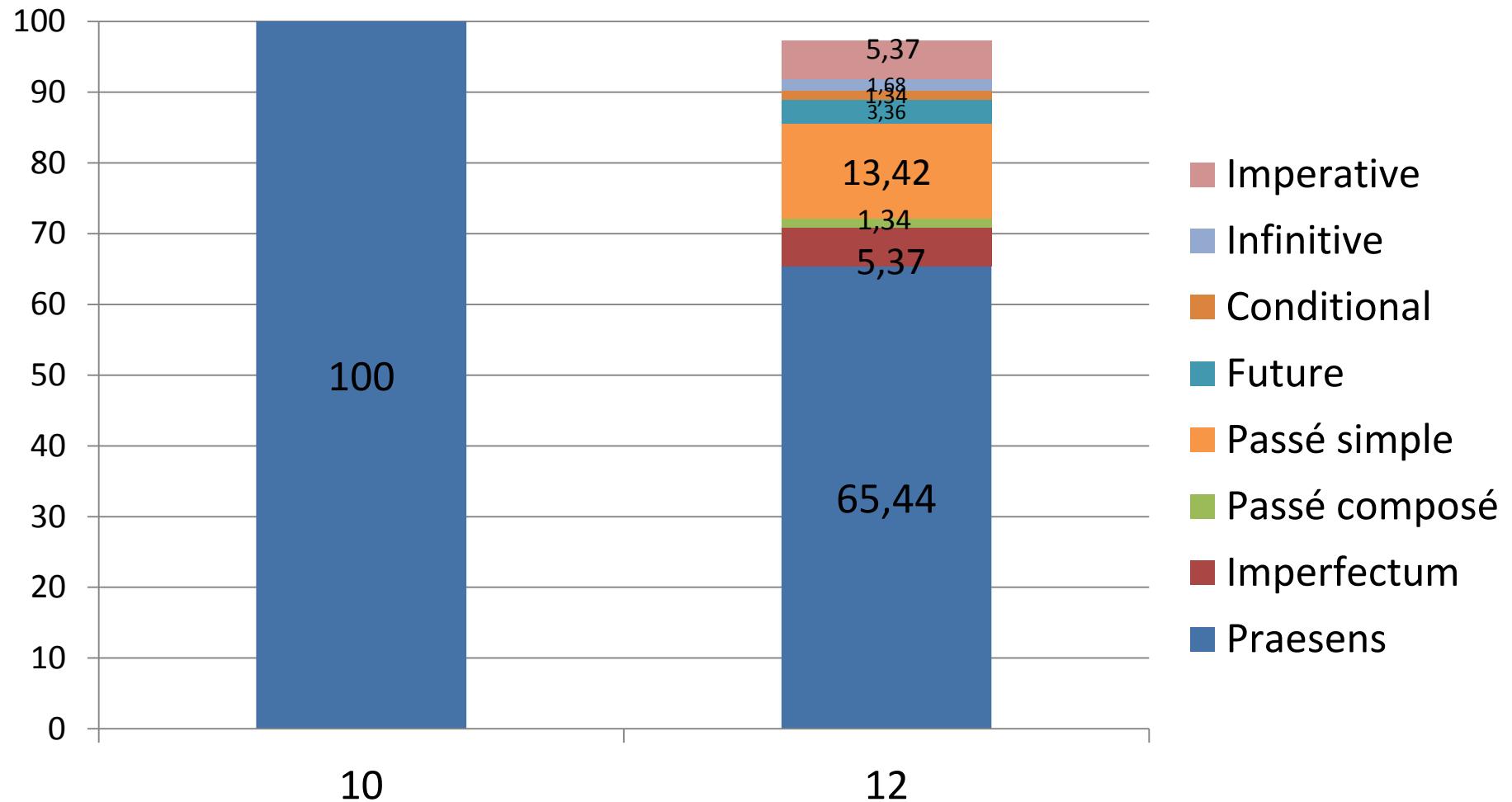
Aspectual variation of V1

Latin:



Aspectual variation of V1

French:



What are the properties of V1?

Argument structure:

- To what extent does V1 keep its argument structure?

Grammaticalization:

- To what extent is V1 desemanticized?
- What is the grammatical meaning of V1?
- To what extent is V1 decategorized (auxiliarized)?
- Does V1 undergo cliticization?

What are the properties of V2?

Lexical variation:

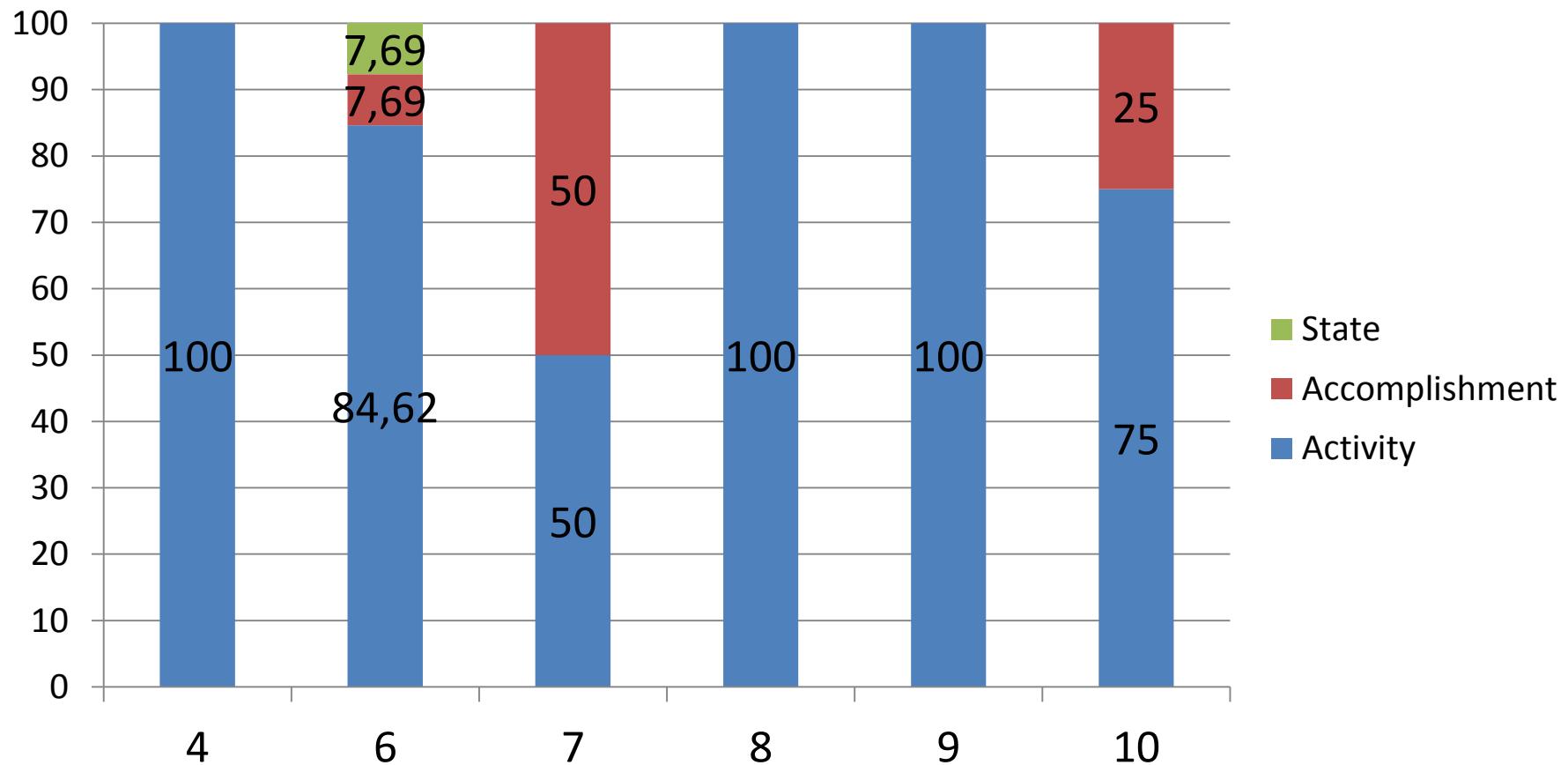
- What is the lexical variation of V2?
- Does V1 impose lexical constraints on V2?
- What is the distribution of the lexemes occurring as V2?

Actional variation:

- What is the actional variation of V2?
- Is the *Aktionsart* of V2 constrained by V1?

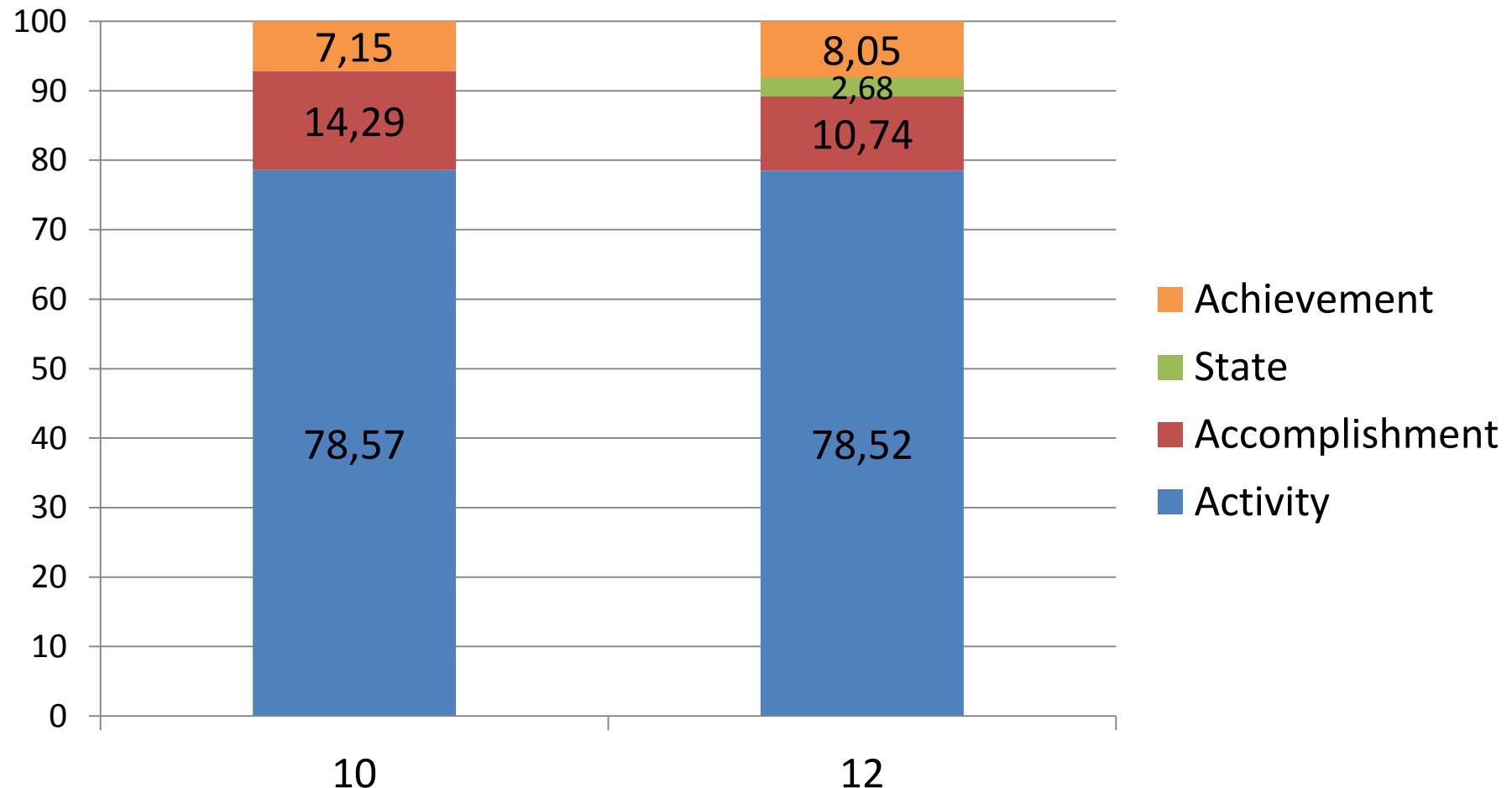
Actional variation of V2

Latin:



Actional variation of V2

French:



What are the properties of V2?

Categorization:

- What is the type of non-finite verb of V2? What is its case form?
- What is the difference between gerundial and present participial PCs?

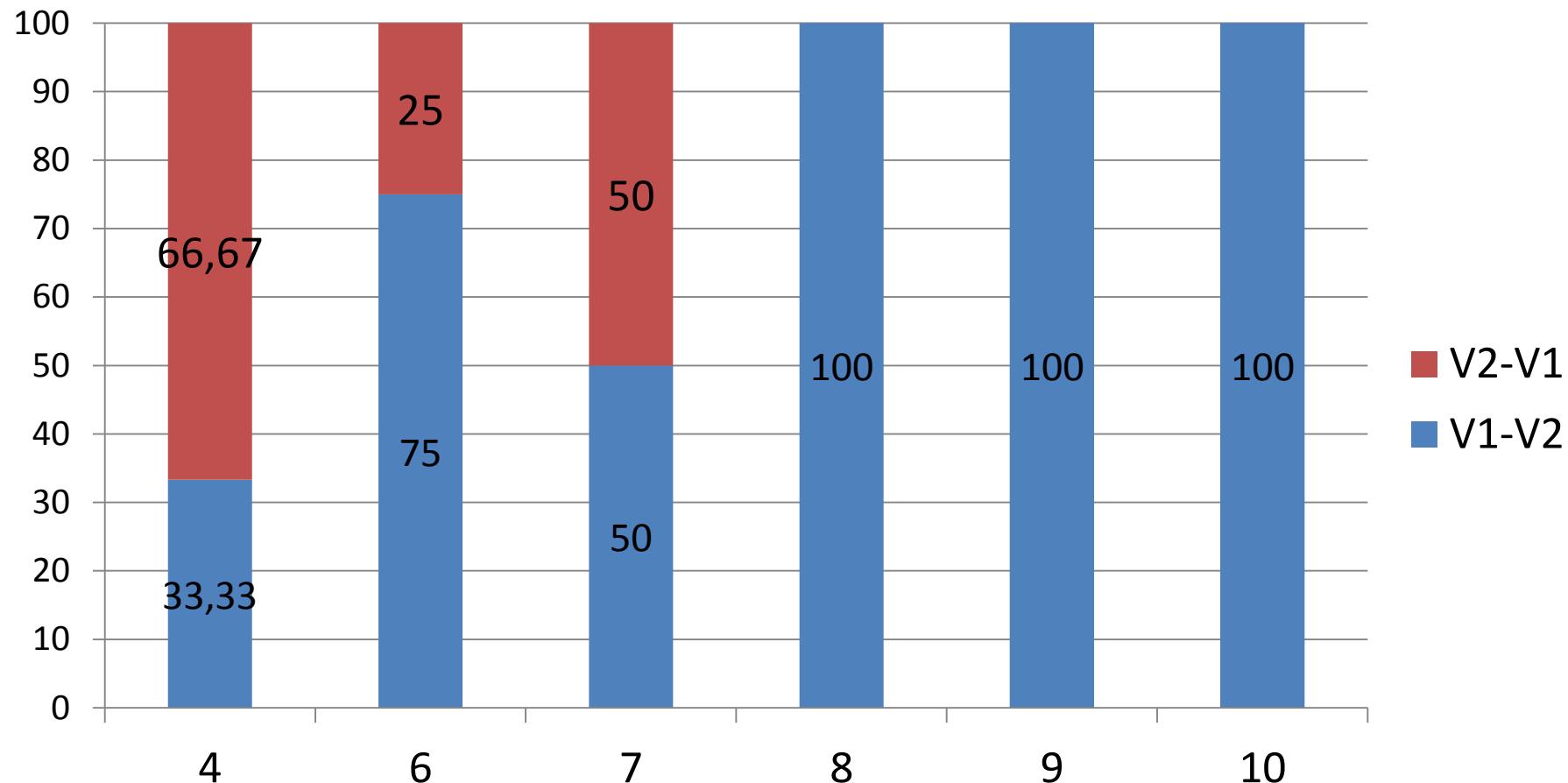
What are the properties of the complex predicate V1-V2?

Word order:

- What is the word order between V1 and V2?
- What is the position of the arguments of V2?
- Does the position of pronominal and lexical arguments differ?

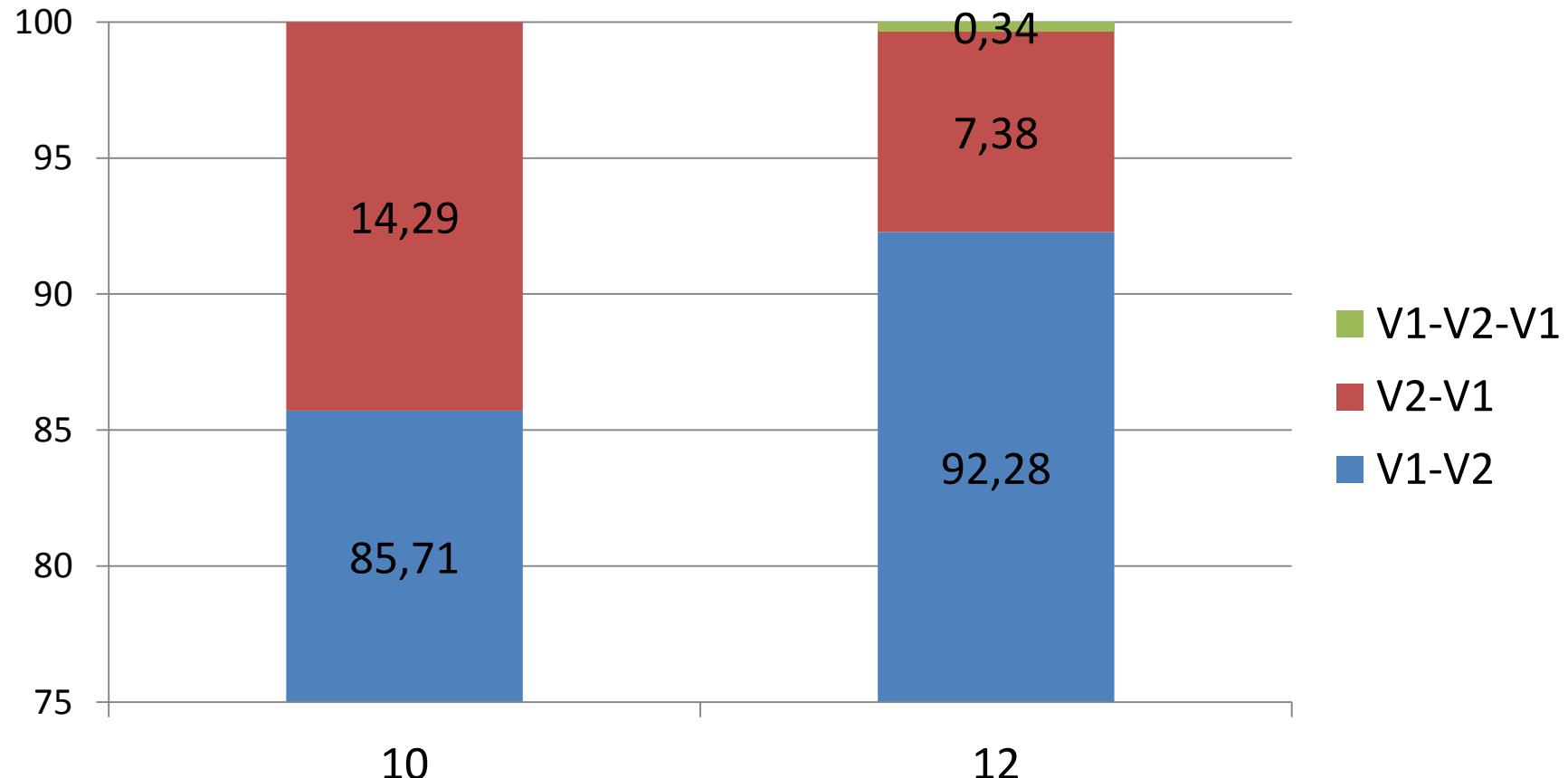
Word order

Latin:



Word order

French:



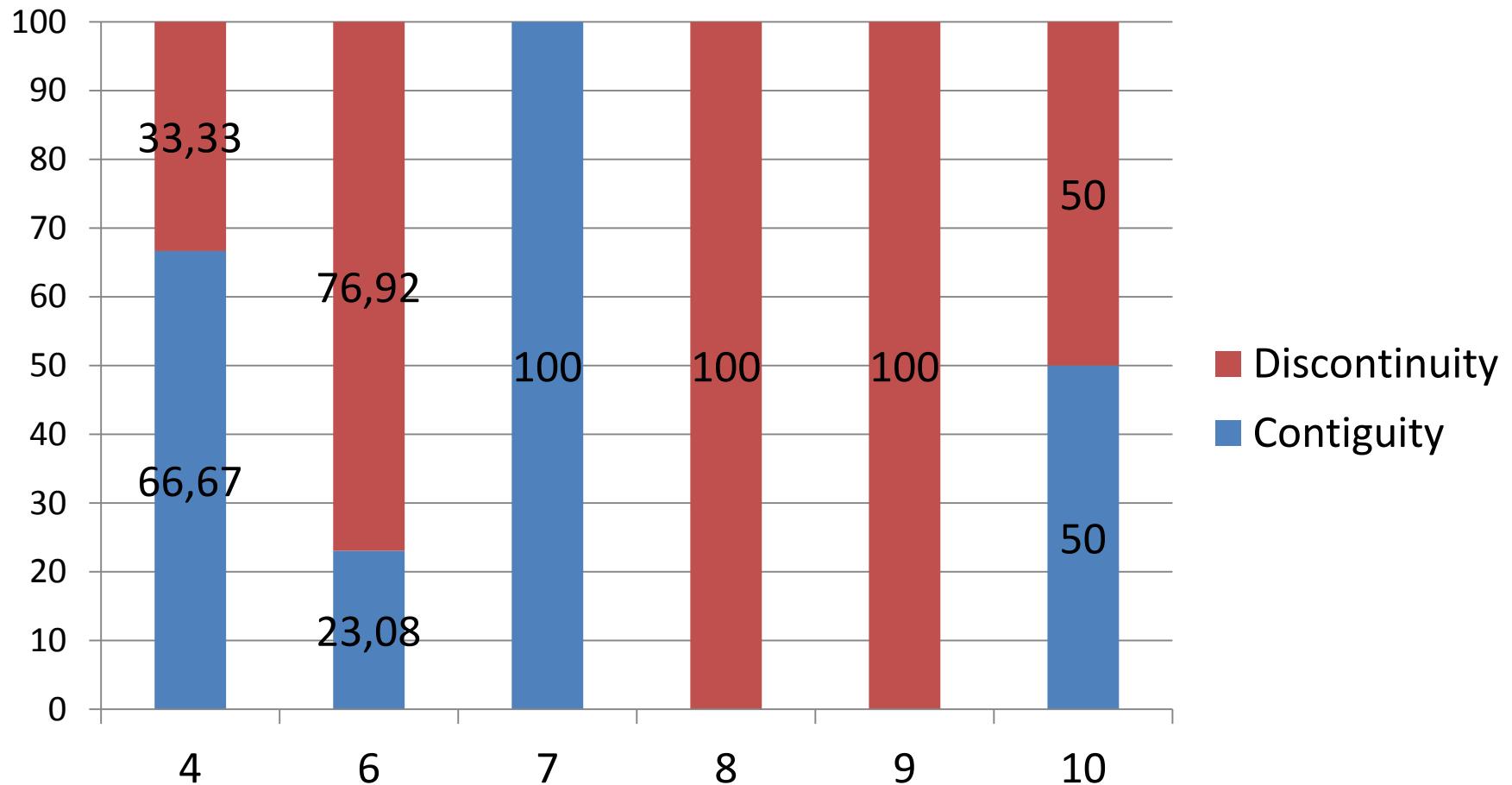
What are the properties of the complex predicate V1-V2?

Contiguity:

- What is the syntagmatic cohesion between V1 and V2?

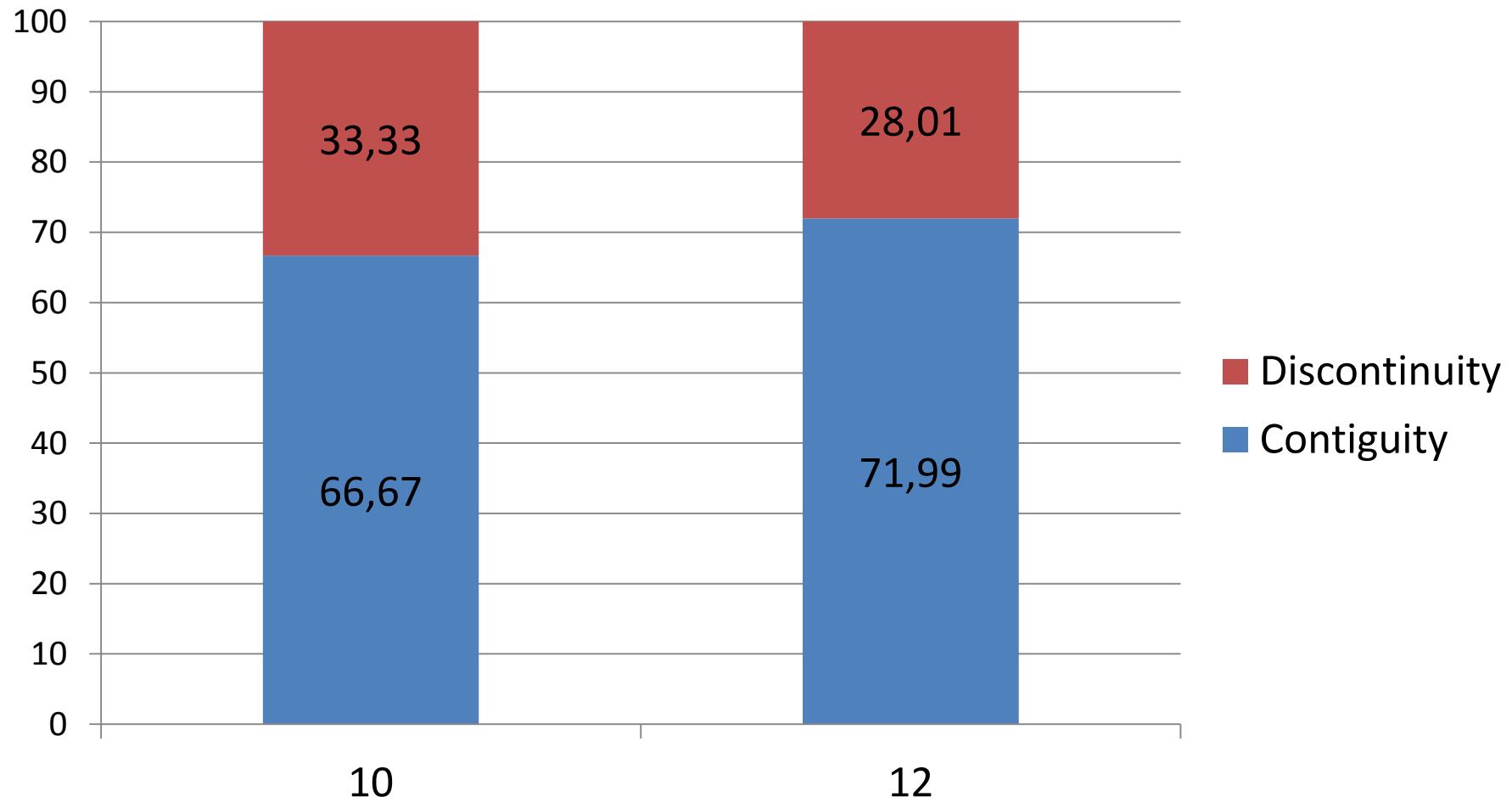
Syntagmatic cohesion

Latin:



Syntagmatic cohesion

French:



What are the properties of the complex predicate V1-V2?

Productivity:

- What is the productivity of the PC?
- Is the PC a schematic construction or does it tend towards lexicalization?
- What is the correlation strength between the lexemes in V1 and V2?

Frequency:

- What is the relative frequency of the PC?
- What is the relative frequency of the PC in comparison with other gerundial and present participial constructions?

What are the properties of the complex predicate V1-V2?

Distribution:

- Are there restrictions on the PC according to clause type (main vs. subordinate), illocutionary force (declarative vs. imperative vs. interrogative sentence), affirmation vs. negation, narrative text vs. (in)direct speech, etc.?
- Does the PC occur in texts with a large diastratic, diaphasic, and diatopic variation?
- Is there a difference between text types (hagiography, novel, etc.), text domains (religious, didactique, etc.), text style (poetry, prose), etc.?

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Thank you for your attention!

Suggestions?