Do HSs make similar use of structural options in their HL (German) compared to German monolinguals?

Participants
20 German HSs (μ age=15.95, SD=1.28, 10 females)
20 German monolinguals (μ age=16.45, SD=0.83, 11 females)

Method
Language Situations Method (Wiese 2020): elicitation of controlled and comparable productions across registers (two modes, two settings) → RUEG corpus

Theoretical Background
• Register: variety dependent on situational parameters (e.g. participants, setting, purpose of communication) (Biber & Conrad 2001).
• L1 learners typically acquire a broad register repertoire in their language and are more or less tacitly aware of appropriateness (Halliday 1975, 1978).
• HSs: early bilinguals acquiring one language (HL) as L1 and family language within the wider context of a dominant ML (Pascual y Cabo and Rothman 2012).
• Selection of clause types provides insight into HSs repertoires because the interface of syntax and discourse is an important source of variation (Sorace 2011).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Register</th>
<th>HSs</th>
<th>Monolinguals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>formal spoken</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formal written</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informal spoken</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>informal written</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1054</td>
<td>1609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data coding (English examples for illustration)

Independent main clauses (IMC): I was walking down the street. I saw a couple.

Coordinated main clauses (CMC): I was walking down the street, and I saw a couple.

Subordinate clauses (SC): While I was walking down the street, I saw a couple.

Results
IMC: HSs = monolinguals in each condition, more IMCs in the written than in the spoken mode.
CMC: HSs > monolinguals, more CMCs in the informal than in the formal setting, more CMCs in the spoken than in the written mode.
SC: monolinguals > HSs, HSs sensitive to interaction of setting and mode, monolinguals only sensitive to setting.

Conclusion
• Registers have an effect on clause type choices.
• HSs produced more CMCs and fewer SCs than monolinguals.
• No 1:1 mapping of clause type choices between HSs and monolinguals but results point to the same syntactic organization of discourse.

References