EURoSLA 25

26-29 Août 2015
Aix-en-Provence, France

EuroSLA 25

Second Language Acquisition: Implications for language sciences

La recherche sur l'acquisition des langues étrangères et ses implications pour les sciences du langage

Book of Abstracts

PAROLE ET LANGAGE
UMR 7309 · CNRS · AMU

Aix*Marseille université

Faculté des Arts, Lettres, Langues et Sciences humaines
Aix*Marseille Université

CNRS

EuroSLA 25 - Book of Abstracts

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Welcome to Aix-en-Provence and EuroSLA 25

The EuroSLA 25 Conference organisers are happy to welcome you to Aix-en-Provence, to Aix-Marseille University and the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme. Aix is hosting this conference for the third time around, after EuroSLA 4 in 1994 and EuroSLA 18 in 2008. Jamais deux sans trois (good thing come in threes) as goes the French saying. We hope that EuroSLA 25 will be a memorable event and that you will want to come back to this town for scientific or personal reasons!

Since October last, we have been busy getting the conference off the ground. We do hope that any frustration you may have resented during this long process will be washed away by the many fountains of this beautiful town, by the excellence of the conference and by pastis, the local drink!

As usual, EuroSLA 25 will be preceded by the EuroSLA doctoral workshop which provides a platform for the discussion of ongoing PhD research in a non-threatening environment. We thank all the experienced colleagues, in fact all our plenary speakers and a dedicated colleague, who agreed to provide feedback to the doctoral students enlisted for the workshop.

Another pre-conference regular event is the Round Table meeting sponsored by *Language Learning*. Aix-Marseille is well known for research work on French related creole languages and on SLA. The theme of this year's Round Table is "Second Language Acquisition and Pidginization / Creolization: Processes and Models". It is convened by Georges Daniel Véronique. The organisers hope that the format of the Round Table will promote lively and searching discussions and thank *Language Learning* for their generous endowment of the event.

The Eurosla Conference proper includes high quality papers and posters (the rate of rejection is around 50 percent of the submitted papers). Three thematic colloquia will bear on "Language Typology in Second Language Acquisition Research: Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Considerations" (Luna Filipovic), "L2 acquisition of grammatical meaning and the language classroom" (Heather Marsden), "New approaches to cross-linguistic influence" (Rosa Alonso). The five plenary speakers will be Sandra Benazzo (Paris 8), Camilla Bardel (Stockholm University), Christine Dimroth (U. of Munster), Scott Jarvis (Ohio University) and Gabriele Pallotti (Modena & Reggio Emilia).

The conference organisers will be very happy to offer you drinks on Wednesday August 26 at 6.00 p.m and at the welcome reception, in town, on Thursday August 27, 7.30 p.m. We wish you a pleasant stay and a successful conference in Aix-en-Provence.

<div style="text-align: right">

Marion Tellier
Daniel Véronique

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Bienvenue à Aix-en-Provence et à EuroSLA 25

Le comité d'organisation d'EuroSLA 25 vous souhaite la bienvenue à Aix-en-Provence, à l'université d'Aix-Marseille et à la Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme. Aix accueille EuroSLA pour la troisième fois, après EuroSLA 4 en 1994 et EuroSLA 18 en 2008. Jamais deux sans trois ! Nous sommes honorés de la confiance qui nous est ainsi manifestée. Nous espérons que le cru 2015 sera à la hauteur des conférences précédentes, que vous conserverez un tel souvenir de votre séjour que vous aurez envie de revenir à Aix !

Depuis octobre 2014, nous nous activons à la préparation de cet événement scientifique majeur. Nous espérons que les irritations et impatiences que vous avez pu ressentir éventuellement durant les phases préparatoires de ce colloque seront dissipées par la beauté de la ville, la qualité du colloque et l'agrément que vous trouverez à flâner à nos terrasses de café !

Comme lors des précédentes conférences, EuroSLA 25 sera précédée par des ateliers de doctorants consacrés à la discussion, dans une atmosphère détendue, des thèses en cours. Nous remercions tous les collègues, nos conférenciers pléniers et une collègue dévouée, qui ont accepté de participer à l'encadrement de ces séances.

Autre événement qui interviendra avant la conférence, la table ronde financée par *Language Learning*. Elle portera sur « Second Language Acquisition and Pidginization / Creolization: Processes and Models ». Cette thématique réunit deux thématiques où les travaux de l'université d'Aix-Marseille sont bien connus. Le format de la table ronde a été conçu par Georges Daniel Véronique, et devrait permettre des discussions vives et fructueuses.

La conférence proprement dite accueillera des communications et des posters de haut niveau (le taux d'acceptation des propositions se situe autour de 50 %). Trois ateliers dirigés par Luna Filipovic, Heather Marsden et Rosa Alonso traiteront des thèmes suivants : « Language Typology in Second Language Acquisition Research : Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Considerations », « L2 acquisition of grammatical meaning and the language classroom », « New approaches to cross-linguistic influence ». Les conférences plénières seront données par Sandra Benazzo (Paris 8), Camilla Bardel (Stockholm University), Christine Dimroth (U. of Munster), Scott Jarvis (Ohio University) et Gabriele Pallotti (Modena & Reggio Emilia).

Nous serons très heureux de vous accueillir autour d'un pot le mercredi 26 août à 18h et à une réception, en ville, le jeudi 27 août à 19h30.

Nous vous souhaitons un séjour agréable à Aix et une excellente conférence.

<div style="text-align: right">

Marion Tellier
Daniel Véronique

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EuroSLA 25 is organized by the Laboratoire Parole et Langage (LPL) in association with the Département de français langue étrangère (Pôle LLC, UFR ALLSHS, Aix-Marseille University).

EuroSLA 25 est organisé par le Laboratoire Parole et Langage (LPL UMR 7309 CNRS AMU) associé au Département de français langue étrangère (Pôle LLC, UFR ALLSHS, Aix-Marseille Université).

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Acknowledgements

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Le Comité d'organisation remercie les personnes, les entreprises et les institutions suivantes :

- L'Université d'Aix-Marseille, son Président et son Conseil Scientifique

- Le Laboratoire Parole et Langage UMR 7309, Université d'Aix-Marseille et CNRS

- L'UFR Arts Lettres Langues et Sciences Humaines

- Le Directeur et le personnel de la Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme

- Madame la Maire d'Aix-en-Provence et son Conseil Municipal

- La Communauté des communes du Pays d'Aix

- Le Conseil général des Bouches-du-Rhône

- Le Conseil régional de Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur

- Language Learning Journal

- John Benjamins Publishing. Co.

The conference organisers would also like to thank all members of the scientific committee for their help in the review process.

Le comité d'organisation adresse ses remerciements les plus chaleureux aux membres du comité scientifique pour leur évaluation des propositions scientifiques soumises.

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Marion Tellier
Daniel Véronique

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A NEW LOOK - EuroSLA website has been revamped

Dear colleagues,

As you may have noticed, we have given the EuroSLA website http://www.eurosla.org a thorough facelift. To some extent, this is still work in progress, and we welcome any and all suggestions that you may have!

A bit of somewhat sad news: we have decided, as part of the restructuring, to discontinue our good old Clarion. Publishing such a newsletter critically depends on there being willing and able to edit it on a regular basis, and with us all being ever busier, this was turning into an insurmountable problem.

Instead, we now have a Facebook page and a Twitter account under the name of EuroSLA. Here, we will post all updates and announcements in abbreviated form, and the full announcement will be posted in the News area on the website. So please either Like/Follow the Facebook or Twitter pages, or check the News on http://www.eurosla.org regulary. If you have any information, for example about upcoming events, PhD fellowships, vacancies etc., which you would like to be announced on these pages, please send it to me.

We do not, of course, intend to let the Clarion be forgotten, and all previous editions that we had in electronic form are available on the webpage. We would very much like this archive to be complete, so if you should have a paper copy of one of the earlier editions somewhere, could I ask you to please either send it to me in the mail (I promise I will treat it with the utmost respect and return it after digitizing!) or email me a good scan (PDF, preferably).

Furthermore, we would like the website to be a bit more visually appealing, and would therefore like to ask you to let us have any pictures you may have of previous EuroSLA conferences, committee meetings, workshops or just EuroSLA members having fun. Again, both hardcopies or scans will be great, and all hardcopies will be returned to you.

Please send anything you may have to:

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Thank you very much, and looking forward to seeing you in Aix!

Monika

Program overview

Wednesday, August 26 2015

9H00 - 10H30	[O-DT1] Oral session 1 - Discussant: Camilla Bardel	Salle 1
9H00 - 10H30	[O-DT2] Oral session 2 - Discussant: Sandra Benazzo	Salle 2
9H00 - 10H30	[O-DT3] Oral session 3 - Discussant: Christine Dimroth	Salle 3
10H30 - 11H00	Pause café / Coffee break	
11H00 - 12H30	[O-DT4] Oral session 4 - Discussant: Scott Jarvis	Salle 1
11H00 - 12H30	[O-DT5] Oral session 5 - Discussant: Maria Kihlstedt	Salle 2
11H00 - 12H30	[O-DT6] Oral session 6 - Discussant: Gabriele Pallotti	Salle 3
12H30 - 13H30	Déjeuner / Lunch	
13H30 - 15H30	Language Learning Round Table	
15H30 - 16H00	Pause café / Coffee break	
16H00 - 18H00	Language Learning Round Table : Second Language Acquisition and Creolization	
18H00 - 19H30	Pot d'accueil - MMSH / Welcome drinks - MMSH	MMSH

Thursday, August 27 2015

8H00 - 9H00	Inscriptions / Registration	
9H00 - 9H30	Discours d'ouverture / Opening ceremony	
9H30 - 10H30	Conférence pleinière / Keynote - S. Benazzo: "Langage, protolangue et systèmes linguistiques en développement : comment les études en L2 peuvent contribuer aux débats sur l'origine du langage ?"	
10H30 - 11H00	Pause café / Coffee break	
11H00 - 12H30	[O-PHON1] Phonetics and Phonology	Salle 1
11H00 - 12H30	[O-LI1] Lexical Issues	Salle 2
11H00 - 12H30	[O-ESP] ESP	Salle 3
11H00 - 12H30	[O-PRO1] Processing	Salle 4
11H00 - 12H30	[O-ID1] Individual Differences	Salle 5
11H00 - 12H30	[O-CLI1] Crosslinguistic Influence	Salle 6
11H00 - 12H30	[O-PW] Phonetics and Writing	Salle 7
11H00 - 12H00	[O-ME] Motion Events	Salle 8
11H00 - 12H30	[O-TEM] Temporality	Salle 9
12H30 - 13H30	Déjeuner / Lunch	
12H30 - 13H30	[P1.1] Session affichée / Poster session	
13H30 - 15H00	[O-PHON2] Phonetics and Phonology	Salle 1
13H30 - 14H30	[O-LI2] Lexical issues	Salle 2
13H30 - 15H00	[O-LP] Language Proficiency	Salle 3
13H30 - 15H00	[O-PRO2] Processing	Salle 4
13H30 - 14H30	[O-ID2] Individual differences	Salle 5
13H30 - 15H00	[O-CLI2] Crosslinguistic Influence	Salle 6
13H30 - 15H00	[O-AML] Awareness and Metalinguistics	Salle 7
13H30 - 15H00	[O-MS] Morphology and Syntax	Salle 8
13H30 - 15H00	[O-PA] Proficiency and Aptitude	Salle 9
15H00 - 16H00	Pause café / Coffee break	
15H00 - 16H00	Session affichée / Poster session	
16H00 - 17H30	[O-PHON3] Phonetics and Phonology	Salle 1
16H00 - 17H00	[O-LI3] Lexical Issues	Salle 2
16H00 - 17H00	[O-SYN] Syntax	Salle 3
16H00 - 17H30	[O-PRO3] Processing	Salle 4
16H00 - 17H00	[O-ID3] Individual Differences	Salle 5
16H00 - 17H00	[O-MET] Methodology	Salle 6
16H00 - 17H30	[O-TSLA] Teaching SLA	Salle 7
16H00 - 17H30	[O-ID4] Individual Differences	Salle 9

17H30 - 18H30   Conférence pleinière / Keynote - S. Jarvis: "Explorations in Lexical Diversity"

19H30 - 20H30   Réception au pavillon Vendôme / Welcome reception

Friday, August 28 2015

8H00 - 9H00	Inscriptions / Registration	
9H00 - 10H00	Conférence pleinière / Keynote - C. Dimroth: "The creation of initial learner varieties under controlled input conditions"	
10H00 - 10H30	Pause café / Coffee break	
10H30 - 12H00	[O-VIC] Verbal Interaction and Cognition	Salle 1
10H30 - 12H30	[O-COM] Complexity	Salle 2
10H30 - 12H00	[O-LI4] Lexical Issues	Salle 3
10H30 - 12H30	[O-SA1] Study Abroad	Salle 4
10H30 - 12H30	[O-PL] Plurilingualism	Salle 5
10H30 - 12H30	[O-TR1] Transfer	Salle 6
10H30 - 12H30	[O-WC] Written Comprehension	Salle 7
10H30 - 12H00	[O-PRO4] Processing	Salle 8
10H30 - 12H30	[THEM2] Thematic panel Filipovic	Salle 9
12H30 - 13H30	Déjeuner / Lunch	
13H30 - 15H30	[O-VI] Verbal Interaction	Salle 1
13H30 - 15H30	[O-SV] Sociolinguistics and Variation	Salle 2
13H30 - 15H30	[O-CHI] Chinese L2 / L3	Salle 3
13H30 - 14H30	[O-SA2] Study Abroad	Salle 4
13H30 - 14H30	[O-CLIL] CLIL	Salle 5
13H30 - 15H30	[O-TR2] Transfer	Salle 6
13H30 - 15H30	[O-OC] Oral Comprehension	Salle 7
13H30 - 15H30	[THEM1] Thematic panel Mardsen	Salle 8
13H30 - 15H30	[THEM3] Thematic panel Alonso	Salle 9
15H30 - 16H00	Pause café / Coffee break	
16H00 - 16H15	Remise de EuroSLA distinguished Award	
16H15 - 17H15	Conférence pleinière / Keynote - C. Bardel: "Metalinguistic knowledge and L3 learning"	
17H15 - 18H15	Assemblée générale EuroSLA / EuroSLA General Assembly	
19H00 -	Rendez-vous bus à "La Rotonde" / Meeting at "La Rotonde" for the bus	
20H00 -	Soirée restaurant L'Olivier à Pertuis / Conference dinner	

Saturday, August 29 2015

8H00 - 9H00	Inscriptions / Registrations	
9H00 - 10H30	[O-LI5] Lexical Issues	Salle 1
9H00 - 10H30	[O-CI] Classroom and Interaction	Salle 2
9H00 - 10H30	[O-ID5] Individual Differences	Salle 3
9H00 - 10H00	[O-SEM] Semantics	Salle 4
9H00 - 10H30	[O-UB] Usage-Based	Salle 5
9H00 - 10H30	[O-BLA] Bilingualism and Age	Salle 6
9H00 - 10H00	[O-EE] ERPS/EEG	Salle 7
9H00 - 10H30	[O-DFL] (Dis)fluency	Salle 8
9H00 - 10H30	[O-PHON4] Phonetics	Salle 9
10H30 - 11H00	Pause café / Coffee break	
11H00 - 12H00	Conférence plénière / Keynote - G. Pallotti	

Plenaries

Camilla Bardel

Metalinguistic knowledge and L3 learning

It has been pointed out by many that multilinguals typically develop a high degree of metalinguistic knowledge or awareness, especially through multilingual literacy, and also that this is beneficial for further Ln learning. However, the multilingual background of L3 learners does not always only lead to advantages, at least not at all stages of development. The effect of previous language learning can be negative as well as positive transfer, depending on the characteristics of the particular languages of the learners' repertoire. Studies on transfer phenomena in syntax and lexicon from L1 and L2 into L3 reveal differences as to whether native or non native languages tend to be transferred and which kind of linguistic elements are transferred from either L1 or L2 (e.g. grammar, vocabulary). Some recent studies account for such differences in transfer patterns in terms of implicit competence and explicit metalinguistic knowledge (Paradis 2009). Following Paradis it is then assumed that grammar is acquired implicitly and vocabulary is learnt explicitly in L1, while in non native language learning explicit metalinguistic knowledge is generally favoured by formal learning situations. Explicit metalinguistic knowledge is the conscious knowledge about language facts that can be reported verbally and it can be defined as "a set of beliefs" (Paradis 2009:28) about a language ("beliefs" because they do not always correspond to the features of the actual target language). Metalinguistic knowledge is typically achieved when learning a non native language, especially in adults learning the language in formal contexts, but does also apply to explicit knowledge about the L1, developed as a function of literacy and language studies.

In this talk, I will focus on the role of metalinguistic knowledge for transfer in L3 learning, reviewing a number of studies that indicate that the content of explicit metalinguistic knowledge about a background language tends to transfer into L3.

Paradis, M. (2009). Declarative and procedural determinants of second languages. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Sandra Benazzo

Langage, protolangage et systèmes linguistiques en développement : comment les études en L2 peuvent contribuer aux débats sur l'origine du langage ?

L'origine du langage et des langues est un sujet d'actualité qui jouit d'un intérêt renouvelé depuis plusieurs années. Les débats couvrent une multitudes de questions très variées, la réflexion portant à la fois sur la nature du processus, la datation de son apparition et les préadaptations nécessaires, ainsi que la distinction entre traits centraux vs. périphériques du langage, ou encore sa modalité expressive initiale (gestuelle vs. vocale).

L'une des questions qui me semble particulièrement intéressante pour les acquisitionnistes concerne la "transition vers le langage", à savoir les étapes intermédiaires censées couvrir la distance entre l'émergence de formes primitives du langage (ce qu'on appelle Protolangage depuis Bickerton 1990) et la complexité des langues modernes.

Étant donné l'absence de traces directes sur ce phénomène évolutif, il s'agit d'une question plutôt spéculative. L'étude de différents processus ontogénétiques (acquisition L1, production d'enfants isolés comme Genie, évolution des homesigns, acquisition L2, pidginisation/ créolisation), offre cependant la possibilité d'observer l'émergence spontanée, le fonctionnement et la complexification de systèmes linguistiques plus simples que les langues à part entière : à ce titre ils sont considérés comme des "fenêtres" pour spéculer sur l'évolution du langage (voir la notion de « windows on language genesis », cf. Botha 2006, 2009), même s'il n'y a pas de consensus sur quel processus est pertinent pour quel phénomène évolutionniste.

Dans cette présentation, je suivrai cette approche pour a) discuter dans quelle mesure le processus d'acquisition d'une L2 est pertinent pour les questions sur les origines du langage ; b) présenter quelques études illustrant comment les études acquisitionnelles peuvent contribuer à remettre en cause et/ou affiner certains traits de modèles courants de protolangage (en particulier les modèles de Calvin & Bickerton 2006, Jackendoff 1999, Heine & Kuteva 2007).

Bickerton, D. 1990. Language and Species. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Botha R. P. 2006. On the Windows Approach to Language Evolution. Language and Communication 26, 129-143.

Botha R.P. and de Swart H. 2009. (éds.) Language Evolution: the view from Restricted Linguistic Systems. Utrecht: LOT.

Calvin, W.H. and D. Bickerton, 2000. Lingua Ex Machina: Reconciling Darwin with the Human Brain. Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press.

Heine, B and Kuteva, T. 2007. The genesis of grammar. A reconstruction. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jackendoff, R. 1999. Possible stages in the evolution of the language capacity. Trends in Cognitive Science 3 (7), 272-279.

Christine Dimroth

The creation of initial learner varieties under controlled input conditions

The widely used notion of interlanguage (Selinker 1972) captures the observation that second language learners' dynamic linguistic repertoires have properties that partly differ from their first language (L1) as well as from their target language (TL). Whereas interlanguage suggests that these properties are somehow situated in between the L1 and the TL, Klein & Perdue (e.g. 1992) insist that second language systems should be studied in their own right and propose the term learner varieties (LV) instead. The prototype of an early LV whose grammar is deemed largely impermeable to L1 and TL structural features is called Basic Variety. It is found in untutored adult SLA and its grammar consists of a limited number of relatively simple phrasal rules that are largely based on argument roles and information structure.

Concerning the assumed properties of the language (learning) faculty the functional LV-approach differs greatly from generative accounts. The Basic Variety is understood as the result of adult learners' informed creativity - informed by "and at least partial understanding of the cognitive categories that universally receive grammatical expression in languages and also a knowledge of how information is organised in different types of discourse" (Perdue 1996:138). The two approaches resemble each other, however, in the relatively minor role they assign to the TL input. This is different for usage-based accounts (e.g. Ellis & Wulff 2014) which assume that second language development is largely driven by the saliency and in particular the frequency of features in the input.

The relative weight of input and creativity is one of the core concerns of the VILLA project (Dimroth/Rast/Starren/Watorek 2013), in which groups of adult beginners with five different L1s were exposed to 14 hours of monolingual and communication based classroom input in Polish. To the extent possible the input (provided by a native speaker) was kept constant across learner groups. It was entirely video-recorded and annotated in order to allow for fine-grained comparisons between traits of the developing LVs and input properties. The talk presents evidence from an elicited production task. It will be shown which input properties have left their traces or were ignored and to what extent the structure of the learners' initial LVs correspond to Klein & Perdue's Basic Variety.

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Scott Jarvis

Explorations in Lexical Diversity

The similarities that can be found between lexical diversity and other manifestations of diversity are not accidental. Language is a complex system, and diversity is a central element of robust complex systems wherever they are found (Page, 2011). One of the important implications of this observation is that the levels of lexical diversity found in samples of speech and writing are not solely a function of the size of speakers' and writers' vocabulary knowledge. While it certainly does reflect this as well as the person's overall level of language proficiency, lexical diversity is also subject to general principles that determine the vitality of a complex system. These principles are related to the numbers and types of entities within the system, how they are dispersed throughout the system, how they interact with one another, what their functions are, whether their functions are unique (i.e., non-redundant), and whether they make an important contribution to the vitality of the system.

Zipf (1935) was among the first scholars to recognize diversity not as a by-product of language use but as a force that guides and governs word choice, other areas of language use, other areas of human behavior, and other naturally occurring phenomena. Zipf used the term diversity to describe this force, although he preferred the term variegation to refer to how it manifests itself in the context of word choice. He pointed out that there exists an optimal level of variegation at a point where diversity can no longer be increased without its compromising comprehension and efficient communication. He also pointed out that competent speakers of a language share a common understanding of what the optimal level of variegation is, and that the optimal level for a given text will typically involve an abundance of word types occurring at approximately their characteristic frequencies (or characteristic rates of repetitiveness). Other researchers (e.g., Carroll, 1938) later misinterpreted Zipf's insights concerning rates of repetitiveness as referring to the overall degree of repetition in a text, and they have tended to operationalize lexical diversity merely as the reciprocal of repetition. This misunderstanding has been perpetuated even to the present day: Essentially all existing measures of lexical diversity are fundamentally measures of lexical repetition.

The purposes of this talk are to describe what lexical diversity is and why it is important to the field of second language acquisition, to offer compelling evidence and arguments that Zipf was correct about the nature of lexical diversity, to further show how lexical diversity in samples of language use works in a manner that is parallel to how diversity works in other types of complex systems, and to show how these principles and findings can be put to good use with both human raters and automated measures of lexical diversity in language learners' spoken and written texts.

Gabriele Pallotti

Studying the role of context in SLA: Theoretical approaches, definitions and research

The presentation will discuss several meanings of the word "context", as it is currently used in SLA research. On the one hand, the scope of this construct can range widely, from extremely large contexts like a whole culture or society, to intermediate contexts like a classroom or other environments for language learning and use, to very narrow characterizations, such as a single conversational setting or the sequence of turns surrounding a single verbal production.

This size-based classification cuts across another, methodological one. Two broad approaches to context can in fact be identified, which can be labelled "finding contexts" and "making contexts". The former is the more traditional idea that contexts contain and precede communicative acts; the latter, inspired by ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and ethnography, focusses on the practices through which speakers create and select contexts. A number of studies employing the two methodologies will be reviewed, in order to provide a coherent picture of how the notion of "context" can be employed in SLA studies.

Round Table

Language Learning Round Table meeting

August 26, 2015
1.30 p.m - 6.00 p.m

Second Language Acquisition and Pidginization / Creolization: Processes and Models

0.   Introduction

L1 and L2 acquisition have been discussed as possible factors in the development of pidgins and creoles since the late nineteenth century and the seminal work of Bloomfield and Hall, during the first half of the twentieth century. In the early 70's, John Schumann, Roger Andersen and A.M. Stauble developed the pidginization / creolization hypothesis to account for the naturalistic acquisition of English L2 grammar by Spanish L1 speakers. This model drew a parallel between the stages of language development in a creole setting (Bickerton 1975) and stages in the development of Spanish L1 naturalistic development in English L2. R. Chaudenson (1978) developed similar views about the genesis of French creoles arguing that French related creoles and pidgins started as adult L2 learner varieties. Since the eighties, there has been interaction and controversy between researchers in the fields of creole studies and SLA research. For the record, the contributions of Sato, Bickerton and Valdman inter alia to this debate are to be acknowledged.

Questions such as transfer qua substratum and the role of universals of language acquisition (see D. Bickerton's bioprogram 1981) are still with us both in the field of SLA and Creole studies.

Various SLA hypotheses and models have been discussed by scholars of creole languages. Klein and Perdue's Basic variety model (1997), Pienemann's processability model, or Schwarz and Sprouse Full Access/ Full Transfer Hypothesis have provided interesting insights for creole studies in the last ten years. Conversely, studies of multilingual contacts and contact languages have provided impetus for second and third language acquisition research.

The idea underlying the Round Table is that the development of pidgins and creoles is fuelled by the same processes. These processes - transfer, reanalysis, analogy, grammmaticalization etc. - that account for pidgin and creole development may also explain the acquisition and use of second and third languages and, possibly, of heritage languages. The Round Table homes on such issues as the role and status of transfer or copying and the role and status of cognitive processes implied in language acquisition, use and change.

1.   Background and rationale

During the past fifteen years, various edited volumes have addressed the links between creolization, acquisition and language change. To consider a few of these attempts, let us mention DeGraff's (ed.) 1999, Language Creation and Language Change, Creolization, Diachrony and Development, Kouwenberg, S. and P. Patrick's (ed.) 2003, "Reconsidering the Role of SLA in Pidginization and Creolization", Special issue of Studies in Second Language Acquisition 25 (2) and Lefebvre, Whyte and Jourdan's (eds.) 2006, L2 Acquisition and Creole Genesis. Dialogues. These volumes and others have addressed issues related to language contact, to the development of creoles and pidgins and to their connections and conflicts. These issues are related to early creole grammar and transfer as well as more advanced creole grammar.

A recent controversy between Plag (2008a, b, 2009a, b, c) and Sprouse (2009) on the possibility of considering creoles and pidgins as early varieties of interlanguage and on the validity of relying on such models as the processability theory of Pienemann or the Full Access/ Full Transfer theory of Schwartz and Sprouse, has sparked further interest and new interest in the interface between SLA and creole studies.

Against the backdrop of studies of language contact and of multilingualism, it seems proper to assess to which degree the development of pidgins and creoles and of learner varieties may be compared and how the models evolved in the fields of SLA, of genetic linguistics and of language contact conspire to provide a more comprehensive picture of the issues at stake in creolization and second and third language acquisition.

Sprouse (2010) draws a very pessimistic picture of the "invisibility of SLA theory in mainstream creole linguistics", whatever the school considered, be it superstratist, substratist or universalist. One of the goals of the Round Table is to renew the dialogue between these domains of contact linguistics and to reassert mutual interest on the part of SLA research and Creole studies.

2.   The Round Table programme

The Round Table will address the following questions:

1. How do issues in the analysis of the emergence of contact languages and in the study of SLA relate?

2. What has SLA research to learn from the analysis of pidginization and creolization processes and from models available in the field of creole studies?

3. How relevant are issues discussed in the field of creolization and pidginization studies to SLA research and vice-versa?

4. How far do creole languages share the linguistic properties of interlanguages?

5. How are processes of language emergence, language maintenance and pidinization/ creolization related?

The aim of this Round Table is to foster discussion among researchers who have attempted to compare and contrast processes of emergence and development of contact languages such as pidgins and creoles and second language acquisition, be it in naturalistic or instructed settings. It is expected that this discussion will be of interest to the wider community of researchers in the field of SLA.

3.   Format

The convener of the Round Table, Georges Daniel Véronique (Aix-Marseille University) will introduce the workshop, setting the stage of the Round Table and the goals of the session (15 minutes). He will subsequently chair the Round Table.

Salikoko S. Mufwene (University of Chicago) will open the Round Table by retracing the relation between SLA research and Creole Studies, a domain he has extensively ploughed. S.S. Mufwene has worked mainly on French and English related creoles and on contact languages in Africa. This 30 minutes presentation will be followed by 15 minutes of discussion within the panel and across the floor. In the same vein Margot van den Berg, (Utrecht University, Netherlands), who has worked on contact languages in various parts of the world including Africa, will address the relation between language distance in contact situations. Creole linguistics typically deals with languages in contact which are typologically distant. This presentation of 30 minutes will be similarly followed by discussion as for the preceding presentation.

After the coffee break, Tonjees Veenstra (FU. Berlin, Germany), building on the Basic Variety hypothesis (Klein and Perdue 1997) from the field of SLA, will investigate how the grammar of emergent languages unfolds. This presentation will be followed by a 15 minutes discussion. The last panellist, Enoch.O. Aboh (University of Amsterdam, Netherlands) will also address the question of the development of grammar in emergent languages. His presentation will be followed by 15 minutes of questions and discussion on the paper presented.

After this last presentation, the discussant, Jeanine Treffers-Daller (U. of Reading, United Kingdom) will be asked to comment on the papers presented, to draw some conclusions and introduce the final discussion of the Round Table.

The audience will be invited to participate in the discussions after each presentation. A final slot of Round Table (see the timeline of the Round Table) will be devoted to a general discussion of the issues raised by the various presentations and by the discussant.

4. Timeline of Round Table session (August 26, 2015, 1.30 p.m - 6 p.m.)

1.30 - 1.45	G.D. Véronique: Introduction
1.45 - 2.30	Salikoko S. Mufwene: Crosspollination between SSLA and Genetic Creolistics: What to Expect?
2.30 - 3.15	Margot van den Berg: Language distance and language contact
3.15 - 3.45	Break
3.45 - 4.30	Tonjees Veenstra: On the role of place-holders in language creation
4.30 - 5.15	Enoch O. Aboh: The emergence of grammar in a multi-language context
5.15 - 5.45	Jeanine Treffers-Daller: Discussant
5.45 - 6.00	General Discussion

5. Titles and abstracts of presentations

1. Salikoko S. Mufwene (University of Chicago), Crosspollination between SSLA and Genetic Creolistics: What to Expect?

I use "SSLA" for "studies in/of SLA" and "genetic creolistics" for that part of creolistics that focuses on the emergence of creoles (and pidgins). Quite a bit has already been written on the subject matter of the connection between the two research areas, including Kouwenberg & Patrick (eds. 2003), Lefebvre et al (eds., 2006), Siegel (2009), and Mufwene (1990, 2010). A great deal depends on what role one assumes SLA plays in the emergence of creoles. Consistent with the position that creoles emerged gradually, DeGraff (1999) points out accurately that both SLA (by adults) and L1 acquisition (by Creole children) contributed to restructuring of the lexifier into the relevant creole. According to this hypothesis, language acquisition is a reconstruction process and children are important agents of selection from their feature pool (which varies from one generation to another), as they determine which substrate features are selected into the emergent colonial vernacular and which ones are selected out.

One must also bear in mind that SSLA have focused on language learning by individuals, whereas creolistics has dealt with the appropriation of a target language (TL) by a whole non-heritage population. Assuming variation in individual learning skills and in the nature of the TL variety, genetic creolistics further complexifies the scenario, which has to do particularly with the dynamics of the emergence of the communal norm, asking which individuals or group have/has played a more important role than the others, why, and at what stage of the emergence of the new vernacular. Creolistics should apparently be paying more attention to how SSLA explain interference/transfers and account for it/them, as well as for innovations that are extrapolations from some patterns in the TL, consequences of (partial) congruence between the TL and source language, or generated by the internal dynamics of the emergent L2 idiolect. Owing to an accident of history in the

practice of the disciplines, creolistics has had to discuss more explicitly than SSLA the nature of the competition and selection within the contact feature pool, as well as the ecology of language appropriation. This difference has created a situation where the latter can learn from the former. The crosspollination is thus enabled by different kinds of factors, viz., 1) for creolistics, the fact that a population consists of individuals and it is necessary to understand the behaviors of individuals to address adequately the question of how communal patterns emerge; and 2) for SSLA, more is involved in SLA than a speaker of a language learning an additional one in the shaping of an L2 idiolect.

2. Margot van den Berg (University of Utrecht) Language distance and language contact

A related issue in contact linguistics and the study of second language acquisition and use is the impact of language distance between the languages in contact on the outcome of language contact. This paper explores the role of language distance in language contact on the basis of a comparison of outcomes of language contact between the same European and African languages in different socio-historical settings in the Caribbean and West Africa in the past and the present in search for universals of language contact.

We will discuss the impact of lexical and structural similarity and equivalence between the languages in contact on creole formation on the basis of historical data from 18th century Suriname and the Virgin Islands, and continue with a presentation of findings on contemporary multilingual language use in present-day Ghana and Togo. While the former deepens our understanding of the result of language contact, the latter aims to expand our knowledge of the processes at work and the role of language distance therein.

3. Tonjees Veenstra (FU. Berlin), On the role of place-holders in language creation

In this paper I will highlight the role of place-holders in the development of creole languages. Place-holders are highly underspecified pieces of proto-structure created by second language learners when they go beyond a certain threshold (Basic Variety), and they tend to be slowly refined over time to fit into the target-language system. In the creole case, due to a shift away from the target, these structures remain underspecified and are able to function as bottlenecks for substrate continuities (similar to hijacking constructions).

4. Enoch O. Aboh (University of Amsterdam), The emergence of grammar in a multi-language context

Studies on language transmission traditionally assume that children are perfect learners who develop a homogeneous grammatical system that faithfully replicates the language of their native communities. This view is compatible with Wexler's (1998:43) metaphor that children "are little inflection machines" or Weerman's (2011:149) observation that "in "normal" transmission from generation to generation children are simply too good to be responsible for transmission errors." Here is the paradox: Children are language-copy machines, but languages nevertheless change overtime; why? This question, central to acquisition studies, is often addressed by focusing on aspects of language change that can be related to external factors resulting in imperfect learning (e.g., late or adult second language learning).

Adopting a learnability approach to language acquisition and change, I posit that learners are multilingual by definition. There is no qualitative difference between a child learning her language in a multilingual environment and a child raised in a monolingual environment. In both situations, children learn to master multiple linguistic sub-systems which combine during their speech. This process generates subtle variations which may eventually lead to language change. This means that language acquisition and change is contingent on language contact. L1 acquisition involves contact of dialects or closely related variants of the same language. Here, we are dealing with varieties that are genetically and typologically related. L2 acquisition, on the other hand, may involve two

or more distinct languages not necessarily genetically or typologically related. Thus, any learner (whether L1, L2, or 2L1) develops her mental grammar out of contact. I propose that in such a contact situation, phonological, syntactic and semantic features of different language varieties or types recombine into a new emergent linguistic system: a hybrid grammar.

Because pidgin and creole languages emerge in a multi-language context involving an interaction between L1, 2L1, and L2 learners their study provides us with a window into human cognitive processes underlying language acquisition and the emergence of hybrid grammars.

5. Discussant: Jeanine Treffers-Daller

I often find that researchers work in narrow specialisms and are insufficiently informed about methods and findings from neighbouring fields. Researchers in the field of SLA often discuss the role of transfer from L1 in L2, for example, without taking on board the findings from contact-induced change, or from creolization and pidginization and vice versa. Sometimes the problem is that researchers use different terminology for phenomena that are in essence the same, but in other cases researchers appear to be investigating different phenomena altogether, which means that drawing conclusions from a range of studies is difficult. In my statement I will try to highlight the common ground between the contributions to the Round Table and sketch some ways forward for a future research agenda.

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Acquisition du français L3 en contexte universitaire chilien: une étude des transferts syntaxiques et du rôle des langues sources dans l'acquisition

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Keywords: acquisition d'une L3, influences translinguistiques, rôle des langues sources, français L3, transferts syntaxiques

Abstract:

Dans la Recherche sur l'acquisition des langues, le développement de l'intérêt pour le plurilinguisme a naturellement placé les chercheurs devant une évidence (l'explosion du modèle binaire L1-L2) et a fait naître de nouvelles questions liées à la complexité des phénomènes d'influence, et notamment au rôle joué par les langues préalablement acquises.

Depuis une décennie surtout, les études proposant des modèles de l'apprentissage des structures grammaticales se sont multipliées. Il existerait ainsi trois hypothèses concernant l'acquisition d'une grammaire L3 : soit a) il n'y a pas d'influence des langues sources, soit b) on constate une influence de la L1, soit c) on note l'influence de toutes les langues préalablement acquises.

Dans le cadre de notre doctorat initié en septembre 2014, nous nous proposons d'étudier l'acquisition du français L3 et le rôle des langues sources (espagnol L1 et anglais L2) à travers l'analyse de transferts syntaxiques liés au groupe verbal. Nous nous intéressons plus particulièrement aux données recueillies auprès des étudiants de première année de la Filière de Traduction/Interprétation de l'Université de Concepción au Chili : ceux-ci commencent la filière avec un niveau débutant en français et un niveau A1-A2 en anglais et, comme ils suivent en parallèle un enseignement de langue de manière assez intensive (8 heures par semaine pour chaque langue), ils sont amenés à élever rapidement leur niveau de compétence.

Notre corpus est constitué par des rédactions réalisées en condition d'examen de langue française, tout au long de l'année académique. Pour 2013, nous disposons de 12 rédactions différentes pour chacun des 12 étudiants sélectionnés ; pour 2014, nous avons 16 rédactions pour les 20 étudiants sélectionnés. Nous avons procédé à la description, au cas par cas, de la syntaxe des verbes afin d'identifier les possibles transferts et la langue exerçant son influence. Plusieurs aspects nous paraissent intéressants à analyser, comme la construction des compléments du verbe et leur éventuelle pronominalisation, la négation, l'absence ou le placement du sujet, etc. Ainsi, nous avons identifié trois phénomènes relatifs à la syntaxe du verbe : l'ordre des éléments dans le groupe verbal, la présence/absence d'un élément et la forme de ces éléments.

Pour l'atelier des doctorants de EUROSLA 25, nous aimerions discuter deux difficultés de l'analyse des transferts : 1) leur identification irréfutable en tant que produit de l'influence d'une langue source ; 2) leur double aspect, négatif et positif. Il serait assez difficile en effet de distinguer ce qui, dans la progression de la L3, est imputable au transfert des connaissances préalables (rôle des langues sources) de ce qui est relatif à la construction de l'interlangue à partir de l'input en langue cible (processus développemental). Par ailleurs, les transferts positifs sont bien sûr beaucoup plus difficiles à repérer car une heureuse intuition linguistique ou le développement de l'interlangue peuvent être tout autant à l'origine d'une occurrence correcte. Cependant l'absence de preuve tangible et irréfutable n'est pas synonyme d'absence de transfert. Nous aimerions aborder ces deux points relatifs à l'origine de certaines réalisations syntaxiques en français L3.

Acquisition and processing of Japanese passives by heritage speakers and L2 learners

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Abstract:

The general aim of this study is to investigate the similarities and differences in processing Japanese passive constructions by heritage speakers and advanced second language (L2) learners of Japanese. These groups acquire the language differently in terms of age and context/manner of acquisition, and may therefore display differences in linguistic knowledge and processing of the three Japanese passives: 1) niyotte passive; 2) ni-direct passive; 3) indirect passive. The latter two involve syntax-semantics-discourse interface, whereas the former does not. It has been found that advanced heritage speakers and L2 learners face difficulties in mastering the complicated structures involving different structural levels, especially structure interfacing with discourse (Laleko & Polinsky 2013; Montrul & Polinsky 2011 among many others). It is argued that the interface involving an external cognitive domain (e.g., syntax-discourse) requires more processing than a linguistic sub-components interface (e.g., syntax-semantics) (Sorace 2011).

However, previous studies of acquisition of Japanese passives by both L1 and L2 learners have shown contrary results, with the niyotte passive, which does not involve an external interface, being acquired later than the other two passives, which are discourse dependent (Harada & Fukuda 1998 for L1; Hara 2002 for L2). These results may be attributed to syntax derivation or frequency of use. The niyotte passive is derived by movement, while the other two are base-generated. The complexity of the syntactic derivation may delay the acquisition. Also, usage of niyotte passive is usually limited to formal speech or written texts.

Acquisition of Japanese passives will allow us to analyse the factors that play a crucial role, and which may be a burden to acquisition. In order to investigate these factors, two tasks will be employed: 1) acceptability judgement task; 2) self-paced listening task. The former will investigate knowledge of each type of Japanese passives by heritage speakers and L2 learners. The latter will allow us to test whether there are any differences in the processing of different types of passives; i.e. whether the passives with external interface are harder for L2 learners and heritage speakers to process. A control group of native speakers will be tested to compare their results to those of the two experimental groups, which will lead to find out whether heritage speakers have similar knowledge and processing patterns to the control group than their counterparts due to their early exposure to the language.

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Anxiety in interaction-driven L2 learning: A Dynamic Systems approach

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Keywords: Emotions in SLA, Interaction, Dynamic systems

Abstract:

Learning a second language (L2) is both a cognitive and emotional process (Swain, 2013). At the core of the emotion process is the approach-avoidance appraisal of a stimulus, which gives L2 learners energy and direction to act in real-time interactions with the environment. Even though a large body of interaction research has investigated the role of language input and output, and of interlocutors' feedback in different contexts, looking at cognitive processes, the affective dimension of interaction-driven L2 learning has not yet been delved into. This project furthers interaction research by empirically investigating, with a Dynamic Systems perspective, how different learners' affective factors (i.e. anxiety) impact what they are willing and able to listen and attend to and what they produce in negotiation-generating tasks. A total of 24 learners of L2 Italian carry out two task-based interactions with a native and a nonnative speaker. They subsequently re-watch their interactions and rate, through a software, how anxiety rises and falls during interaction (Idio-dynamic rating, MacIntyre, 2012). The triangulation of data from questionnaires (trait variables), language tasks, real-time ratings of emotions (state variables), and interviews aims at providing a comprehensive description of how the emergence and development of emotions (i.e. language anxiety) can impact how learners notice feedback and learn from L2 interactions. Findings will have pedagogical implications on possible strategies for both L2 learners and teachers to manage emotions in interaction-based L2 learning, so that affective factors are channeled to foster L2 development.

Musical expertise facilitates word learning in children

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Keywords: musical expertise, auditory perception, speech perception, word learning, foreign language, auditory working and short term memory, auditory attention

Abstract:

Learning a language and playing music may engage similar domain-general mechanisms. Word learning, for example, requires sound perception and discrimination, attention, association of concepts to speech sounds and storing of associations in memory – a multi-functional task relying on processes that are also required when playing an instrument. Moreover, there is evidence for overlapping brain regions involved in language and music processing and that musicianship positively impacts on the neuronal networks underlying these processes. Based on these previous findings, the aim of the present study was to determine whether music training positively influences word learning and to specify the spatio-temporal dynamics and neurobiological basis of such transfer effects.

We compared children (8 to 11 year-old) with and without music training when learning the meaning of new auditory words through a series of experiments: first an identification task of 6 syllables, some belonging to the French phonemic repertory (e.g., Ba, Pa) and others not (e.g., Baa, Pha), second a training session in which each syllable was associated to a picture, third a matching task with correct and incorrect picture-syllable (word) associations and finally a semantic task to test for generalization to new pictures. We recorded the Event-Related Potentials (ERPs) to examine the N1 component, related to auditory perception and attention, the N2 component, related to categorization, the N4 component, considered as the brain signature of lexical and semantic processing, and the Late Positive Component (LPC), taken as a marker of episodic memory traces, context updating and decision-related processes.

Clearly, results showed that music training facilitated syllabic identification; this influence was larger for syllables that did not belong to the French phonemic repertory, thereby supporting the idea that musical expertise may benefit second language acquisition. All children were able to learn the meaning of new words in the short time of the experiment (i.e., 2 hours). Importantly, children with music training learned the new words more efficiently than children without music training, as shown by higher level of performance in the matching and semantic tasks. These results were also evident in faster and stronger brain plasticity in "musicians" than in control children: fronto-centrally distributed N2 and N4 in the training session, indicating word-categorization and association processes shifting to parietal N2 and N4 effects in the matching and semantic tasks, reflecting access to semantic memory networks.

Taken together, these results demonstrate fast and strong neural plasticity in the child brain and highlight the influence of musical training on speech perception as well as on higher cognitive functions, so that enhanced auditory perception and attention with music training is associated with better phonological representations, memory and word learning. Of specific interest is the potential of active music training to boost neural mechanisms underlying language-related skills, which are critical for children's education and for language acquisition, not only of the mother tongue but also of foreign languages.

L'ACQUISITION DE LA COMPÉTENCE DISCURSIVE EN SITUATION PLURILINGUE: Implications pour la didactique du FLE au Nigeria

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Keywords: Plurilinguisme, oralité, rhétorique, compétence discursive, argumentation, FLE, linguistique textuelle, Production écrite

Abstract:

L'objet de notre thèse est d'étudier comment la situation plurilingue est impliquée dans le processus d'apprentissage et d'acquisition du français langue étrangère au Nigéria. Nous nous intéressons plus particulièrement à l'acquisition d'une compétence discursive en FLE chez des étudiants universitaires à travers le genre d'écrit argumentatif.

Nous partons de l'hypothèse est que l'expérience culturelle/plurilingue pourrait jouer un rôle important dans le processus d'apprentissage et d'acquisition d'une compétence discursive de français en tant que langue étrangère chez ces étudiants. Il est vrai que les linguistes attestent une reconnaissance explicite de l'importance du contexte sociolinguistique/culturel dans l'acquisition d'une langue étrangère, (Donahue (2000), Leoni (1993), Wlassof (1998) et Takagaki (2002) mais nous voulons vérifier ce constat en étudiant la situation d'étudiants nigérians, particulièrement ceux en FLE.

Dans le but de comprendre comment les étudiants acquièrent une compétence discursive à travers la rédaction des textes argumentatifs, nous voulons prendre en compte non seulement les grandes théories d'argumentation, de la cohérence textuelle, et de la didactique d'écrit, comme nous avons fait dans notre étude antérieure mais aussi tenir compte des mécanismes et stratégies discursifs que ces étudiants ont déjà acquis dans leur situation plurilingue au niveau de la rhétorique et l'oralité africaine.

La place de la langue maternelle déjà acquise par un apprenant lors de l'apprentissage d'une langue étrangère a occupé plusieurs réflexions de tous ceux qui s'intéressent aux langues et à sa didactique. On peut, dans un premier temps, décider d'ignorer ce « déjà-là » ou d'en tenir compte; on peut ensuite, si l'on accepte de reconnaitre la réalité de sa présence, tenter de l'évacuer de la classe de langue étrangère à cause de ses effets « négatifs » sur la langue cible, ou on peut, à l'inverse, s'appuyer sur les acquis des apprentissages de la langue maternelle pour accéder à une langue étrangère (Castellotti, 2001:7). Pour nous, ce « déjà-la » représente les stratégies discursives inhérentes dans les traditions africaines orales qui peuvent être transférées par des apprenants dans l'acquisition d'une langue étrangère.

Suivant ce raisonnement, à l'aide de notre corpus, nous tenterons de montrer que les compétences langagières dont font preuve ces étudiants en situation de plurilinguisme, notamment dans leur façon de raisonner à travers des textes argumentatifs, reflètent le mode de raisonnement et la logique de l'espace culturel d'où ils proviennent. Après une observation rapide de ces productions écrites de ces étudiants on se rend compte qu'il y a déjà des compétences discursives à l'œuvre dans ces productions. Quelques précédés oraux qu'emploient les étudiants sont: le dialogue, les métaphores culturelles, la répétition, des questions rhétoriques, appel et réponse. Nous pensons qu'au lieu d'invalider les productions argumentatives de ces étudiants, qui semblent ne pas respecter les normes occidentales du genre argumentatif, ces compétences pourraient être utiles dans l'acquisition des compétences discursives en FLE. Ainsi, ces compétences déjà acquises serviraient de tremplin vers l'acquisition d'une meilleure compétence discursive en situation d'apprentissage d'une nouvelle langue. Une didactique du FLE en situation plurilingue pourrait s'appuyer sur ces stratégies discursives.

L'influence de l'input orthographique sur l'apprentissage de l'oral en LE: une remédiation aux problèmes de prononciation?

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Keywords: Interface oral/écrit, FLE, Phonologie, Production écrite, Psycholinguistique

Abstract:

La recherche en FLES n'octroie généralement aucune place au rôle de l'écrit dans l'apprentissage de l'oral en L2, reléguant la réflexion à la notion de surdité phonologique (Billières, 2005; Dupoux & Peperkamp, 2002). Or, des études récentes en L1 et en L2 montrent que les habiletés écrites peuvent modifier la compétence phonologique des sujets (Bürki et al., 2012; Chevrot et al., 2000; Erdener & Burnham, 2005; Showalter & Hayes-Harb, 2013; Soum-Favaro et al., 2014).

Notre hypothèse est qu'un entrainement écrit améliore la qualité des représentations phonologiques des apprenants et facilite l'accès à une production orale normée (Rapp et al., 2002).

Pour l'évaluer, nous analysons un corpus préliminaire d'écrits d'apprenants arabophones de niveau débutant afin d'identifier les phonèmes posant des problèmes de transcription pour bâtir les stimuli expérimentaux du protocole. Il comporte trois phases successives : prétest, test et posttest. Dans la phase de test, les sujets sont répartis en trois groupes : le groupe 1 est entrainé en modalité orale avec la Méthode Verbo-Tonale d'intégration phonétique ; le groupe 2 est entrainé en modalité écrite à travers des tâches de lecture et de copie ; le groupe 3 est un groupe contrôle qui ne suit aucun entrainement. Le matériel expérimental se compose (a) de stimuli sonores comportant les phonèmes à problème identifiés dans le corpus préliminaire pour le groupe 1 (b) des mêmes stimuli transcrits en code écrit pour les tâches du groupe 2. Les phases de prétest et de posttest évaluent la conscience phonologique, de façon à mesurer le bénéfice des entrainements des tests.

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L'acquisition d'une L2 : le français chez les jeunes enfants de migrants.

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Keywords: Bilinguisme précoce, Acquisition, Enfants de migrants, Ecole

Abstract:

La société française propose de plus en plus aux parents d'initier leurs jeunes enfants aux langues étrangères par le biais d'activités parascolaires le plus souvent ludiques mettant en avant tous les bienfaits avérés que le bilinguisme pourrait procurer à l'enfant (Kihlstedt, 2013). Je souhaiterais, ici, m'interroger sur l'apprentissage du français comme deuxième/troisième langue d'acquisition chez les jeunes enfants de migrants, langue à laquelle ils sont confrontés à leur entrée à l'école maternelle. Quelles différences et similarités trouve-t-on dans le développement du lexique des enfants monolingues, bilingues simultanés et bilingues successifs ? Quelle formation et quels outils sont mis à la disposition des maîtres qui accueillent des enfants allophones dans les classes de maternelle pour favoriser l'acquisition du français?

Je m'appuierai sur deux cas particuliers :

  - Ya[1] est une jeune Espagnole qui est arrivée en France à l'âge de 1;10 et qui est restée dans un environnement essentiellement hispanophone et arabophone jusqu'à son entrée en maternelle à l'âge de 2;10.

  - Ham est un jeune Gorani né en France mais n'ayant eu jusqu'à son entrée à l'école maternelle à l'âge de 2;09 que de très rares contacts avec le français. La langue parlée dans son entourage est exclusivement le goranski et il n'a jamais fréquenté la crèche.

Je me propose de comparer leur acquisition du français à celle d'enfants du même âge participant à mon projet doctoral. Ces enfants ont pour langue de première socialisation le français puisqu'ils grandissent dans des familles soit monolingues françaises, soit bilingues parlant le français et une autre langue, ou encore non francophones où l'enfant a fréquenté dès le plus jeune âge des lieux de socialisation de langue française. Pour y parvenir, j'utiliserai un corpus longitudinal comprenant, d'une part, des enregistrements mensuels faits au domicile de l'enfant et, d'autre part, des questionnaires trimestriels remplis par les parents et permettant de rendre compte du lexique de l'enfant dans les langues qu'il parle.

Les témoignages d'enseignants recueillis lors d'entretiens semi-directifs me permettront de faire un état des lieux sur l'accueil réservé aux enfants allophones en classes de maternelle et de mieux connaître leurs pratiques vis-à-vis de ce public.

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[1] Dans cette étude, par respect des familles, j'ai rendu anonymes les enfants.

L'acquisition du français des élèves alloglottes nés en France : Français langue première, co-première ou seconde ?

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Keywords: français, élèves alloglottes nés en France.

Abstract:

Notre communication porte sur le problème de la maitrise de la langue française des élèves alloglottes nés en France (EANF ; Tran Min Thao, 2009), des élèves qui ont accès à une autre langue que le français à la maison. Les recherches en didactique du Français Langue Seconde (FLS) établissent souvent un parallèle entre les élèves alloglottes nés en France et les Elèves Allophones Nouvellement Arrivés à l'école (EANA), préconisant en outre, l'enseignement du FLS pour ces derniers. Martine Chomentowski (2010) affirme que les difficultés scolaires que peut avoir un élève alloglotte né en France ne peuvent « se résoudre sans l'apprentissage du français, en privilégiant si possible l'accès par le biais de 'français langue seconde' ».

Les évaluations de l'enquête PISA de 2003 indiquent que les élèves qui parlent à la maison une autre langue que celle de l'école ont de moins bons résultats scolaires. L'analyse d'évaluations départementales d'élèves de CP, menée sur deux années de Master, révèle que les élèves alloglottes nés en France obtiennent les scores les plus faibles en français et en mathématiques. Ces constats confirment la conception dominante parmi les enseignants et conduisent à plusieurs interrogations dont l'une essentielle visant à étudier la problématique des difficultés spécifiques des élèves alloglottes nés en France dans l'apprentissage du français.

Le recueil de données que nous avons réalisé – film de classe, productions écrites, questionnaires et tests – permet d'effectuer des analyses didactiques comparatives des difficultés des élèves à plusieurs niveaux (EANF/EANA, EANF/élève non alloglotte). Ces analyses offriront la possibilité de nous interroger, dans le cadre de l'atelier doctoral, sur l'acquisition du français pour les élèves alloglottes nés en France comme langue première, co-première (Romain, 2007) ou seconde.

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A comparison of primary school students in Germany learning English as a second language with students learning English as third language

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Abstract:

It is a primary objective of the European Commission that multilingual competences receive an emphasis in a globalized world. Early teaching of at least two foreign languages is seen as a priority for Member States in order to promote positive attitudes towards other languages and cultures. Primary students with a migration background exhibit and incorporate these multilingual and multicultural competences in German schools. However, their multilingual abilities are regarded on a cline from being a resource to being an interference in the language learning process by supporters and critics of early foreign language learning in primary schools (Bundesregierung 2007). In addition, research studies on foreign language acquisition of children with a migration background have so far been inconclusive. In order to inform this discussion, further evidence needs to be collected. Therefore, the aim of this study is to compare students learning English as a second or third language and their acquisition of receptive morphosyntactic and lexical skills. In a longitudinal study, approximately 500 young learners will be tested at the end of 3rd grade and at the end of 4th grade. In this group are monolingual German students learning English as an L2 and also multilingual learners of German as an L2 and English as an L3 (n = ca. 100) from different L1 backgrounds. The research questions will be as follows:

1. Do mono- and multilingual learners of English differ from each other with regard to their receptive morphosyntactic and lexical skills in German primary schools?

2. How do multilingual learners' L2 (German) and L3 (English) develop in their receptive morphosyntactic and lexical skills?

This paper presents the pilot study of the project previously described. In the pilot study, the receptive L3 English competences were assessed using the BPVS III (Dunn et al. 1997) and the ELIAS Grammar Test II (Kersten et al. n.d.), receptive L3 German lexical skills were tested with the WWT 6-10 (Glück 2011) and the morphosyntactic skills with the TROG-D (Fox 2006). The initial results of the pilot study show that multilingual learners reach the same proficiency levels in their L3 as monolingual learners. However, the pilot study cannot give any evidence of the development of the multilinguals' L2 and L3; this will be a focus in the longitudinal study.

In the workshop, it will be helpful to discuss the focus of the research questions as well as methodological considerations pertaining to data analysis.

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An empirical investigation of L1 and L2 language proficiency: the case of lexical competence in B1 listening and speaking activities

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Abstract:

Vocabulary knowledge is a key predictor of listening and speaking success in a foreign language. On the basis of foreign language learners' performance on vocabulary measures, it is possible to classify them into language proficiency levels, as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The language-neutral CEFR is a highly influential document for educational language policy in Europe. It describes communicative language activities and competences and links them to six levels of language proficiency (from A1 to C2). However, the CEFR has been criticized for not being underpinned by a language proficiency theory and for being empirically insufficiently validated. In general, the relationship between communicative language activities described by CEFR, especially in the domain of listening and speaking, and language competences, more specifically lexical competence, has been little investigated neither for native speakers nor for foreign language learners.

The aim of this project is to provide empirical evidence for the concept of native speakers' and foreign language learners' language proficiency by focusing on French lexical competence in listening and speaking activities as described by the CEFR for the B1 level. To make this theoretical aim possible, we will develop a mixed method approach (corpus-based and rater-based), integrating contextualized frequency counts. We will collect existing subtitle corpora and spoken native speaker language corpora. This approach will result in (semi)-authentic spoken French language of native speakers to which learners will be exposed when engaging in communicative activities related to the B1 CEFR-level.

Specifically, this PhD project consists of four studies. First we will determine which vocabulary native speakers use in communicative activities at the B1 CEFR-level. Next, we will test Jan Hulstijn's language proficiency theory by empirically validating his concept of Basic Language Cognition. Hulstijn argues that there will be hardly any lexical variability between native speakers with different educational backgrounds when engaging in Basic Language Cognition activities. Hulstijn hypothesizes that Basic Language Cognition comes close to the B1 CEFR-level, which explains our focus on this level. Once native speakers' shared vocabulary has been identified, it is possible to determine how much lexical knowledge should be minimally attainable by French-as-a-foreign-language learners in B1 communicative situations. The last two studies will thus determine the vocabulary French-as-a-foreign-language learners need to successfully perform B1 listening (study 3) and speaking (study 4) activities.

The findings of this project will make a substantial and innovative contribution to language proficiency theories and Second Language Acquisition theories. Moreover, this project contributes to methodological innovation in Second Language Acquisition research by adopting a mixed method approach that uses contextualized corpus frequency. Finally, the findings will have a significant impact on European and national educational policy, textbooks, and language testing practices.

An empirical investigation of LI and L2 language proficiency: the case of lexical competence in English listening and speaking activities at B1 CEFR level

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Abstract:

Vocabulary knowledge is a key predictor of listening and speaking success in a foreign language. On the basis of foreign language learners' performance on vocabulary measures, it is possible to classify them into language proficiency levels, as defined by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The language-neutral CEFR is a highly influential document for educational language policy in Europe. It describes communicative language activities and competences and links them to six levels of language proficiency (from A1 to C2). However, the CEFR has been criticized for not being underpinned by a language proficiency theory and for being empirically insufficiently validated. In general, the relationship between communicative language activities described by CEFR, especially in the domain of listening and speaking, and language competences, more specifically lexical competence, has been little investigated neither for native speakers nor for foreign language learners.

The aim of this project is to provide empirical evidence for the concept of native speakers' and foreign language learners' language proficiency by focusing on English lexical competence in listening and speaking activities as described by the CEFR for the B1 level. To make this theoretical aim possible, we will develop a mixed method approach (corpus-based and rater-based), integrating contextualized frequency counts. We will collect existing subtitle corpora and spoken native speaker language corpora. This approach will result in (semi)-authentic spoken English of native speakers to which learners will be exposed when engaging in communicative activities related to the B1 CEFR-level.

Specifically, this PhD project consists of four studies. First we will determine which vocabulary native English speakers use in communicative activities at the B1 CEFR-level. Next, we will test Jan Hulstijn's language proficiency theory by empirically validating his concept of Basic Language Cognition. Hulstijn argues that there will be hardly any lexical variability between native speakers with different educational backgrounds when engaging in Basic Language Cognition activities. Hulstijn hypothesizes that Basic Language Cognition comes close to the B1 CEFR-level, which explains our focus on this level. Once native speakers' shared vocabulary has been identified, it is possible to determine how much lexical knowledge should be minimally attainable by English-as-a-foreign-language learners in B1 communicative situations. The last two studies will thus determine the vocabulary English-as-a-foreign-language learners need to successfully perform B1 listening (study 3) and speaking (study 4) activities.

The findings of this project will make a substantial and innovative contribution to language proficiency theories and Second Language Acquisition theories. Moreover, this project contributes to methodological innovation in Second Language Acquisition research by adopting a mixed method approach that uses contextualized corpus frequency. Finally, the findings will have a significant impact on European and national educational policy, textbooks, and language testing practices.

Transferability as a predictive factor for crosslinguistic influence

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Keywords: Transferability, Multilingualism, Third Language Acquisition, Transfer, Transfer strategies, Crosslinguistic influence

Abstract:

A number of studies have shown that the source language of transfer can be related to factors such as proficiency, L2 status, recency, and psychotypology. These factors have proven especially relevant for spoken data, as shown in an earlier, quantitative study (Neuser, 2015) on transfer in TLA. This study looked at lexical transfer into L4 English from Luxemburgish, German and French among 14-year-olds in Luxemburg. The suggested model correctly predicted over 10% fewer outcomes for the written data as compared to the spoken data. Proficiency and exposure in particular were better predictors in speaking than writing. Both these factors may lead to greater activation and thus accessibility, which is more relevant for spoken production than written due to its spontaneous nature, the need for faster processing and reduced monitoring. These results thus suggest that other factors may be at play during writing.

Writing is a more controlled process, allowing time to think, to scan all available options and to make a careful decision in choosing the best possible lexical item. Kellerman (1978) describes the learner as an active decision-maker on what linguistic structures may be transferable, while Bouvy (2000) discusses the importance of item-specific markedness of a potentially transferable item. She found that her Dutch learners of English were more reluctant to transfer [Dutch] bezuinigen than [Dutch] sparen (both mean "to save money" in English). That is, she observed a preference for non-marked items that require fewer changes, i.e. less foreignising. During a picture naming task in a previous pilot study, also in Luxemburg, a similar pattern was identified. Learners had acquired three other languages prior to English and so had multiple sources to draw from. While no consistent pattern was found per student, i.e. a preference for a particular source language, some items elicited 80% transfer from one of the three available source languages from all students. While Bouvy's (2000) findings, were within-language only, the results from this picture naming task may indicate that this process is also at work across languages.

One promising direction for future research could thus be the investigation of whether potential transfer items are scanned across languages and compared for their level of markedness as an integral part of transfer strategies. While Kellerman (1978) used acceptability judgments for the transfer of expressions and a lexical decision task on the acceptability of specific items has been piloted, other reliable means of testing and measuring transferability still need to be established. Focus groups, stimulated recalls, and think-aloud protocols may provide valuable insight into the selection process, while carefully selected stimuli seem essential in determining the degree of markedness governing a particular choice. Conducting the study in Luxembourg, where students have acquired three typologically related languages before learning English (Luxembourgish, German, and French), allows for a broad range of pairings of marked vs. unmarked items, thus producing more reliable results. Furthermore, using young informants aged 13-14, during their second year of English instruction, may solidify previous results of increased crosslinguistic awareness, apparent even in young multilingual learners.

Ambiguity between closely related languages and its influence on second language acquisition: a corpus-based study of native and learner Finnish

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Keywords: ambiguity, verb, cross, linguistic influence

Abstract:

It is widely accepted that learners exhibit systematic differences based on different L1 and L2 configurations. In closely related languages, due to extensive formal and semantic similarity, the L1 influence is mainly positive. Nevertheless, different patterns in L1 and L2 may cause negative L1 influence as well (Ringbom 2007). According to the structural-contrastive theory, cases in which one L1 phenomenon corresponds to one L2 phenomenon are the easiest to acquire. The most difficult are the L2 phenomena not found in L1, and those in which the L1 phenomenon corresponds to many different L2 counterparts.

Although the Estonian and Finnish languages are closely related, the Estonian verb minema 'go' and Finnish verb mennä 'go' have developed in different directions. In Finnish two separate and parallel paradigms remain: mennä: menen 'to go: I go' and lähteä: lähden 'to start to go, to leave: I start to go, I leave'. In Estonian the two verbs collapse into one paradigm with complementary distribution: minema: lähen 'to go: I go'. These typologically interesting paradigms are challenging for Estonian learners of Finnish, causing problems both in learning and in use of the second language. The verbs mennä and lähteä thus present a unique opportunity to study the influence of an ambiguity on second language acquisition.

The research questions addressed in this study are the following: 1) how and in what contexts do the Estonian learners of Finnish use mennä- and lähteä-verbs, 2) whether and how does the use of lähteä and mennä vary on proficiency levels A2-C1, 3) whether and how does the learner use of lähteä- and mennä-verbs differ from their use in the native corpus. The theoretical framework of the research is based on three dimensions of language proficiency: complexity, accuracy and fluency (Housen, Kuiken 2009) which can be analyzed by DEMfad model (Martin et al 2010). In this study, as in the DEMfad model, the number of lähteä- and mennä-verbs per 1000 tokens of running text is used as an overall measure of fluency. Accuracy is seen as the number of target-like expressions in comparison with native Finnish; distribution is used as a cover term for complexity in traditional sense as well as for variability. To explore the L1 influence, the unified methodological framework of Jarvis (2000: 249-261,) and the Three-Phase Comparative Analysis earlier tested in translation studies (Jantunen 2004) are used. The data is selected from the Estonian subcorpus of the International Corpus of Learner Finnish (ICLFI). Learner language is compared on the native Finnish corpus and on the multi-source-language subcorpus of ICLFI where none of the source languages is dominant, so it can be seen as a source of representative data for learner Finnish in general.

I look forward to receiving guidance from the doctoral student workshop on the usefulness of the methodology chosen to my study the influence of an ambiguity on second language acquisition.

Lexicogrammatical profile of Estonian as a second language on the B1 and B2 level

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Keywords: Estonian as second language, B1 and B2 level, writing performances, lexicogrammatical profile

Abstract:

In Estonia as in the whole European Union the CEFR is used as the basis for determining second language proficiency. In the CEFR the language levels are described in the "can do" style and these detailed descriptions can be applied to all languages. However, curriculum writers, the authors of study materials, the assessors of language proficiency, the language teachers and learners also need more language specific information about vocabulary, phrases and constructions which are important to communicate successfully on particular levels of the language proficiency. In Estonia the first step in specification of the language levels has been taken: the language level descriptions are compiled and published.There the preliminary description of vocabulary and grammatical constructions essential for expressing language functions and general concepts in different language levels is presented, but it still based more on intuition and experience than on the scientific researches. Therefore there are need for specific scientific researches, which can give useful information for Estonian language practicians and also can develop the understanding SLA in general.

In my doctoral thesis I will examine the lexicogrammatical profile of B1 and B2 writing performances in Estonian as a second language, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The study is carried out on a sub-corpora of Estonian Interlanguage Corpus which contains written B1 (27 412 tokens) and B2 level (22 128 tokens) examination papers of Estonian as a second language.

The theoretical framework of my research is based on three dimensions of language proficiency: complexity, accuracy and fluency (Housen et al 2012). In addition the DEMfad model (Franceschina, Alanen, Huhta & Martin, 2006) concepts are used: domain, emergence mastery, frequency, accuracy, distribution.

The main research questions are:

   - Which lexicogrammatical constructions are typical in the writing performances at B1 level and which at B2 level.

   - How does language proficiency (complexity and accuracy) develop from B1 level to B2 level?

In the process of investigation the corpus-driven approach has been used. By using the programm Simple Concordancer two lists has been compiled for both levels (B1 and B2): the vocabulary forms frequency list and the concordances list. The tokens which frequency is 5 and more have been then selected, grouped by morphological forms and compared between B1 and B2 level. I have already found out that one distinguish criteria between levels is use of conditional mood. I have compiled detailed description of using conditional mood in both levels.

In next study phases I am going to analyze lexicogrammatical profile of core verbs (tegema 'do, make', tulema 'come', minema 'go', käima 'go, walk', saama 'get, receive", võtma 'take', andma 'give', panema 'put') and compare results of B1 and B2 levels.

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A Typological View on Subordination in Second Language Development. A Case Study on Swedish as a Second Language.

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Abstract:

In the area of Second language acquisition (SLA), subordination is often linked to complexity (see for instance Norris & Ortega, 2009). Only at late stages of development, language learners are assumed to learn relations between clauses and structures that go across clause boundaries. Although subordination ratio is commonly used as a measure for complexity, this has recently been criticized (Norris & Ortega, 2009; Bulté & Housen 2012; Baten & Håkansson, 2015). Baten & Håkansson (2015) for example, argue that not subordination ratio is important in analysing language development, but rather the internal structure of subordinate clauses. In the current paper it will be suggested that it should also be taken into account that subordination and coordination are often presented as two strictly binary phenomena, even though typologists have shown that they can be seen as more gradual phenomena or as a continuum (see for instance Lehmann 1988, Croft 2001, Givón 2001, Cristofaro 2003). The aim of this study is to analyze subordination as a more gradual phenomenon in the development of language learners, by investigating various types of subordination in the broadest sense. The study is carried out within the framework of Construction Grammar.

In this case-study, longitudinal data from 25 Dutch speaking learners of Swedish as a Foreign Language are analyzed, starting from absolute beginners level. The data consists of free written assignments that are obtained at eight different points in time, over a time span of 1,5 years. In these texts, the use of coordinate clauses, various types of subordinate clauses and various structures in between, such as infinitival complement clauses and pseudo-coordination are examined. Based on the data, it is shown that subordination ratio indeed is too superficial a measure to determine complexity or learner development. The type of subordination and the semantic and syntactic bond between and within clauses and phrases are also important to take into account in order to arrive at a more nuanced view of complexity and learner development.

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of complexity. Applied Linguistics , 30, 555 – 578.

Towards a framework of fluency resources: examining how learners keep the flow of talk going

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Abstract:

In SLA research, fluency is viewed as one measurable aspect of L2 proficiency that includes smoothness and effortlessness of speech (see Lennon 1990). The majority of L2 fluency studies analyze fluency-related features (e.g. pausing and repair) from speech samples quantitatively, whereas qualitative approaches are rare. To address this gap in research, I included a complementary qualitative analysis in the first substudy of my doctoral research. The analysis of contexts and functions of filled pauses and repetitions showed that certain high-fluency subjects used these so-called disfluency markers for avoiding long pauses and maintaining the flow of talk, that is, for enhancing fluency. A purely frequency-based analysis of these features is therefore not likely to reveal their full role in fluent speech.

The aim of my doctoral dissertation is to create a new framework for comprehensive L2 fluency analysis, highlighting the importance of examining resources that can be used for keeping up fluency.Filled pauses and repetitions are viewed as potential stalling mechanisms that are used for coping with processing time pressure (following Dörnyei & Kormos 1998). In addition, I examine the link between communication strategies (CSs) and fluency, combining two separate research fields. I argue that CSs can also be viewed as potential resources for keeping the flow of talk going, since they aid in overcoming troubles mainly related to lexis. The dissertation offers significant methodological implications for L2 fluency research, but also for other fields, including L2 assessment and L2 teaching.

A novel research design was created for exploring the framework empirically. Two groups of students participated in the second substudy of the doctoral dissertation: 9th grade students (15–16-year-olds, N=20) and upper secondary school students (17–18-year-olds, N=18). The purpose of the study is to examine both individual and group level differences in the use of fluency resources. The majority of fluency studies examine monologue data, while little is known about how fluency is maintained in interaction. Therefore, the main task in the study was a pair task, where the subjects had to rank items in the order of usefulness for survival on a desert island. A stimulated recall interview was conducted one day after the pair task to increase the reliability of CS analysis. Furthermore, the subjects performed two monologue tasks: in L1 Finnish to get information about their individual fluency profile and in L2 English to get a long enough speech sample from each subject for fluency analysis. They also completed a vocabulary test (LexTALE) that provided information about their general proficiency level.

Discussion on the following questions would be particularly helpful: 1) What would be the best methods, including statistical methods, for analyzing the materials? 2) Do the materials seem sufficient for exploring the proposed framework?

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The effect of IQ and personality traits on L2 oral fluency

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Keywords: L2 acquisition, L1 fluency, L2 fluency, intelligence, personality

Abstract:

Personality plays a major role in influencing human behaviour (Eysenck, 1994). Intelligence has similarly been shown to influence everyday competence (e.g., accomplishing tasks like banking (Gottfredson, 1997)), academic and job performance (e.g., Schmidt & Hunter, 1998), and various important social characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic status; Jensen, 1998). It is thus surprising that research investigating the effect of intelligence and personality on second language (L2) acquisition is limited, particularly compared to work on other individual differences (e.g., motivation). The present study fills this gap by examining the role of intelligence and the Big Five personality traits (extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness to experience, and neuroticism; e.g., McCrae & Costa, 2003) in English-speaking learners' L2 acquisition of French fluency. A high degree of inter-learner variability has been observed in the mastery of L2 fluency (e.g., Dewaele, 2002). This is due to the complexity of this phenomenon, which is conditioned by several variables, many of which correlate with both intelligence (e.g., working memory capacity) and personality traits (e.g., amount of input received and output produced; short-term memory capacity and language anxiety). A study of the effects of these two variables is thus warranted.

My doctoral research addresses five lacunae in previous fluency research. First, although intelligence has received much attention in psychology and correlates with various basic cognitive tasks (e.g., Deary, 2000), L2 fluency studies have largely ignored its potential influence. Second, personality research has looked almost exclusively extraversion's effect on L2 fluency (e.g., Dewaele & Furnham, 2000), neglecting the other four personality variables. Third, some researchers suggest that the knowledge required for L1 and L2 fluency differs (e.g., Towell & Dewaele, 2005), while others propose that learners who are more fluent in their L1 are also more fluent in their L2 (Raupach, 1980). It is therefore crucial that fluency be studied in both languages to control for the possibility that fluency is a stable construct. Fourth, in previous studies, measures of fluency have sometimes been limited. For example, Dewaele & Furnham (2000) only included 'er' among their learners' hesitations, ignoring pauses, fillers, and other hesitation markers. Finally, previous L2 fluency studies have not always effectively controlled for or operationalized important learner variables (e.g., known languages, proficiency). For example, Ghapanchi, Khajavy & Asadpour (2011) used learners' self-evaluations as the measure of target language proficiency.

In this presentation, I discuss a study designed to address these weaknesses that examines the influence of intelligence, personality, and L1 fluency on the L2 spoken fluency of 100 low-advanced learners using 6 temporal/hesitation measures (i. speech rate; speech runs that are ii. hesitation-free, iii. filler-free, iv. fluent, v. repetition-free, and vi. grammatical-repair-free; Freed, Segalowitz & Dewey, 2004). Two elicited production tasks (picture-narration, and sentence inversion), which differ in syntactic and lexical complexity, serve to obtain speech samples. Proficiency is measured via standardized proficiency tests, personality traits using the Big Five Aspect Scale Test (DeYoung, Quilty & Peterson, 2007). Finally, a short form of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (Wechsler, 1981) measures IQ. Data is analyzed via multiple regressions.

Longitudinal Analysis of Teacher Guided Planning With Form-Focus on Learners' Speaking Proficiency: A relationship between CAF and Human ratings.

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Keywords: TBLT, CAF, Pre, task planning, Focus on form

Abstract:

This research explores the effects of guided pre-task planning on the development of Japanese university students' oral performance. In task-based language teaching (TBLT), developing speaking proficiency often can be one of major learning goals. In spite of the movement toward a communicative approach of language instruction, there is still misunderstanding that attention to form in TBLT is limited. One way to balance communication and grammar in TBLT is to add form-focus instruction to the tasks. In this study, pre-task planning is implemented to help learners improve their accuracy.

Another problem in the field of TBLT is that speaking proficiency has often been measured using the Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency (CAF) framework. However, very few researchers have discussed successful achievement of communicative goals although most researchers have used communicative tasks. Therefore, adequacy can be seen as a separate dimension alongside CAF measurements. Based on the two problems, this current study examines: 1) the extent guided pre-task planning with form-focus will enhance students' longitudinal development on CAF and 2) relationships between CAF and human rating of students' oral performance.

The participants are approximately 70 first-year university students attending a private Japanese university in Japan. The 3/2/1 fluency activity is implemented in every class (week 1- week 14). In the 3/2/1 task, students talk about the same topic for 3 minutes, then 2 minutes, and finally 1 minute. When students talk for 2 minutes and 1 minutes, they keep speaking faster so that they can repeat the same talk within shorter time.

The participants are divided into three different groups. In every lesson, each group receives a different treatment prior to the 3/2/1 fluency activity. The first group is the control group. In this group, students do not engage in pre-task planning activity. Instead, the students start the 3/2/1 minute fluency tasks immediately. The second group is the planning group with a form-focus. The students receive a teacher-led planning handout focusing on linguistic formulaic form. The third group is that focusing on meaning groups. This group pays attention to the content of what they talk about rather than the form and organization. The participants brainstorm on a piece of blank paper about what they are going to say for four minutes by themselves. On the blank paper, they write English words or phrases so that it can look like a mind-mapping.

Data will be analyzed based on students' oral performance on three tests. Students will complete a monologic speaking test three times as Test 1 (Week 2), Test 2 (Week 8), and Test 3 (Week 14). One-way, repeated-measures MANOVA are used to analyze changes in fluency, accuracy and complexity. The independent variable is group (Three levels: Control group, Form-focus, Meaning-focus). The dependent variables are Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency. In order to answer a research question about the relationship between CAF and human ratings, trained native speakers will rate students' oral performance. A FACET analysis is conducted.

Attrition in geminate consonant production: evidence from Farsi-English speaking Iranian-Canadian bilinguals

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Keywords: Bilingualism, phonology, attrition, geminate

Abstract:

Phonological attrition as a result of language shift has been reported in the perception of geminate consonants by bilingual listeners (e.g., Celata and Cancila, 2010). However, no study has yet investigated attrition in the speech production of bilingual immigrant communities. In Farsi, consonant length has been reported as phonologically contrastive (e.g., [ajar] 'carat' contrasts with [aj:ar] 'brave'; Rafat, 2010). The current study focuses on the production of geminates in Farsi across three Farsi-English bilingual generations in Toronto, namely, first, second and 1.5 generations (cf., Rumbaut, 2004). Eleven participants whose ages ranged from 30-66 took part in the study. All participants completed a word-naming task in Farsi and a background questionnaire. Geminate and singleton durations were measured for sonorants /m,n,l,r,j/, fricatives /s,z,h/ and obstruents /p,t,k,b,d,q,tʃ,dʒ/ using Praat software (V.5.3.23). The preliminary acoustic analysis of 2463 tokens from the word-naming task suggests that the length contrast was categorically maintained in the first generation bilinguals, but not in the 1.5 and second generation groups. Moreover, when the data was collapsed across phonemes the following hierarchy was established with respect to the overall mean duration: control (159ms) > first generation (150ms) > second generation (126ms) > 1.5 generation (118ms). While the difference between the control group and the first generation group was not significant (p = 0.981), the results yielded a significant difference between the control group and the 1.5 generation (p = 0.037) and the control group and the second generation (p = 0.02). A hierarchy based on 'sound class' was also established by conducting a between-phoneme comparison of the mean durations: Sonorants > fricatives > obstruents. The importance of the factor 'sound class' as a predictor of degemination echoes the findings in L2 acquisition of Italian geminate consonants by German, English, and Mandarin learners (e.g., Sorianello, 2014) and degemination patterns across the languages of the world (e.g., Blevins, 2004; Steriade, 1982). Based on these findings, we propose that perceptual salience, articulatory difficulty and markedness condition geminate attrition in language contact situations.

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L2 acquisition of Default-to-Opposite-Edge stress: the case of Mongolian

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Keywords: default, to, opposite, edge stress, Mongolian, prosody, acquisition of stress, Universal Grammar, linguistic universals

Abstract:

Languages with Default-to-Opposite-Edge stress (conflicting directionality) provide phonologists with intriguing opportunities to investigate the options made available by UG, and have informed all major theories of stress (Hayes 1981, 1995, Prince 1983, Halle & Vergnaud 1987, Idsardi 1992, Kenstowicz 1995, Zoll 1997, among others). I investigate the L2 acquisition of one such language, Khalka Mongolian, where (i) primary stress falls on the rightmost nonfinal heavy syllable (see (1)), (ii) on the final heavy syllable if it is the only heavy syllable (see (2)), or (iii) if there are no heavy syllables, on the leftmost light syllable (see (3)) (Bosson 1964, Walker 1997). Given the additional Nonfinality effect, this is a system even more complicated than other languages displaying conflicting directionality, making Mongolian perhaps the most complex regularly stressed language. Therefore, on the surface, it looks like Mongolian is a Trochaic and Weight-Sensitive language, but a strange one in that End-Rule appears to be sometimes set to Left (1a,b), sometimes to Right (2a,b,d), and sometimes even to Middle (1c,d,f), and sometimes replaced by Leftmost-Wins (3c), a system that is linguistically impossible (see (4-5)), and crucially one that is, thus, ruled out by UG.

These problems, however, go away if initial (leftmost) stress in these languages is assumed to be intonational (footless) prominence (Gordon 2000, Özçelik 2014). This would mean that End-Rule is consistently set to Right in Mongolian (with final foot extrametricality), and End-Rule-Right is vacuously satisfied for cases with initial stress, as there is no foot available. However, since producing footless utterances in an L2 is a challenging task for learners with footed L1s (Özçelik 2011) and assuming thus that English-speaking learners of Mongolian will always produce footed outputs, Mongolian L2ers are forced to make UG-unconstrained assumptions, where End-Rule is sometimes set to Right, sometimes to Left and, even more surprisingly, sometimes to Middle (see (4)). However, if interlanguage grammars are constrained by UG, they would produce words that are consistent with either End-Rule-Left or End-Rule-Right only, despite the input.

In order to investigate these issues, a semi-controlled production experiment was conducted with English-speaking learners of L2 Mongolian (n=10), of various proficiency levels. The stimuli, composed of 180 words (all nouns), of various syllable structure profiles, were first uttered in isolation, and then in a carrier sentence (see (6)). Only the latter were transcribed and analyzed for acoustic measures (pitch, intensity, duration).

The results demonstrate that although the learners did not consistently produce words with target-like stress or intonation, they made various UG-constrained changes to their grammar, such as resetting End-Rule from Right to Left, in order to better accommodate the input (although this is not the value instantiated in the L2 and is different from the L1 setting, too). Crucially, none of the subjects had a Middle or 'variable' setting for this parameter, i.e. they had it set either to Left or Right. These findings provide evidence for the extension of the Strong UG Hypothesis proposed for L2 morphosyntax (e.g. Schwartz & Sprouse 1996; White 1989) to L2 phonology.

L2 acquisition of English sentence prosody by L1 Mandarin speakers

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Keywords: intonation, sentence, type, English, Mandarin

Abstract:

Recent findings suggest that access to contextual information affects the perception and production of L2 intonation [3]. Here we seek to determine to what extent increasing contextual information affects the perception and production of English statements, absolute yes-no questions (AQs) and declarative questions (DQs) by speakers of a tonal language (Mandarin). In Mandarin, AQs and DQs are syntactically identical; questions are marked by either a rising boundary tone and the presence of a sentence-final lexical marker (ma) or by the Verb-not-Verb structure [1]. When compared to English controls, learners are expected to (i) demonstrate more difficulty with questions than statements; (ii) produce a larger pitch range in the nuclear rise in questions; (iii) display larger differences in tasks with more contextual information.

We compared English controls (N=10) to L1 Mandarin advanced learners of English (N=15; AoA= 18.1; LoR=2.1) across perception and production experiments in which access to contextual information was manipulated. The former included a low-pass filter sentence identification task, a decontextualized sentence-identification task and a contextualized matching task. Production experiments involved a de-contextualized sentence-repetition task and a context-completion task. Mean accuracy rates and reaction times (RTs) were analysed for the perception data. For the production data, the first pitch accent (PA) and the nuclear contour (NC) (final PA plus boundary tone) were analysed acoustically (F0 changes).

Results revealed larger differences in production than in perception. In the repetition task, phonetic differences were restricted to the PA realization. Learners closely resembled controls but they displayed more frequent use of PAs, consistent with previous findings [4]. In the contextualized production task, L1 Mandarin speakers showed a larger pitch excursion in the realization of the NC than controls, both in AQs ($F(1,12)=22.6$; $p=.0001$) and DQs ($F(1,12)=26.7$; $p=.000$). In perception (against our predictions), groups did not significantly differ across tasks in mean accuracy rates but learners showed significantly longer RTs in the de-contextualized task ($F(1,20)=7.9$; $p=.005$).

As in previous studies [2], results revealed cross-linguistic influence in the realization of phonetic parameters in both types of questions (size of the F0 excursion in NCs), with larger differences in contextualized tasks. Thus, increasing contextual information affects perception and production differently. While no significant effects were observed in perception, groups showed larger differences in the realization of NCs in the contextualized task, and in the realization of PAs in the repetition task. The findings suggest that, as with segments, the acquisition of intonation is modelled by typological differences, contextual effects and the specific target structure to be acquired.

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'LOVE' and 'HATE': emotion available words in adolescent EFL learners' lexicons

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Keywords: Psycholinguistics and SLA, Lexicon, Semantic fluency, Emotion words, Gender

Abstract:

Emotions are part of human beings regardless of language, sex, age, or culture, but they are particularly important in adolescence, a period of life characterized by emotional upheavals, search for identity and romantic relationships (Larson, Clore and Wood 1999). Emotions are closely related to language and human conceptualization (Altarriba & Bauer 2004; Altarriba 2003; Kövecses 2000; Wierzbicka 1992); yet little has been done to investigate the vocabulary of emotions in adolescents, let alone foreign language learners of this age group. Certainly, there are the pioneering studies carried out by Dewaele 2010; Dewaele & Pavlenko 2002; Pavlenko 2005, 2002; Pavlenko and Diagrina 2007; but these scholars mainly focused on the use of emotion words in narratives by university students, most in second or multilingual language contexts rather than in foreign language contexts. Closely related to emotion vocabulary is the issue of gender as the above studies have shown women's tendency to use more emotion words than men. The present study focuses on adolescent English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners and looks at learners' emotion words in their mental lexicons rather than on their use of words.

A total of 21 adolescent (17-18 year-olds) EFL learners took part in this study, designed as a preliminary study within a large-scale investigation on the available emotion vocabulary of EFL learners. By means of a semantic fluency task consisting of two prompts related to emotions, LOVE and HATE, we aimed at getting insights into the learners' lexical output, i.e. first most available words, and semantic clusters. The total number of words retrieved by learners was 450. The preliminary findings showed: (i) a higher number of word responses for LOVE (277) compared to HATE (173); (ii) girls' tendency to outperform boys in the two prompts; (iii) idiosyncratic patterns in first word responses; (iv) common clusters in learners' word responses.

The findings are relevant for second language acquisition in what concerns vocabulary retrieval, vocabulary output and the effect of prompt and gender. In the first place, the higher number of words elicited by the prompt LOVE suggests a tendency to focus on positive rather than on negative emotions. In this regard, our results keep resemblance to the ones reported in L2 narrative studies as well as L1 psycholinguistic research. In the second place, learners' first word responses suggest the lack of a common available lexicon in the two prompts examined. Finally, the findings point to the existence of strong cultural beliefs related to the conception of LOVE and HATE held by adolescent EFL learners, although in the case of HATE this influence is weaker; in this respect, the words retrieved by learners in response to HATE remind us of personal stories rather than on common cultural experiences.

Use of verbs to name physical transformations at different levels of second language acquisition

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Keywords: second language acquisition, semantic approximations, verbs, palliative strategy, adults

Abstract:

We present a study in linguistics and psycholinguistics using a functionalist approach to the study of production of verbs by adults learning French as a second language. We investigate the production of semantic approximations such as ouvrir un fruit ('to open a fruit') for the action of peeling an orange that are also sometimes classified as metaphors or errors of overextension. Previous research has suggested that it is important to draw attention to lexical-semantic relations of verbs in second language acquisition in adults' speech, noting that there has been insufficient research in this. Viberg (2002) considered overextensions as errors and argued that learners of a second language produce many overextensions at earlier stages of acquisition. Although it has been hypothesized that this kind of error disappears at an advanced level and conventional usages may decrease as learners advance, evidence has not been collected from samples large enough to confirm this hypothesis. The objective of this paper is to investigate production of semantic approximations at different levels in French second language acquisition.

We used Duvignau and Gaume's (2004) APPROX protocol which contains 17 actions that are broadly similar to the 61 actions tested in Bohnemeyer, Bowerman and Brown's (2001) protocol that has been widely used. Duvignau and Gaume's protocol includes actions from the general domains to damage, to separate and to take away and includes actions of 'cutting', 'breaking', 'peeling', 'pulling apart', etc. This paper presents results from a verb denomination task in a hundred and twelve adult learners of French at different levels (A – beginner, B - intermediate and C - advanced) and in thirteen native speakers.

Main results show that the learners produce semantic approximations at every level. Learners at more advanced levels produce more conventional verbs but the hypothesis that they will use less semantic approximations only receives mitigated support. Our expectation that the use of conventional expressions reflects knowledge of appropriate specific or support verbs is confirmed. Finally most semantic approximations are produced with generic verbs. To sum up, our study produces some limited support for the hypothesis that the palliative strategy helps learners to resolve a problem of lack of conventional verbs and in consequence produce semantic approximations.

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Does studying vocabulary in smaller sets increase learning? Effects of whole and part learning on second language vocabulary acquisition

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Keywords: vocabulary learning, part learning, whole learning, retrieval, distributed practice effect, block size

Abstract:

The present study examined the effects of whole and part learning on the acquisition of second language (L2) vocabulary. In whole learning, the materials to be learnt are repeated in one large block, whereas in part learning, the materials are divided into smaller blocks and repeated. Although the majority of research on part and whole learning has been conducted in the field of psychology (e.g., Brown, 1924; Kornell, 2009; McGeoch, 1931; Woodworth & Schlosberg, 1954), the issue of part and whole learning may also be relevant for L2 vocabulary acquisition. For instance, suppose we have 20 words to study. Would it be more effective to learn all 20 words at one time (whole learning) or would it be more effective to divide them into smaller blocks (part learning)?

From a theoretical perspective, the retrieval practice effect (Baddeley, 1997; Ellis, 1995) and the list-length effect (Gillund & Shiffrin, 1984; Van Bussel, 1994) suggest that part learning should be more effective than whole learning. Most empirical studies, however, have found the advantage of whole over part learning (e.g., Brown, 1924; Crothers & Suppes, 1967; Kornell, 2009; McGeoch, 1931; Seibert, 1932). Even though the findings of the previous studies help to shed light on this issue, they may be limited in that the part-whole learning distinction and spacing were confounded. More specifically, in previous studies, whole learning always had longer spacing than part learning. This is problematic considering the distributed practice effect, according to which introducing a large amount of spacing increases retention (e.g., Bahrick & Phelps, 1987; Cepeda et al., 2009; Kornell, 2009; Pashler, Zarow, & Triplett, 2003). In other words, the results of the earlier studies may be at least partly attributed to spacing rather than the part-whole distinction per se. The present study aimed to investigate the effects of part and whole learning on L2 vocabulary acquisition in two experiments while isolating the effects of the part-whole distinction and spacing.

In two experiments, a total of 224 Japanese university students studied 20 English-Japanese word pairs. Experiment 1 compared the effects of the following three treatments: 20-item whole learning, 4-item part learning, and 10-item part learning. Unlike previous studies, part and whole learning were matched in spacing. Learning was measured by productive and receptive posttests administered immediately and 1 week after the treatment. In Experiment 2, spacing as well as the part-whole learning distinction were manipulated, and the following three treatments were compared: 20-item whole learning, 4-item part learning with short spacing, and 4-item part learning with long spacing.

Results of the two experiments suggested that (a) as long as spacing is equivalent, the part-whole distinction has little effect on learning, and (b) spacing has a larger effect on learning than the part-whole distinction. Pedagogically, the findings indicate that introducing a large amount of spacing is more important than the part-whole learning distinction. The present study is also methodologically significant in that it isolated the effects of the part-whole distinction and spacing, which have been confounded in previous research.

Integrating multiword unit analysis in corpus-informed ESP wordlist

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Keywords: English for specific purposes, specialized corpus, multi, word units, word list

Abstract:

With the increased availability of digital texts and the development of user-friendly corpus tools, English for specific purposes (ESP) researchers have recently created discipline-specific wordlists to cater for the needs of their students by compiling specialized corpora (Wang, Liang, & Ge, 2008; Hsu, 2013; Ward 2009; Martinez, Beck, & Panza, 2009). While such specialized wordlists are helpful as a guide to design a coherent ESP program and to create teaching and learning materials, they can be much improved by adding phraseological and collocational information which can be obtained by re-analyzing the same corpora. Such direction is congruent with recent findings about the importance of multiword units (MWUs), also referred to as lexical bundles and chunks, as salient and functionally significant units and knowledge of these units crucial for fluent processing. They are recognized as "important building blocks of discourse (Biber, Conrad, & Cortes, 2004)" as well as "important means of differentiating written texts by discipline (Hyland, 2008)". This research trend now extends to more professional written genres. Breeze (2013), for example, has investigated 4-word lexical bundles of four legal genres: academic law, case law, legislation, and documents.

The present study explores ways to improve English radiology wordlists by adding information through the analysis of MWUs in the originally-built specialized corpora. The existing preliminary wordlists are staged in three levels, roughly targeting at lower-undergraduate, upper-undergraduate, and graduate levels. The first level list consists of 308 word families (e.g. symptom, infect, disorder, surgery, severe, therapy), the second level list consists of 342 word families (e.g. structure, beam, magnet, atom, scatter, resolution), and the third level list consists of 370 families (e.g. analyse, method, evaluate, significant, assess, ratio, estimate, correlate). These wordlists were derived from three individual corpora compiled from sources targeting audiences with different levels of specialized knowledge: (1) patient education materials, (2) introductory university textbooks, and (3) research articles. Through the MWU analysis, common collocations such as x-ray(s), blood clot(s), magnetic resonance imaging, are identified through bigram and trigram analyses. Also, terminology extraction using POS tags and phrase-frames (Fletcher, 2007) analyses are conducted.

As a pedagogical practice, the improved first level list is made into online bilingual flash cards using a readily available web-based application. Feedback from students will be reported in the presentation.

Semi-automated individual recasts to spark writing proficiency development in ESP

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Keywords: L2 writing proficiency, Semi automated revision tool, Recasts, Potential learning sequences, Action research

Abstract:

This paper is about the design, development, implementation, deployment and evaluation of a semi-automated individual feedback generation system which aim is to foster writing proficiency development in English for specific purposes (ESP) amongst French threshold learners (equivalent to level B1 on the CEFR scales).

In the approach which was taken, designing this tutoring tool first required to carry out an applied linguistics-centered research endeavor (between 2008 and 2010) to collect, analyze and quantify those learners' ESP needs when performing distance written tasks. This experiment showed that the problems encountered were always the same – thus outlining a typology – and that most obstacles derived from A2/B1 elements (CEFR, 2001) those learners had already been through during their secondary education. To circumvent this difficulty, those results led to hypothesize that an online tutoring system exposing learners to asynchronous focused recasts would be a relevant approach to follow, in so far as recasts would be an efficient means to (i) have learners notice (Rutherford, 1987), (ii) encourage various cognitive and meta-reflexive operations (e.g. attention to forms, form-focus instruction, etc.), (iii) trigger off potential learning sequences (De Pietro, Matthey & Py, 1989) and, by cascading effect, (iv) gain proficiency in their written production tasks.

Following the conclusions of this research, a master file containing ready-made recasts – containing online references to relevant online help and exercises in line with the highlighted L2 obstacles – was made up, thus allowing to implement a system of semi-automated revision.

Between the academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013, this semi-automatic online tutoring system enabling to generate individual recasts was incorporated in an experimental guided autonomy course in which 250 learners were enrolled each year. This study allowed to collect and analyze various sets of data (students' attendance, satisfaction and performance at the final exam) which results appeared to be encouraging. However, the tutoring system implied time-consuming practices for the tutor and the potential of the feedback system to foster L2 writing proficiency development could not be assessed at the time.

To explore those questions, a web application enabling both to automate the master file and to monitor the informants' L2 progress (using a tracking device) was implemented in September 2013. Thanks to the database of the computer program, the highlighted problems could be monitored, quantified and followed up, thus allowing to identify potential L2 recurring mistakes and to assess the students' L2 writing proficiency. This tool was put to the test during the 2013-2014 academic year amongst 250 learners.

In this paper, after presenting the theoretical framework of the study, the semi-automatic online tutoring system devised to foster (as much as possible) writing proficiency development in ESP will be described. Results concerning the impact of those tailor-made foreign language teaching and learning practices on the learners' L2 writing proficiency development in ESP will eventually be provided, thus contributing to a discussion on large-scale deployment of distance education solutions to address current issues related to individualized instruction and the expansion of educational opportunities in ESP at university level.

Is writing a valuable technique for structural elaboration in L2 vocabulary learning?

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Abstract:

Many techniques for L2 vocabulary learning involve semantic elaboration, i.e. the increased attention to a word's meaning. Studies claim, however, that employing semantic elaboration during L2 vocabulary learning can inhibit word-form learning and it is structural elaboration, i.e. the enhanced attention to the form of a word, which helps learners to acquire the form of the new word (Barcroft 2003). In this psycholinguistic study, we aim to discover whether structural elaboration, in particular the writing of the target vocabulary, promotes English L2 word-form learning. The research design used in this study is a partial replication of Elgort's contextual word learning study (under review). Her study showed that for Chinese-speaking learners of English, writing new target vocabulary led to more robust lexical knowledge and better form-meaning mapping than guessing the target vocabulary's meaning from the context. The present study, however, was carried out with participants whose native writing system is similar to English (Roman alphabet).

The participants were 50 Dutch speaking EFL speakers who have all had formal English instruction in secondary school. Their proficiency level varied from B2 to C2. Forty-eight new English words, of which 24 were pseudo words and 24 were low-frequency words, were presented in 3 different contexts. During the learning procedure, the participants had to write down half of these words on paper and derive the meaning of the other half from the context given. The two conditions were counterbalanced to avoid order effects. After learning the words, the participants performed a working memory test and an immediate test in which they first listened to the word, then typed the word and subsequently provided its meaning. This test measured the extent of form-meaning mapping that had occurred. One day later, they were subjected to two priming tasks to measure the amount of lexicalization that had taken place. In order to correlate lexical gains with vocabulary size, two vocabulary size tests and a productive gapfill test were administered a day after the treatment. In this last test, the participants were presented with 24 sentences, each of which was missing a newly learned word. This measure of delayed recall allowed us to discover whether the meaning of a new word activates the form of this target word. As such, it is a valuable addition to Elgort's (under review) immediate form-meaning mapping test, since form recall reflects declarative rather than implicit word knowledge.

The results should shed more light on the value of writing as a technique for structural elaboration. A comparison between this study and Elgort's (under review) should also reveal more about the relative efficacy of writing for English L2 vocabulary acquisition for users of different writing systems.

Barcroft, J. (2003). Effects of questions about word meaning during L2 Spanish lexical learning. The Modern Language Journal, 87 (4), 546 – 561.

Elgort, I. (under review). The power of the written word: Contextual word learning in English by Chinese speakers with and without handwriting.

Heritage speakers' processing of thematic roles in a picture-sentence verification task: Data from ERP studies

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Abstract:

This study investigated heritage speakers' processing of thematic roles in a picture-sentence verification task in Korean compared with native speakers(NSs) using event related potentials (ERPs). Knoeferle et al. (2011) found an N400 effect for the mismatch of the events between the picture and its corresponding sentence (e.g., The gymnast applauds/*punches the journalist). The semantic-related N400 was predictable due to the mismatch of the semantic representations of the two verbs. However, the mismatch of the events between a picture and a sentence can be caused not only by the verbs but also by the switch of the thematic roles of the arguments (e.g., The man sees the woman vs. The woman sees the man). In such cases, two hypotheses are possible: an N400 will be elicited if the parser processes the mismatch as a semantic violation whereas an ELAN and/or a P600 is expected if the parser processes it as a syntactic violation. Lee, Jeong & Nam (2014) found P600 for mismatch of thematic roles in a picture-sentence verification task caused by case markers in native speakers of Korean. This study investigated how heritage speakers of Korean response to the same task. HS often showed native-like behavior in the behavioral language task with simple linguistic features such as case markers. However, their brain-responses might be different from NSs due to their incomplete acquisition of the language (Montrul, 2007). For example, second language learners often showed semantically related brain responses (i.e., N400 rather than P600) to syntactic anomaly indicating their use of different strategies in the processing of the same structure from NSs (e.g., Guo et al. 2009). Lee & Jeong's (2014) findings on the processing of case markers in Korean found similar results for the sematic incongruence caused by case markers (e.g., Agent-NOM/*ACC + Verb): N400 in heritage speakers and P600 in native speakers. This study reports the results of different analysis from Lee & Jeong (2014), focusing on the mismatch of thematic roles caused by switching the argument of the sentence (e.g., Agent/*Patient-NOM, Pagent/*Agent-ACC) in a picture-sentence verification task with auditory stimuli.

EEG data were collected from 11 heritage speakers and 18 native speakers of Korean regarding two conditions: (A) Agent mismatch, [Agent/*Patient-NOM + Verb, brother/*sister-ka cathes_], (B) Patient mismatch, [Patient/*Agent-ACC + Verb, sister/*brother-lul catches_]. The ERPs were compared at the case markers and verbs. Preliminary results showed that native speakers revealed P600 at the verbs but not at the case markers for mismatch condition whereas heritage speakers showed N400. The findings can be interpreted in such way that heritage speakers' processing of thematic roles in a picture sentence verification task is different from native speakers' probably due to their incomplete acquisition of syntactic features such as case markers and voice morphology. More detailed results and their implications will be discussed.

The timing of lexical and syntactic processes in L2 sentence comprehension

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Keywords: sentence processing, morphosyntax, lexicon

Abstract:

Current research on L2 sentence processing finds that syntactic structure building in a late-learnt L2 is associated with greater difficulty than in native sentence comprehension (for overview, see Roberts, 2013). Models of L2 processing tie these difficulties either to age-related changes in syntactic representations (Clahsen & Felser, 2006), proceduralized grammatical knowledge (Ullman, 2005), attenuation in the integration of morphosyntactic knowledge in real-time comprehension (Jiang, 2007) or they relate them to lower levels of efficiency in lexical processing that subserves parsing (e.g. Dekydtspotter, Schwartz & Sprouse, 2006; Dekydtspotter & Renaud, 2014; Hopp, 2014; Miller, 2014).

This paper directly investigates whether and how lexical processing difficulty contributes to difficulties in L2 syntactic processing. In a self-paced reading experiment with 36 monolingual and 62 L1 German advanced speakers of English, we investigate (a) whether slower lexical processing in the L2 affects syntactic structure building and (b) whether differences in lexical processing between L1 and L2 readers can give rise to differences between non-native and native parsing. Following on previous research on native processing (Tily, Fedorenko & Gibson, 2010), we test how the on-line L2 comprehension of English subject and object clefts, which differ in syntactic complexity, is moderated by differences in lexical access, as manipulated by frequency differences of the main clause verb ({high-frequency/low-frequency}, see (1)).

(1)

a. It was Amandai who ti {scared/horrified} Sulena with a frightening look. (subject cleft)

b. It was Amandai who Sulena {scared/horrified} ti with a frightening look. (object cleft)

Linear mixed-model regression analyses with the factors Cleft Type and Verb Frequency show that lexical processing systematically affects L2 syntactic processing, with linear delays of syntactic structure building as verb frequency decreases in L2 processing. For high-frequency verbs, L2 readers show reading slowdowns between subject and object clefts in the cleft region, whereas, for low-frequency verbs, these slowdowns surface in the following post-cleft region. A regression model using verb frequency as a continuous variable shows that native processing is not affected by differences in lexical processing in the same frequency range as L2 processing; however, comparable effects of verb frequency on structure building surface for much lower frequency verbs in native comprehension.

The main finding that L2 readers show larger frequency effects than natives supports current models of the bilingual lexicon such as the Weaker Links hypothesis, which argue that lexical representations are less stable and accessible in L2 than in native processing (Gollan, Montoya, Cera & Sandoval, 2008). Critically, these effects implicate differences in syntactic structure building between natives and non-natives in that they attenuate and delay effects of structure building in L2 sentence processing. Such lexical and syntactic interactions are compatible with capacity models of L2 processing (e.g. McDonald, 2006; Hopp, 2010), which suggest that native and non-native syntactic processing are fundamentally isomorphic, yet differ in resource allocation. In the talk, we discuss implications for current models of L2 sentence processing.

To split or not to split, that is the question! – Processing of particle verbs in L2 German

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Keywords: particle verbs, self paced reading, sentence processing

Abstract:

German particle verbs pose a special challenge to L2 learners as they appear in different shapes depending on the syntactic context: either with the particle attached to the verb (e.g. abnehmen 'to lose weight', infinitive or dass er abnimmt, 3rd person singular present tense, embedded sentence) or with the particle split from the verb (er nimmt ab, 3rd person singular present tense, V2 context).

40 advanced German L2 speakers from various Slavic L1s completed an acceptability judgment (AJT) and a self-paced reading (SPR) task that probed their judgment and processing of 24 German particle verbs. I chose Slavic speakers, as their native languages make frequent use of prefixes, but this prefix is never separated from the verb.

In the AJT, participants judged whether a particle verb had been correctly split in a V2 context (1). The SPR task used a 2x2 design manipulating sentence context and split (2,3).

(1) V2-context

Der Chemiker *abnimmt/nimmt* die Schutzbrille *ab*.

(The chemist takes off the safety googles.)

(2) Infinitive context

Sebastian soll nochmal fünfzehn Kilo *abnehmen/*nehmen ab* diesen Sommer.

(Sebastian should lose another fifteen kilograms this summer.)

(3) Embedded context

Die Ärztin verordnet, dass Sebastian nochmal fünfzehn Kilo *abnimmt/*nimmt ab* diesen Sommer.

(The doctor prescribes, that Sebastian loses another fifteen kilograms this summer.)

If the L2 group has fully acquired the syntactic properties of particle verbs, they should judge unsplit particle verbs in V2 contexts as ungrammatical in the AJT and show elevated reading times for sentences in the ungrammatical conditions as compared to the grammatical conditions in the SPR task.

No L1/L2 differences were found in the AJT. Both groups judged unsplit verbs as unacceptable. Post-hoc analyses revealed that neither proficiency nor verb frequency were reliable predictors of performance accuracy in the L2 group. An error analysis of the L2 judgments seemed to indicate that for some participants particle verb recognition happens on a by-item basis as the same particle produced very different error patterns for different verbs.

I did find L1/L2 differences in the SPR task. The L1 controls showed elevated reading times for ungrammatical sentences in both sentence contexts. An ANOVA run on the residual reading times for the whole L2 group showed that they were not sensitive to the grammaticality violation, only to the context manipulation. Post-hoc analysis using proficiency as a predictor showed an effect only in the embedded condition. Using the results of the offline task to equally divide the group into high and low performers, I found that the high performers showed a pattern that was similar to the L1 controls, while the low performers showed the opposite pattern with faster reading times for the ungrammatical conditions.

Taken together, it can be said that sensitivity to the syntactic properties of particle verbs is difficult to acquire even for very advanced L2 speakers, but reaching native-like levels is not entirely impossible. The value of very general proficiency assessments is also questioned as the performance on the AJT was a better predictor of reading time patterns.

Individual differences in adults' acquisition of determiner-noun agreement in a new language

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Keywords: individual differences, adult L2 acquisition, aptitude, determiner noun agreement structure

Abstract:

Adults differ substantially in the success with which they learn a new language (L2). While some appear to learn the L2 effortlessly, others spend years trying without much success. L2 learning contexts are largely responsible for such differences (Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson, 2003), but in the past decades, second language acquisition (SLA) researchers showed an increasing interest in the role of learners' aptitude.

Previous research on individual differences has mostly focused on investigating explicit, language-related aptitudes, e.g. grammar-learning ability, while largely ignoring potential domain-general aptitudes, e.g. statistical learning ability, which can provide more insight into cognitive mechanisms underlying adult SLA (DeKeyser, 2012; Granena, 2013). Also, most studies looked at individual differences of learners in naturalistic settings, where it is impossible to control for the amount and kind of language input learners received in their L2, which are likely the major sources of individual differences. Finally, few studies on individual differences measured learners' L2 knowledge by means of online/implicit processing tasks in addition to explicit knowledge tests.

This study investigates to what extent and how adult language learners differ in learning a new language and a specific grammatical structure within that language when the amount and kind of input are identical for all learners. It also aims to explain individual differences by relating L2 learning success – measured by online and offline tests – to both language-specific and domain-general aptitudes.

Fifty native speakers of Dutch (18 – 35 years old) received brief, auditory exposure to a new language based on Fijian, which included a determiner-noun agreement structure. During the instruction, learners looked at images and listened to sentences describing the images. They were encouraged to learn the language as well as they could but were not told what to focus on. After the instruction, participants' knowledge of the target structure was measured by a test of online processing (visual world eye-tracking) and two acceptability judgment tasks – one with new and one with familiar nouns. The learners also did an intelligence task and three aptitude tests: a visual statistical learning ability task, a grammatical inference task, and a sound recognition task.

Results showed large individual differences in acquisition of the determiner-noun agreement structure. Several learning patterns were observed: 1) some learners were aware of the target structure during the instruction, which led to ceiling performance, 2) some learners were unaware of the structure during the instruction but were able to extract the rule based on their implicit knowledge during acceptability tasks, which led to good performance, 3) some learners were unaware of the target structure, and they relied on guessing or intuition during acceptability tasks, which led to above-chance performance when implicit knowledge was acquired, or chance performance when there was no learning. These results show that even when adult learners receive identical exposure to an L2, and when their intelligence is controlled for, their learning patterns and outcomes still differ considerably. In this presentation, we will explain the observed individual differences and present how they correlate with the different aptitudes measured.

Variables influencing the acquisition of English by young L2 learners

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Abstract:

In the last decades, research in SLA has discussed a variety of internal and external factors affecting L2 acquisition in the classroom context. With the introduction of inclusive classrooms throughout Europe, learner groups in schools will become increasingly heterogeneous, and, along with this development, L2 instruction will have to respond to the different needs and competences of children in diverse classrooms. While some studies have shown that so-called "at-risk children" benefit from intensive bilingual schooling, other studies in L2 classrooms have produced inconclusive results.

This project investigates the impact of internal and external factors on the receptive lexical and grammatical L2 competence by heterogeneous groups of learners in different primary school programs. Such factors include, for instance, specific cognitive skills of the learners, their cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, their language backgrounds including the typological distance between L1, L2 and L3, as well as the intensity and duration of L2 contact and the quality of the linguistic input provided in the L2 classroom. Thus, this paper focuses on the following question:

What factors are the most important predictors of L2 learners' receptive lexical and grammatical competence of English in different German primary school programs?

The project involves a longitudinal study carried out in 25 primary school classes with differing L2 programs (N=500, t1 in grade 3, t2 in grade 4). Receptive lexical and grammatical English competences are elicited with the BPVS III (Dunn et al. 1997) and the ELIAS Grammar Test II (Kersten et al. n.d.). Nonverbal intelligence, working memory and phonological awareness are assessed using the BUEGA (Esser et al. 2008), the WISC IV (Wechsler 2003), and the P-ITPA (Esser & Wyschkon 2010). The quality of teacher input is monitored with the help of a classroom observation instrument (Schwirz in prep.). Information on the home language background and the socio-economic status is gathered with a parent questionnaire.

This paper reports on the pilot study to this project carried out in four German primary classrooms which differ in intensity and onset time of English in the curriculum (participants n=80, age 9;0-10;6). Preliminary statistical analysis suggests that working memory, phonological awareness and the intensity of L2 contact seem to have a strong impact on the learners' receptive L2 skills. Based on previous research we expect the quality of L2 input to have a significant effect on the L2 skills as well.

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Attentional processing of input in different input conditions: an eye tracking study

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Keywords: attention, L2, input conditions, eye tracking

Abstract:

Although it is widely accepted that attention plays a key role in second language development, it is only recently that eye-tracking methodologies can provide a detailed insight into second language (L2) learners' attentional processing. The aims of the study reported in this presentation were to investigate how students pay attention to target items in written L2 input in different input conditions, how the learners' knowledge of a target syntactic construction changes in these conditions and how the change under different conditions is related to attentional processing. We investigated these questions in an eye-tracking study conducted with 100 undergraduate L2 learners of English in Sri Lanka. The students were divided into five groups of 20, with one control group and four other groups receiving different types of input. The experimental groups participated in an input session for three consecutive days. In each session the participants read a story containing 7 examples of the grammatical construction 'causative had'. The first group read the stories with no textual enhancement (unenhanced only) and the second with the examples of the target structure visually enhanced (enhanced only). The third group was exposed to enhanced input with a specific instruction that asked them to pay attention to the highlighted construction in the input (enhanced+ instructions). The fourth group only differed from the third one in that they received explicit explanation of the target construction between the first and second exposures (enhanced+ instruction+ explanation). The control group received no treatment. Improvement on the knowledge of the target construction was measured by comparing post-test and pre-test scores on a sentence reconstruction (SR) and grammaticality judgement (GJ) task. Eye tracking was used to collect data on attentional processing. Total fixation duration (TFD) and the difference between observed and expected total fixation duration (DTFD) were considered as measures of the attention paid to the examples of the target construction.

The unenhanced only and enhanced only groups demonstrated a random pattern of TFD and DTFD, while the enhanced +instructions and enhanced+ instructions+ explanation groups showed a high TFD and DTFD at the beginning of the exposure which then gradually decreased. The MANOVA analysis revealed a statistically significant increase in the gain score of the SR items in the enhanced+ instructions and enhanced+ instructions+ explanation groups compared to the control and the unenhanced only groups. TFD and DTFD showed a significant correlation with the gain scores on the SR and GJ tasks in the enhanced+ instructions+ explanation group. A significant correlation between DTFD and gain scores in the enhanced+ instructions and enhanced only groups was also found. The results suggest that unenhanced input is not effective in directing learners' attention to the target structure and results in no change in learners' knowledge. Although visual enhancement can lead to increased attention to the target features, it was not found to contribute to improved performance in the post-test. The findings indicate that either specific instruction to pay attention to target features in the input or explicit explanation is needed for measurable gains in knowledge.

Influence de la L1 dans l'interprétation d'un pronom anaphorique par des natifs francophones et hispanophones apprenants de l'allemand

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Abstract:

On ne sait pas dans quelle mesure les préférences d'interprétation dans la L1 influencent l'interprétation d'un pronom anaphorique dans une L2. Roberts et al. (2008) ont observé une influence de la L1 dans une tâche off-line : les préférences d'interprétation d'apprenants du néerlandais étaient différentes suivant qu'ils étaient natifs du turc ou de l'allemand. En revanche, dans une tâche on-line d'enregistrement des mouvements oculaires en lecture, les deux groupes d'apprenants ne révélaient pas de préférences d'interprétation claires.

Notre étude vise à étudier l'influence de la L1 dans l'interprétation d'un pronom anaphorique par des natifs francophones et hispanophones apprenants de l'allemand, dans une tâche off-line (questionnaires écrits) et une tâche on-line (paradigme du monde visuel). Dans des langues non-pro-drop comme le français et l'allemand, un pronom personnel clitique sujet est préférentiellement interprété comme se référant à un antécédent sujet (e.g., Bouma & Hopp, 2007). Dans une langue pro-drop comme l'espagnol, un pronom sujet réalisé est préférentiellement interprété comme se référant à un antécédent objet alors qu'un pronom nul est préférentiellement interprété comme se référant à un antécédent sujet (Alonso-Ovalle et al., 2002). Malgré la similarité du système pronominal, on observe dans des phrases telles que (1), des préférences d'interprétation du pronom anaphorique ambigu différentes en allemand et en français. Les locuteurs natifs de l'allemand interprètent préférentiellement le pronom « er » comme se référant au sujet de la proposition principale, alors que les locuteurs natifs du français interprètent préférentiellement le pronom « il » comme se référant à l'objet (Hemforth et al., 2010). Suivant Hemforth et al. (2010), la préférence pour l'objet observée en français est due à la possibilité d'utiliser une forme alternative non ambiguë pour exprimer la référence au sujet (... avant de rentrer à la maison).

(1) Der Postbote hat den Straßenfeger getroffen, bevor *er* nach Hause ging./ Le facteur a rencontré le balayeur avant qu'*il* rentre à la maison.

Deux groupes d'apprenants (22 natifs francophones et 23 natifs hispanophones) ont été testés. Leur niveau en allemand (B2 ou C1), ainsi que leur capacité en mémoire de travail (testée en L1 et L2), étaient équivalents.

Les résultats montrent des différences claires dans les préférences d'interprétation des deux groupes. Les natifs francophones interprètent préférentiellement le pronom comme se référant au sujet dans les deux tâches (off-line et on-line) ; alors que les natifs hispanophones ne révèlent pas de préférence claire on-line mais une préférence pour le sujet off-line. Cette préférence pour le sujet reste néanmoins moins marquée que pour les francophones.

Nos résultats révèlent 1) que la préférence pour le sujet observée en allemand est plus facile à acquérir pour des locuteurs natifs d'une autre langue non-pro-drop et 2) que le transfert ne se fait pas au niveau d'une construction spécifique. Enfin, nous argumenterons que les différences entre nos résultats et ceux de Roberts et al. (2008) sont dues à la méthodologie utilisée, le paradigme du monde visuel permettant d'observer des préférences d'interprétation on-line que ne permettent pas d'autres méthodes.

Cross-linguistic influence at the end-state of L2 acquisition: Evidence for negative transfer in the online processing of wh-questions with that-trace

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Keywords: L1 Spanish, L1 Turkish, L2 English, cross linguistic influence, wh, questions, that, trace

Abstract:

Within the generative framework, studies that have examined cross linguistic transfer in second language (L2) acquisition have shown that first language (L1) has a significant influence at the initial stage of L2 acquisition (e.g., White 1989, 1990; 1991; Flynn & Martohardjono, 1994; Schwartz and Sprouse, 1996). However, little is known about L1 transfer at the final stage of L2 acquisition.

Inspired by the findings of the previous studies (e.g., White & Juffs, 1998; Juffs & Harrington, 1995), this study examines whether different instantiation of the Empty Category Principle (ECP) in the L1 and the L2 results in negative transfer during the real-time processing of ungrammatical wh-questions with that-trace violations in L2 English. In English subjects are not allowed to be extracted across overt complementizer as in "*Who do the police believe that attacked the man last night?", because this violates the Empty Category Principle (ECP), which states that traces must be properly governed (Chomsky & Lasnik, 1977). However, in Spanish, subjects can be extracted in the presence of the complementizer. We tested a group of end state L1 Spanish and Turkish learners of L2 English and a group of native English controls on a grammaticality judgment task (GJT) involving long-distance grammatical and ungrammatical wh-questions using a self-paced word-by-word in the moving window procedure.

Overall accuracy results indicate that L2 groups, particularly, the Spanish group were significantly less accurate (F (2, 82) =30.22; p<.01) and slower (F (2, 76) =14.80; p<.01) than the native speakers in correctly judging ungrammatical types. For L2 groups, the most difficult type to correctly judge was the wh-extractions with that-trace violation (Spanish M: 2.95; and Turkish M: 4.32 out of 10). Results from self-paced word-by-word reading times (RTs) reveal that the locus of the difficulty in sentences with that-trace where the L2 speakers, particularly Spanish speakers spent significantly longer RTs, was the embedded verb (e.g., 'attached) that follow the complementizer (F (1, 71) =24.97; p<.01), (see Figure 1 below). These findings show that the Spanish group failed to correctly reject wh-extractions with that-trace violations under the influence of their L1 Spanish in which the sentences are grammatically correct and provide evidence for negative transfer at the end state of an L2. As for Turkish group, since that-trace effect is not present in L1 Turkish, failure in the judgment of wh-questions with that-trace violation can be attributed to pro-drop property of Turkish where sentences with overt subject are grammatically correct.

Cross-linguistic influence and the dative alternation: A corpus study of English as a second language

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Keywords: dative alternation, CLI, corpus study

Abstract:

The dative alternation as displayed in (1) has been widely researched for English as a native language (cf. Bresnan et al. 2007).

(1)

a. The boy gives [the flowers]theme [to his girlfriend]recipient. PP dative

b. The boy gives [his girlfriend]recipient [the flowers]theme. NP dative

Recent studies of English as an L1 (e.g. Bresnan et al. 2007) show that the native speakers' choices depend on the interplay of multiple linguistic factors, such as syntactic weight, animacy and pronominality of theme and recipient.

With respect to the dative alternation in English as a Second Language (ESL) much less research has been done. Even though the effects of the linguistic factors have been addressed in some studies, only one study investigates probabilistic factors in a multifactorial (experimental) study (Jäschke & Plag 2014). There is only one corpus study of the dative alternation in ESL (Callies & Szczesniak 2008). This study shows amongst other things that Polish and German ESL learners produce both PP and NP datives even though the prevalent construction in their L1s is the NP dative. The question in how far L1 influence plays a role in the production of dative constructions is still under debate.

This study tackles this problem. The present corpus study examines more than 2300 dative constructions, taken from the ICLE corpus (Granger et al. 2002), produced by advanced ESL learners of 14 different L1s. The influence of linguistic factors, alongside the influence of the learners' L1 and their proficiency were investigated using linear mixed effect regression models.

The results show that linguistic factors which are known to influence the English (L1) dative alternation are highly predictive in ESL as well. Proficiency (measured in years of ESL instruction and months spent in an English speaking country) failed to reach significance.

The most important result with respect to cross-linguistic influence is that learners with different L1 backgrounds differ significantly in their choice of dative construction. Turkish learners for instance have an extreme bias towards the PP dative, whereas Dutch learners prefer the NP dative. These differences between learners with different L1s backgrounds are, however, difficult to interpret in the light of transfer approaches to SLA.

In a transfer perspective we expect learners to use dative constructions which correspond to those found in their L1s. This is however not the case. E.g. in Dutch (L1) we find a dative alternation like in English, but Dutch ESL learners have a strong bias towards the NP dative. Turkish (L1) has a rather inflexible word order which corresponds to the NP rather than the PP dative (Haspelmath 2013). Turkish learners, however, have a very strong bias towards the PP dative.

The paper will offer possible explanations for these rather unexpected results by providing detailed analyses of the structural intricacies involved with selected L1s (Turkish, Dutch and Japanese), and will discuss the implications of these findings for theories of transfer, processability and the role of typological distance.

The role of phonology in L2 writing

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Keywords: L2 writing, phonological influence, orthography, formulation process, L2, L1 comparison

Abstract:

When comparing L2 learner and L1 novice writing in French some differences have caught our attention and made us want to investigate them further. There are some errors that are quite frequent in L1 writing and almost non-existent in French L2 guided learner writing except in very advanced L2 users having developed automatisms. A typical example is the homophone errors. A French child learning to write often has problems with homophones, whole words as well as grammatical endings. Therefore, he can write vert when aiming to write verre, ver or vers, or *j'ai regarder instead of j'ai regardé. (Brissaud et al. 2006 ; Gunnarsson & Largy 2010). Something a guided French L2 learner would almost never do (Gunnarsson-Largy 2013).

According to the models of written production where the function working memory is integrated (Hayes 1996; Kellogs 1996), it is the articulatory/phonological loop that plays a decisive role in the formulation/translation process, i.e. when the ideas come to words to be graphically executed in the next process. Furthermore, the homophone errors in L1 writing are the result of a mismatch between the phonological sequence and what is retrieved in the mental lexicon and/or grammar. The L1 writer often retrieves the most frequent spelling.

As these errors are much less frequent in L2 learner writing, it seems as if phonology plays a much smaller role during the formulation/translation process than in L1 writing. Whether this is due to formulation in L1 translated into L2 and before writing it down, to a stronger use of the visuo-spatial sketchpad in the working memory or to a stronger pre-graphic control, we cannot say at this stage.

In order to explore the importance of phonology during the formulation/translation process and at different L2 levels, we have designed an experimental protocol where we force the French L2 writers (beginners, intermediate, and advanced) to rely on and take phonology in consideration in a dictation task and compare their performance to that of French L1 children (1st, 4th and 6th grade). The dictation task explores the treatment of the negation ne...pas where the /n/ could be a liaison consonant or an elided n' in a negation: On est dans la rue vs. On n'est pas dans la rue. The protocol consisting of two lists of 24 sentences (12 with negation and 12 without) has been submitted to 3 groups of 20 French L2 learners, 1 beginner, 1 intermediate and 1 advanced, and 3 groups of 20 French L1 children, 1 first grade, 1 fourth grade and 1 sixth grade.

We formulate the hypothesis that the marking of the n' in the negation will increase with age in the French L1 children while it will be marked form the start in the French L2 learners. If the advanced L2 learners start decreasing in the marking, this will be an indication of a change in the formulation process, which has in that case become more L1 like.

The role of articulatory difficulty in native and L2 speakers of Spanish

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Keywords: articulatory difficulty, articulatory complexity, L2 acquisition, Spanish, phonetic constraints, markedness

Abstract:

While we know that certain segments are more difficult to acquire due to a greater degree of articulatory complexity (e.g., Yavas, 1997; Colantoni & Steele, 2008), no L2 theory can account for this difficulty. This paper aims to contribute to our understanding of the role of articulatory difficulty in L2 acquisition by investigating the production of Spanish by L1 English speakers.

Articulatory difficulty (AD) was tested in six native Spanish speakers and six intermediate L1 English, L2 Spanish speakers. Participants were asked to repeat a V.CV sequence (e.g., /o extltailno/) at an increasingly rapid rate until they began to produce errors (similar to the Diadochokinetic task that is frequently used in speech sciences, e.g., Yarus & Logan, 2002; Icht & Boaz, 2014). The segment produced with the fastest rate was considered to be the easiest, while the segment produced with the slowest rate was considered to be the most difficult. Each sequence consisted of a vowel ([e, o]) and one of five Spanish segments that do not exist in English ([β, ɣ, χ, ɲ, r]). Two segments that exist in English and Spanish ([m, t]) were also included as a baseline, as stops are expected to be the least difficult (Lindblom & Maddieson, 1988). The 14 V.CV sequences (7 segments in two vocalic contexts) were presented twice to participants in random order. All productions were recorded and subsequently analyzed acoustically in Praat, in order to determine when the productions were no longer target-like.

Preliminary results indicate that, as expected, the stops [m, t] were produced with the fastest rates by both groups, signifying that they were the least complex. This is consistent with findings of phonetic constraints (Ohala, 1983; Ohala, 1997) and markedness (Maddieson, 1984). The segments [ɣ] and [x] had the slowest rates of production for the native speakers, and the second slowest rates for the L2 speakers. This suggests that a velar place of articulation is more complex compared to more anterior places of articulation, for native and non-native speakers. Again, this is consistent with phonological theories (e.g. the emergence of the unmarked) that treat coronals as the unmarked segment. Finally, the segment that was the most difficult for the non-native speakers was the trill [r], whereas for the native speakers, the trill had the third fastest rate of production. This was somewhat unexpected, as the trill is considered to have a high degree of AD (due to the precise phonetic conditions required for its production, and the fact that even some native speakers are unable to produce it (Solé, 2002)). Nevertheless, the results indicate that while the trill may be complex for less experienced speakers, it is not necessarily complex for speakers who are accustomed to producing the sound, when they are actively focusing on its successful realization.

Overall, these findings provide further evidence that phonetic and phonological constraints play a role in L2 acquisition and reveal that more dialogue between phonetic theories of speech production and L2 speech models is necessary.

Effects of word familiarity and L1-homographic spellings on phonological decoding: the case of English-speaking secondary school students learning French

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Keywords: phonological decoding, second language writing systems, L2 French, secondary school learners

Abstract:

This paper investigates second language (L2) phonological decoding: that is, the production of phonological forms based on their written representations. Various studies have documented the ways in which L1 decoding processes are shaped by the nature of the L1 writing system and, in turn, influence the processing of L2 written forms. This has been interpreted as the automatic triggering of L1-entrenched processing mechanisms by written L2 input, leading to either 'positive transfer' where the L1 and L2 writing systems overlap or 'negative transfer' where they differ. It has been postulated that highly congruent L1 and L2 writing system pairs (e.g. English / French) facilitate the L2 learner's task compared to more disparate writing systems (e.g. Chinese / English), because in the former case only minimal 'retuning' of L1 processing mechanisms is needed. Conversely, it has been argued that highly congruent L1-L2 writing systems may also pose problems for L2 decoders, because the orthographic similarities between the two languages may encourage the triggering of automatic, L1-based processing. This might be expected to be particularly likely in the case of interlingual homographs (e.g. 'chat', written identically but pronounced differently in French and English). It has been proposed that controlled, strategic processing may allow learners to override such automatic L1-based processing, and thus to decode L2 written forms more accurately. Learners may also be able to achieve some accuracy in decoding written texts (at least those containing few unfamiliar words) by retrieving stored pronunciations of familiar words from long-term memory, providing these stored forms are themselves accurate. To investigate these issues, 32 English-speaking secondary school students, all lower-intermediate learners of French, completed a French reading aloud test comprising 36 decontextualized real words (plus distractors). The words varied on two orthogonal dimensions: (a) half were homographs of English words, and half not; (b) half were familiar to participants, and half unfamiliar. Further, each familiar word was matched with an unfamiliar word with an identical spelling body (e.g. , 'chair' – , 'clay'). The pronunciations of the familiar words were additionally elicited using picture prompts. Participants' decoding accuracy was found to be generally low. There were no differences in the decoding accuracy of homographic versus non-homographic words, but participants decoded significantly more familiar words accurately than unfamiliar words, with the latter being more often pronounced in ways which were wholly or partly consistent with English symbol-sound correspondences. These findings are consistent with the hypothesis that participants were more likely to decode familiar words by retrieving their stored pronunciations from long-term memory, and unfamiliar words using symbol-sound correspondences at a sub-lexical level. These sub-lexical correspondences were, in turn, heavily influenced by L1 transfer; however, there were also some idiosyncratic pronunciations, perhaps reflecting participants' attempts to move beyond L1 symbol-sound correspondences. Participants' retrieved pronunciations of the familiar words, produced in response to picture prompts, themselves showed some influence of English symbol-sound correspondences, even though no written stimulus was present. Theoretical and pedagogical implications of these findings are discussed.

The role of immersion experience in linguistic relativity: Evidence from Korean-English speakers' categorization of motion events

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Keywords: linguistic relativity, bilingual cognition, motion categorization, immersion experience

Abstract:

A substantial body of research has demonstrated that there are predictable cross-linguistic differences in how speakers of different languages conceptualize the world, suggesting that language may shape cognition. Much of the current debate in this line of research centers on to what extent language modulates our patterns of cognition. While some studies (e.g., Bunger, Papafragou, & Trueswell, 2013; Papafragou, Hulbert, & Trueswell, 2008; Slobin, 1996, 2000) have revealed that language specificity only emerges in preverbal thought, others (e.g., Fausey & Boroditsky, 2010, 2011; Levinson, 1996, 1997; Lucy, 1992; Park & Ziegler, 2014) are in support of the notion of linguistic relativity, claiming that language-specific effects may even appear in general, non-linguistic thought. Notwithstanding the considerable evidence for linguistic relativity, its credibility has often been challenged as nonlinguistic tasks employed in existing studies are open to methodological and interpretation criticisms.

To investigate the notion of linguistic relativity with more precision, the present study compared categorization preferences for motion events of Korean-English bilingual speakers (N=80) against those of Korean and English functional monolingual speakers (N=15 each). Results indicated that there were statistically significant differences between the two monolingual groups and that the bilingual speakers' categorization patterns resembled those of the Korean speakers. Correlation and regression analyses further demonstrated that their categorization preferences were modulated by the length of immersion in an L2-speaking country, not necessarily by their L2 proficiency. When the bilingual group was split into two subgroups by their immersion experience (immersion group vs. non-immersion group) for additional analyses, the findings demonstrated that different background factors predicted variance in the categorization scores of the two bilingual groups. While the length of immersion in an L2-speaking country predicted the scores of the immersion group at 13%, the scores of the non-immersion group were estimated by L2 study length at 14%. These results suggest that for late bilinguals who have never gone abroad, their preference to categorize motion events more like English monolinguals would be moderately conditioned by how long they have studied the L2. However, once bilinguals undergo varying lengths of immersion experience, it is these experiences (and likely the length, intensity, and quality of naturalistic use of the L2 they may afford) that seem to better predict how much bilinguals are influenced in their non-linguistic behavior by categorization patterns favored by the target grammar.

Acquisition du concept de la trajectoire en français L2 par les apprenants turcs et polonais

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Keywords: acquisition du français L2, espace, trajectoire, discours narratif, langue source, le polonais, le turc, langue cible

Abstract:

Cette contribution porte sur l'acquisition des moyens linguistiques en français L2 pour encoder le concept de trajectoire, lié au déplacement spatial, par des apprenants des deux langues sources, le polonais et le turc.

Cette étude s'inscrit dans l'approche de la relativité linguistique selon laquelle la langue a un impact sur la cognition (Levinson & Gumperz 1996). Concernant la trajectoire, des études récentes (Kopecka & Narasimhan 2012) s'accordent à reconnaître au But une plus grande saillance cognitive et importance pragmatique sans oublier le rôle que jouent les propriétés typologiques des langues dans le choix de l'expression de la Source et du But.

Les langues sources, le polonais et le turc, et la langue cible, le français, disposent des moyens linguistiques pour coder les différentes portions de la trajectoire (Source, Médiane, But). Cependant, ces langues varient dans le type de ressources lexicales et grammaticales disponibles pour encoder la Source et le But ainsi que dans la façon de distribuer l'information spatiale dans la structure morphosyntaxique.

Nous analysons des extraits des récits des apprenants et des natifs portant sur une scène où un personnage agit sur un autre provoquant son déplacement selon différentes trajectoires. L'analyse des productions des locuteurs natifs montre les différences translinguistiques suivantes. Les francophones préfèrent de mentionner le point initial de la trajectoire (Source), contrairement aux locuteurs turcophones qui préfèrent de mentionner le point final (But). En revanche, les polonophones, bien qu'ils aient une petite préférence pour l'encodage du but de la trajectoire, ils mentionnent également la Source. L'expression de la portion médiane est minoritaire dans les trois langues bien qu'on note son augmentation en français.

Les apprenants analysés dans cette étude, se caractérisent par deux niveaux de compétence en L2 correspondant à la variété de base et la variété post-basique (cf. Klein et Perdue 1997). Notre analyse permet de voir qu'en dehors des différences relevant de l'impact des langues sources sur l'encodage des portions de la trajectoire, tous les apprenants des deux niveaux, produisent les discours en partie similaires. L'analyse montre que seule la portion initiale de la trajectoire (Source) est exprimée dans leurs productions, ce qui est préféré par les francophones natifs.

Ce résultat suggère que

- soit les préférences de la langue cible influencent précocement les productions en L2,

- soit les apprenants traitent de façon similaire la même information relevant de la même tâche communicative dans la même langue cible au niveau basique et post-basique en faisant l'abstraction des différences translinguistiques entre leur L1 et la L2.

La discussion de ce résultat tente de proposer des explications de l'existence des similitudes dans l'encodage de la trajectoire dans un discours narratif en français L2.

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Function-Form Analyses and Variation: A New Look at Future-Time Reference in Native and Non-Native French

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Keywords: function form analysis, L2 French, variation, advanced learners, future time expression

Abstract:

Although variationist approaches to linguistics, which examine how language is conditioned by linguistic and social context, were originally applied to the study of language variation and change in native-speaker (NS) speech (e.g., Labov, 1972), this research has been successfully extended to second-language (L2) acquisition (e.g., Preston, 1989; Mougeon, Nadasdi & Rehner, 2010). The application of variationism to second language acquisition (SLA) has enabled linguists to systematically analyze, describe, and explain non-native variation, an undertaking which is essential in order to truly understand how acquisition progresses and what processes are involved (Geeslin, 2011). For example, NSs of French have been shown to be variable in their verb-form use in contexts of future-time reference (e.g., King & Nadasdi, 2003; Poplack & Turpin, 1999), and this variation has been shown to be conditioned by factors such as temporal distance and the presence of a temporal adverbial. Subsequent research on non-native French has indicated that native-like use of the inflectional future, periphrastic future and present in future-time expression, is acquired late, that learners' expression of future-time reference varies, and that this variation is conditioned by some of the same linguistic factors (Howard, 2012; Moses, 2002; Nadasdi et al., 2003). One limitation in most previous studies is the adherence to form-function analyses, narrowly focused on pre-selected forms such as the morphological and periphrastic futures. In this study, we seek to provide a more inclusive investigation of future-time expression in L2 French. In particular, we report a function-form analysis (Bardovi-Harlig, 2007), for which we began by first identifying all future-time contexts before then moving on to an analysis of verb forms used to express future time.

The data come from ten spontaneous, informal conversations, each between a highly-advanced English-speaking L2 user of French and a NS of French (20 participants in all). Using a function-form approach, we first examine the conversations (amounting to a total of 77,300 words) in order to determine the full range of verb forms that speakers use to express future time. This examination reveals that the L2 speakers and the NSs use largely the same forms, with some differences in frequency. All future-time reference occurrences (L2, n = 501; NS, n = 445) were coded for a range of linguistic variables whose influence on the selection of verb-form in future-time contexts has been documented in previous literature. An analysis of these variables indicates that the greatest differences between the natives and highly advanced nonnatives concerns the use of the present-for-future. Thus, after discussing the L2 speakers' overall repertoire of future-time forms, we examine in detail the present-for-future, which has received relatively little attention in previous literature, in part because of the form-function bias in favor of investigations looking at morphologically-marked future forms. This examination has implications for future analyses of present forms for future-time expression in L2 French and contributes to theory building in SLA as concerns the acquisition of variable structures more generally.

The importance of elicitation task design in SLA research: revisiting the Aspect Hypothesis

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Keywords: tense, aspect, elicitation task design, task variability, Aspect Hypothesis, corpora

Abstract:

In his review of L2 English studies testing the Aspect Hypothesis (AH), Shirai (2004) concluded that studies adopting paper-and-pencil tests more consistently supported the predictions of the AH than production tasks (both oral and written). In this study we compare sixty L2 Spanish learners' (English L1) performance on three oral production tasks with increasingly controlled structure (personal interview, semi-controlled impersonal narrative, fully-controlled impersonal narrative) and a context-dependant preference (comprehension) task. Together the tasks were designed to a) force learners to produce more non-prototypical (telic-imperfective and atelic-perfective) pairings, and b) test both knowledge of (aspectual) morphological distinctions as well as distribution of use.

Our results show that learners' use and distribution of verbal forms was not consistent across the production tasks. The less constrained task (interview) elicited the fewer non-prototypical pairings, supporting the AH. However, the more controlled tasks were successful in eliciting non-prototypical pairings which disconfirmed the AH. We argue that the combined results from the four tasks do not support the prediction that the preterit is more often used with telic predicates and the imperfect with atelic predicates, since when given the opportunity, as in our controlled impersonal narrative, all learners are able to use the preterit with states and activities, and the imperfect with accomplishment and achievements, including the beginners. Furthermore, learners are able to appropriately reject the preterit in imperfect (habitual, progressive and continuous) contexts regardless of the lexical aspectual properties of the predicate as shown in our comprehension task.

We claim that the predictions of the AH are difficult to hold for data elicited through a battery of tasks and that the construction of a learner corpus consisting of multiple tasks by the same learners is indispensable for eliciting robust linguistic evidence that can be useful for SLA theorizing and hypothesis testing.

Learning L2 past tenses from closely related languages: L1 transfer vs aspect and interface issues

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Abstract:

The present study will report data from a study on the acquisition, by adult L1 French and Portuguese learners, of verbal morphology in L2 Spanish; specifically focusing on the semantics and pragmatics of the simple past, present perfect, imperfect and progressive forms. Debates over the causes of optionality and inaccessibility of certain forms in L2 acquisition have dealt with the question of whether such selective difficulties are due to parametric differences between L1 and L2, whether they are permanent (Hawkins & Hattori, 2006), or whether they are symptomatic of a process of feature reassembly (Lardiere 2008). Many studies have addressed the role of tense, aspect and discourse in the development of verbal morphology, although little has been said on the acquisition of L2 Spanish by L1 speakers of closely related languages.

Therefore, the study of how Spanish is acquired by speakers of French and Portuguese, whose tense/aspect systems diverge from that of Spanish, despite the fact that they share basic aspectual distinctions, represents a promising area. Are learners able to effectively transfer useful tense/aspect features from their L1? Or rather are they (mis)guided by the eventuality type when choosing a past tense (Andersen & Shirai 1996)? How does their grasp of the L2 tense/aspect distinctions and combinations develop?

We will present original data comparing the choices of adult L1 French and L1 Portuguese speakers, learning Spanish in a non-immersion setting (Instituto Cervantes in France and Portugal) at CEFR A2 (n = 22 L1 French and 22 L1 Portuguese) and B1 (n = 24 L1 French and 24 L1 Portuguese). A control group of native Spanish speakers (n= 20) was also used. Preliminary data from more advanced learners (B2 and C1) will also be discussed, in order to offer a broader perspective.

The participants were asked to fill 30 gaps from a narrative text in a multiple choice task (with three options per item), focusing on potentially complex uses of the Spanish past tenses, such as: choice of a perfective tense (simple past vs present perfect) in the absence of explicit time location; use of imperfect indicative with telic predicates; progressive forms (estar + gerund) combined with perfective tenses; choice of perfective or imperfective tenses with expressions denoting a time interval.

Our results suggest that at A2 level learners are clearly influenced by the options available in their L1, but they are also influenced by discourse cues accessible in the immediate environment of a verb form; in some of the items, complex aspectual combinations are also an issue. From B1 level onwards, L1 influence is progressively attenuated, while aspectual and discourse factors tend to be more persistent. However, for Portuguese speakers, L1 direct transfer is pervasive at all levels: it has a positive effect on the choices of the A2 learners, but it often has a negative effect at more advanced levels. The study offers, thereby, data that can contribute to enhancing knowledge of factors that help and hinder the acquisition process when the L2 is closely related to the L1.

The Acquisition of the Depictive and the Resultative Construction by Portuguese-English Bilinguals.

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Keywords: L2 learnability, Depictive Construction, Resutlative Construction.

Abstract:

This paper aims at shedding light on the learnability and representation of the depictive (Samuel wiped the clean table) and the resultative construction (Samuel wiped the table clean) by Brazilian Portuguese-English bilinguals. Both constructions are licensed and productive in English. In Brazilian Portuguese (BP), dissimilarly, the same syntactic pattern of the resultative construction (Samuel esfregou a mesa limpa) is unlicensed with a resultative reading, but it is fully grammatical and productive with a depictive reading. Thus, the resultative construction poses a challenge for Portuguese-English bilinguals, as not only must they learn a syntax-semantics mapping unlicensed in their L1, but they must also inhibit the L1 reading of the same structure. Furthermore, the depictive and the resultative construction have different rules concerning the AP licensing (Samuel wiped the table dirty*/Samuel wiped the dirty table). Therefore, bilinguals also have to acquire event structure constraints that govern the construction in the L2. In the present study we tested how bilinguals in different levels of proficiency represented both the depictive and the resultative construction in the L2 in comparison to the native speakers of this language. An acceptability judgment test with the magnitude estimation was run and yielded the results summarized in TABLE 1.

TABLE 1: Means of acceptability judgments for the depictive, grammatical resultative and ungrammatical resultative constructions.

The main results indicate that lower proficiency bilinguals (LPB) did not differentiate the grammatical and the ungrammatical resultative construction (Z=-.039, p<.969). Also, the LPB presented a lower acceptability judgment for the grammatical resultative construction in comparison to the high proficient bilinguals (HPB) (Z=-.5132, p<.001) and the native speakers (NS) (Z=-.5751, p<.001). These results may indicate that LPB have not fully learned the grammatical resultative construction and have not learned this construction's constraints. Surprisingly, the same behavior was found in regards to the depictive construction, for which LPB also had a lower acceptability in comparison to the HPB (Z=-.3573, p<.001) and the NS (Z=-3.562, p<.001). The HPB behaved similarly to the NS in relation to the acceptability of the depictive construction (Z=-.455, p<.649) and of the grammatical resultative construction (=Z-1.513, p<.130). The HPB also differentiated the grammatical and the ungrammatical resultative construction (Z=-4.443, p<.001) as the native speakers did (Z=-9.658, p<.001). However, the HPB presented a considerably higher acceptability for the ungrammatical resultative construction in comparison to the NS (Z=-7.994, p<.001). These results suggest that BP-English bilinguals can learn the resultative construction as much as they can learn the depictive construction, but they are not as sensitive to the constraints of the resultative construction as the native speakers are. These data are interpreted as evidence for the multi-competence construct, which predicts L1 influence in the representation of the L2 mainly in lower levels of proficiency, and the superset subset construct that suggests that constraints in the L2 are difficult for bilinguals to learn.

Prompts in a phrasal decision task for investigating L1 effects on the acquisition of L2 collocations

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Keywords: collocation, L1 influence, crosslinguistic influence, lexical decision, phrasal decision

Abstract:

First language (L1) is a critical factor that affects the acquisition of second language (L2) lexical competence. With the advancement of research from single lexeme to multiword units, studies that examine the L1 influence at the phrasal level have emerged. Some of them used phrasal decision tasks (PDT). The task is similar to well-established lexical decision tasks, where researchers show the participant an item (either a real word or a pseudoword) and ask whether it is a real word or not. In the PDT, researchers show either a felicitous or an infelicitous word combination, and prompt the participant to make a decision on each item. Depending on the nature of multiword units, however, difficulties arise in deciding the prompt. This problem is particularly pronounced when the target is collocations, which are looser word combinations than, for instance, idioms. Constituent words in collocations can co-occur naturally with many other words (e.g., small child, small bed, little child), and seemingly unnatural collocations can make sense given a specific context (e.g., a happy potato in fiction where a potato is a character). This flexibility contributes to the creativity of language, but makes it difficult to call infelicitous collocations incorrect or unreal. This study aimed to examine whether the L1 influence on the acquisition of L2 collocations observed through the PDT is affected by prompts. Three prompting words were tested: acceptable, commonly used, and natural. An English PDT was created by involving the congruent (L1=L2) and incongruent collocations both in existing (i.e., found in the BNC and COCA) collocations (Yes-items) and in non-existing collocations (No-items). The PDT was given to L1-Japanese university students (JS) and native speakers of English (NS), both of whom were residing in Japan at the time of testing. The JS additionally supplied their confidence rating on each item. Data were analysed with mixed effects modelling containing participant and item random intercepts and participant random slope. In addition to Prompt and Congruency (the primary interest of this study), Collocation Frequency, MI Scores, and Confidence were included in the analysis where applicable. In Yes-items, following effects were observed: Prompt and Collocation Frequency in both groups; Congruency, MI Scores, and Confidence in the JS. In No-items, significant effects were Congruency in both groups, Prompt in the NS, and Confidence in the JS. The observed effects of Prompt indicated that both groups of participants tended to affirm items when acceptable was in the prompt, leading to higher accuracies in Yes-items and lower accuracies in No-items than the other two prompting words. Despite this, however, the L1-L2 congruency effect was clearly observed in the JS. Therefore, the overall result suggests that, although prompts do have effects pointing to the importance of careful selection of the prompt, the L1 influence is recognizable through the PDT with different prompts (at least with those tested in this study). Interestingly, the NS also showed the congruency effect in No-items, implying the cross-linguistic influence from their L2 to L1. Further implications from the findings will be discussed in the presentation.

L2 Learners Do Not Drop the Subject - Syntactic Prominence in L1 and L2 Incidental Vocabulary Acquisition

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Keywords: incidental vocabulary acquisition, syntactic prominence, reading in L1 and L2

Abstract:

Syntactic prominence, i.e. the perceived importance of a sentence's constituents (Birch & Rayner, 2010; Mckoon, Ratcliff, Ward, & Sproat, 1993), has been shown to aid processing and memorization of prominent concepts (Mckoon et al., 1993), decrease shallow processing (Sanford & Sturt, 2002) and the likelihood of overlooking factual errors (Baker & Wagner, 1987) in L1. The present study represents the first attempt to explore and compare the role of syntactic prominence in L1 and L2 incidental vocabulary acquisition (IVA).

Twenty low frequent German nouns (e.g. "Zunder", i.e. tinder) were substituted by pseudowords to create novel words which were embedded in short texts pairs. The text pairs differed only in the structure of two sentences which contained the novel word either in high syntactic prominence condition (HSPC; i.e. as subjects of main clauses) or low syntactic prominence condition (LSPC; objects in subordinate clauses). Eighty L1 and 80 advanced L2 participants read 20 texts, half in each condition. After each text, several additional sentences were read in a self-paced manner, one containing the novel word preceded by either a semantically plausible (e.g. "feucht" – wet) or implausible adjective (e.g. "reich" – rich).

The results showed that both L1 and L2 participants successfully inferred the meaning of the novel words in both syntactic conditions as indicated by slower reading times in the implausible condition. However, while the implausibility effect appeared already at the novel word itself in both conditions in L1, in L2 it appeared at the novel word only in HSPC. In LSPC, the implausibility effect started to appear only on the subsequent spillover region. The earlier implausibility effect in HSPC indicates that the meaning of the novel words was more readily available and probably stronger represented.

We assume that the acquisition advantage for words with high syntactic prominence in L2 can be attributed to a higher allocation of reader's attention to prominent sentence constituents, thus following Givon's (1992) claims that syntax serves as "mental processing instructions" that direct attention. L1 participants did not display this benefit because of their high linguistic competence which allowed sufficient processing of both subject and object, main and subordinate clause. The results will be discussed with respect to IVA, shallow processing and noticing (Schmidt, 2012).

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Mckoon, G., Ratcliff, R., Ward, G., & Sproat, R. (1993). Syntactic Prominence Effects On Discourse Processes. Journal of Memory and Language, 32(5), 593–607.

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Structural and inherent case in the non-native processing of Spanish: Constraints on inflectional variability

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Keywords: L2 processing, case, morphosyntax, Spanish

Abstract:

In L2 sentence processing, L2 readers often fail to use inflectional morphology, such as case, gender or number and person agreement, in building an incremental representation of the input (e.g. Jiang, 2007). One set of approaches argues this reflects fossilization in adult L2 acquisition in that L2 speakers do not integrate (Jiang, 2007), proceduralize (Ullman, 2005) or fully recruit (Clahsen & Felser, 2006; Silva & Clahsen, 2010) morphosyntactic information in sentence comprehension.

On the other hand, computational approaches stipulate that, even when the use of inflection is not native-like, grammatical information is accessed and computed during L2 processing because it constrains the types of inflectional errors (e.g. Prévost & White, 2000; McCarthy, 2008). Most of the evidence comes from studies on grammatical gender agreement (e.g. White, Valenzuela, Kozlowska-Macgregor & Leung, 2004) and subject-verb agreement (e.g. McCarthy, 2012). In this paper, we test between these approaches and investigate whether constraints on inflectional variability extend to the on-line integration of different types of case marking in Spanish.

This paper reports an off-line acceptability judgment and an on-line eye-tracking study on case in Spanish, involving the polyfunctional case marker 'a' (Torrego, 1998). Twenty-four native and twenty-four L1 German non-native speakers of Spanish were tested on their sensitivity to case marking violations involving structural case with objects of ditransitive verbs (1) and to violations of inherent case for objects of transitive verbs (differential object marking; DOM (2)). In Spanish, DOM is required for animate objects of transitive verbs (2a), while inanimates are unmarked (2c Zagona, 2002).

(1) a. Federico prometió *al* vecino una revista sobre barcos.

b. *Federico prometió *el* vecino una revista sobre barcos.

'Federico promised the neighbour a magazine about ships.'

 (2) a. Verónica visita *al* presidente en la ciudad todos los meses. (animate DOM marked)

b. *Verónica visita *el* presidente en la ciudad todos los meses. (animate unmarked)

c. *Verónica visita *al* colegio en la ciudad todos los meses. (inanimate DOM marked)

d. Verónica visita *el* colegio en la ciudad todos los meses. (inanimate unmarked)

'Veronica visited {the president/the school} in the city every month.'

In off-line acceptability judgments, both groups distinguished between grammatical and ungrammatical case marking for all sentence types. In reading, native speakers showed processing slowdowns for all sentences, too. In contrast, the non-natives evinced slowdowns only for violations of structural case marking with ditransitive verbs (1b) and for the erroneous realization of DOM with inanimate objects (2c).They did not show processing slowdowns for the omission of DOM with animate objects (2b). This processing pattern cross-cuts the distinction between inherent and structural case marking and suggests that the L2 parser is sensitive to grammatical feature hierarchies (e.g. Harley & Ritter, 2002). The parser licenses default markings (animate unmarked) where DOM is required, yet flags feature clashes occasioned by the suppliance of DOM where it is not licensed by a [+animate] feature (inanimate marked). We discuss the findings in the context of approaches to L2 acquisition and processing.

The influence of caregivers' language training competence on early child SLA in educational settings

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Keywords: child SLA, metalinguistic knowledge, standardized assessment

Abstract:

As a consequence of migration and demographic change, early L2 training programs have been enforced all across Europe. There is high political pressure for these intervention programs to be successful but the results from evaluation studies are mixed. Several studies have questioned the quality of program implementation which also challenges the competences of the caregivers or teachers involved. Theories that model language training competence claim that caregivers must have (meta-)linguistic knowledge about language as a system, about SLA and about multilingualism to effectively support L2ers' linguistic development at kindergarten age. This knowledge should combine with abilities and action repertoires so that caregivers can identify learner needs accurately and can create language learning environments. These are efficient if they emulate naturalistic and successful SLA settings.

In this presentation, we focus on the question if caregiver language training competence promotes child L2 competence in the unstructured context of kindergarten education and present the first study that relies on standardized assessment of both competences. In a longitudinal test-retest design, we assessed the receptive and productive L2 German vocabulary and grammar of 86 children (mean age = 4;4 years, SD = 0;7) at the beginning and end of their participation in a 10 month language training program. The program was implemented by 24 members of kindergarten caretaker teams who regularly worked with small groups of about three children. The caretakers received further education to enhance their language training competence which was assessed with a standardized test. It contained 55 multiple-choice knowledge questions about language, SLA and language training as well as 18 situational judgment/ rating tasks to assess strategic and methodological abilities in the areas of language assessment and support.

For analysis, the children's linguistic development was linearly regressed onto the caregiver's language training competence score, relevant control variables (age, age of kindergarten entry, hours of language training received, German speaking context, time between assessments) and interaction terms. The final model explained 41% of the variance in child SLA development. The variables representing language training competence were the strongest predictors of increasing child L2 competence, followed by language training quantity. We also found that the caretakers' declarative metalinguistic knowledge is a prerequisite for successful child L2 training. Yet, it is not very effective unless it is met by substantial practical implementation skills. Our findings provide empirical support for linguistically motivated models of language training competence in the context of child SLA. We argue that applied linguistics should be further strengthened in the curricula of early-years professionals to support child language learning more effectively and economically.

Semantic and Grammatical Gender Agreement: Evidence from the L2-Acquisition of the German Gender System

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Keywords: Gender, Agreement, Agreement Hierarchy, Crosslinguistic influence

Abstract:

My contribution investigates the L2 acquisition of German gender agreement by 38 primary school pupils (age 8-10, onset of L2 with ca. 3 years) with either Turkish or Russian as their L1. Recent research on this topic has shown different sequences in the acquisition of either formal or semantic gender assignment rules (Dieser 2009, Marouani 2006, Montanari 2010, Kaltenbacher & Klages 2006, Ruberg 2013, Wegener 2000). Those results were primary based on the use of determiners while other gender sensitive targets (adjectives, relative and personal pronouns) were not investigated that well.

Therefore, one aim of my study was to explore if either formal or semantic agreement is first marked on all different types of gender sensitive targets. The second aim was to verify possible conceptual crosslinguisitic transfer effects depending on the children's L1: Only learners with L1 Russian know the grammatical category gender from their L1, while children with L1 Turkish do not.

The results of a written elicitation task, performed three times over the course of six months, show that the interpretation of all gender sensitive targets starts with the use of semantic strategies: At the beginning, both test groups mark semantic instead of grammatical agreement. The form-function mapping in both test groups relies on the same features: sex and animacy.

The expected difference between the two test groups was confirmed for the onset of marking grammatical gender: Learners with L1 Russian mark grammatical gender earlier than children with L1 Turkish, presumably because of conceptual transfer from their L1.

Furthermore, the data shows that semantic agreement appears more often on personal pronouns than on determiners, adjectives or relative pronouns. This confirms the predictions made by Corbett's (1991, 2006) Agreement Hierarchy.

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How L2 Proficiency Interacts with Implicit Learning in Structural Priming among Japanese EFL Learners

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Keywords: structural priming, proficiency, implicit learning

Abstract:

Language proficiency is obtained as a result of an extensive and extended series of learning episodes. Structural priming refers to the tendency for language users to reuse previously processed sentence structures (Bock, 1986) and can be used as an experimental method for studying structure changes in an individual learning episode. Here we examine how L2 proficiency interacts with implicit learning in structural priming.

232 Japanese EFL learners performed computer-based sentence production tasks twice at a three-month interval. Proficiency level was manipulated by using two universities that differ in their respective average Oxford Quick Placement Test scores, i.e., higher-proficiency students with CEFR B1 (n = 83) and lower-proficiency students with CEFR A2 (n = 149).

We used two types of structures for prime sentences; datives and questions. The former can be (syntactically) alternated and is frequently used in structural priming experiments both in L1 and L2/EFL settings to investigate syntactic representation in one's mental lexicon. In contrast, the latter is almost exclusively used for L2/EFL learners to investigate their development in creating question sentences over the course of experiments. As a matter of fact, the results of a series of related experiments we conducted regarding wh-questions show that Japanese EFL learners tend to experience difficulty in producing question sentences, which is an integral part of linguistic interactions, thus explaining in part why Japanese learners are poor in English communication.

Dative primes were PD sentences (e.g., the woman offered a dress to her friend) versus DO sentences (e.g., the woman offered her friend a dress) and question primes were wh-questions (e.g., what is the man eating) versus yes/no-questions (e.g., is the man eating the cake). Structure and lexical overlaps were manipulated within subjects.

Prime sentences were presented phrase-by-phrase in the center of a circle on the computer screen. Students had to select the matching phrases on the circle for primes and then produced target sentences on their own from a set of phrases on a circle which constrained the type of structure that was produced (e.g., "the butcher," "offered," "the worker," "the food," and "to" for datives).

Almost all of the students showed dative and question structural priming, but proficiency modulated this effect. For datives, higher-proficiency students increased DO production and this created a stronger priming effect. For question priming, the difference between yes/no- production after yes/no primes versus wh-primes was larger for higher-proficiency students. The results show that the ability to use the input prime sentence for learning was different depending on previous experience as expressed by proficiency. Thus, implicit learning is more effective for higher-proficiency students, while explicit teaching has an important role for lower-proficiency students, whose syntactic structure might not be fully represented in their mental lexicon for learning grammatical rules.

The above results are consistent with the previous studies of structural priming by Japanese EFL learners using dative structures in sentence completion tasks (e.g., Morishita, 2012, 2013). The task employed may provide a new way to train syntactic knowledge within a game-like e-learning experience.

French language teachers' understandings of the passé composé and the imparfait: A case study

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Abstract:

Foreign and second language (L2) teachers differ in their individual understandings of the language concepts they teach. These differences inevitably shape pedagogical decisions, for example during explicit classroom instruction. Research has indicated that explicit instruction is useful, but only if the instructional content is good. However, identifying good metalinguistic descriptions is a challenge requiring complex understandings of myriad factors, such as language concepts, the students' level, and their learning trajectory. To understand teachers' in-the-moment instructional decisions, we must delve into understanding their Knowledge about Language (KAL), or metalinguistic knowledge. In working with teachers, researchers must avoid prescribing what teachers should know and testing for discrete knowledge points, actions which result in a deficit framing of teachers. The purpose of my research is to investigate teachers' knowledge construction in realistic settings and illuminate its complexity.

In a small-scale study, I investigated the complexity of teachers' KAL using Andrea DiSessa's Pieces of Knowledge framework. This framework allows a more in-depth description of teacher KAL because it defines knowledge as being constructed at a specific point in time and as composed of a network of pieces as opposed to discrete whole concepts. In order to explore L2 teachers' KAL in a setting that approximates instructional contexts, I used Cognitive Clinical Interviews (CCIs), a task-based semi-structured interview method, to investigate how non-native speaker teachers of French as a foreign language understand the passé composé (composed past) and the imparfait (imperfect). Unlike previous research on teacher KAL, this study focused on providing a detailed description and analysis of the knowledge pieces that participants used to construct their understandings. The tasks, which included an oral description, a drawing, and correcting a sample student's work, were designed to elicit in-the-moment thinking that could realistically occur in a classroom setting.

Unsurprisingly, the participants had complex understandings of the past tenses, ranging from morphology to discourse and context. However, their reliance on one-to-one relationships between form and function and simplified rules-of-thumb were sometimes in conflict with their accurate intuitions about language in use. Overall, the results suggest that 1) language teachers can have complex understandings of language features and that these understandings are composed of core and peripheral knowledge; 2) it is plausible that language users have different levels and means of reliance on intuition and KAL, particularly when the two conflict; and 3) the knowledge constructed involves both domain-specific and domain-general knowledge.

This study has resulted in important theoretical and methodological advances for the study of teacher KAL. It serves as a first step in reframing teacher KAL and valuing teachers' multifaceted understandings. Additionally, the CCIs proved an innovative method for understanding teacher KAL in use. These advances can inform teacher education and methods of evaluating teacher KAL in professional and research settings.

Analyse du syntagme nominal en français et en anglais L2 chez des apprenants libanais

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Keywords: Acquisition L2, référenciation, discours narratif, interférence, syntagme nominale

Abstract:

Notre étude examine comment les apprenants de la langue maternelle, le libanais (L1) introduisent des entités dans un discours narratif en anglais L2 et en français L2, leurs premières langues étrangères.

Nos deux groupes sont des élèves scolarisés au Liban. Chaque groupe est divisé en trois sous-groupes de différents âges (10, 13 et 16 ans) et dont chacun est composé de 15 sujets excepté le groupe de 16 ans apprenant de l'anglais L2 (7 sujets). Ces apprenants produisent un récit de film à l'oral (Watorek, 2004a, b) en anglais et en français L2.

Des locuteurs anglophones, francophones et libanophones adultes natifs ont été soumis à la même tâche communicative pour déterminer le rôle des langues sources.

Dans cette recherche, nous établissons un bilan comparatif des erreurs observées au niveau de la structure du syntagme nominal (SN) lequel est un moyen linguistique essentiel pour encoder l'introduction des entités dans un discours narratif. Nous nous intéressons également à évaluer l'impact de la langue source, le libanais, sur l'acquisition de la L2 et à exposer les spécificités de chaque langue étudiée.

Le cadre d'analyse retenu est celui de l'approche fonctionnaliste (Perdue, 2002). Pour examiner l'interaction entre la structure informationnelle du discours et la structure phrastique des énoncés, nous nous appuyons sur le modèle de la quaestio (Klein et von Stutterheim, 1991).

Notre analyse des productions en L2 montre que les erreurs au niveau du SN sont variées et que la L1 (libanais) peut avoir un poids différent sur l'acquisition de la LC, soit au niveau lexical, soit au niveau morpho-syntaxique.

Chez les deux groupes, les apprenants de 10 ans ont des difficultés à former un SN composé correct (un maison de *garçon*)* ; (the door of the house of *a boy*)*.

Au niveau lexical, ils introduisent les entités inanimées par des lexèmes en libanais tout en la précédant d'un déterminant de la langue cible. Ce phénomène disparaît à l'âge de 13 et 16 ans.

En français L2, les erreurs de marquage de genre sont présentes chez les trois tranches d'âge : un déterminant masculin accompagne un nom féminin (le glace)*. Ces formes idiosyncrasiques pourraient montrer aussi l'impact de la L1. Par exemple, un nom féminin en français est masculin en arabe (le personne il)*.

Finalement, les apprenants du français L2 confondent l'utilisation de divers articles (partitif ou défini contracté) ce qui change complètement le sens de l'entité introduite. Par exemple, l'emploi d'un indéfini pour accompagner l'entité « glace » désigne de la « nourriture » et non « la glace d'un lac gelé ».

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Persistent effect of auditory word repetition on L2 pronunciation improvement: Controlling the amount and quality of the input of auditory words

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Keywords: pronunciation, repetition, English schwa, L2 phonological processing

Abstract:

Previously encountered auditory input is processed faster and more accurately than unheard input. This repetition effect occurs because the phonetic/phonological information in spoken input is encoded and stored in the listener's implicit memory, which facilitates subsequent speech processing (Church & Fisher, 1998).

Our previous research has shown that L2 learners of English can benefit from one exposure to auditory words in terms of processing speed (Sugiura & Hori, 2012; Hori & Sugiura, 2014). With intensive repetition of auditory input, the repetition effect could contribute to the improvement of L2 pronunciation. Several studies highlighted the effect of repetition (e.g., oral repetition, shadowing) in improving L2 pronunciation in a classroom setting (e.g., Mori, 2011; Ofuka & Gilbert, 2013). However, it is still uncertain how many times L2 learners need to repeat the auditory input and what specific linguistic features in the presented auditory input they can attend to and assimilate to improve their pronunciation.

To address these problems, two input factors that facilitate L2 acquisition, the amount and the quality of input, must be controlled during the repetition. As one of a series of experiments (Sugiura, 2013, 2014), the present study aimed to investigate whether the amount of input (5 or 10 times repetition) and the quality of input (word familiarity: high vs. low; stress patterns of a word: initial vs. final schwa) influence the improvement of the pronunciation of English schwa by Japanese speakers. The persistence of the effect (10min. vs. 1 week) was also examined.

Twelve Japanese university students at the CEFR A2 English level participated in the present study. In the study phase, the participants were asked to repeat 22 English auditory words immediately after the presentation and to engage in a simple 10-minute distracter task to clear their short-term memory. In the test phase, they repeated 33 words, including words both heard and unheard in the study phase, and their productions were recorded. They took the same test 1 week later as well. For the analysis, the duration ratio of schwa to a stressed vowel in a word (duration ratio) and the quality (the first and second formant frequencies: F1 and F2) were acoustically analyzed.

The statistical analyses showed no difference in the repetitive effect between the 5- and 10-time repetition and low and high familiarity word conditions for pronunciation improvement. Word stress patterns appeared to be related to the persistence of the repetition effect. For the duration ratio, the effect was obtained in both initial and final schwas in the 10-min. conditions, but the effect lasted 1 week for the words with initial schwa, which is a less common stress pattern for Japanese speakers. By contrast, regarding the quality, only in the F2 value of the final schwa, which is a more common stress pattern for Japanese speakers, did the repetitive effect lasted 1 week. We discuss the reasons for the greater repetition effect on weakly-represented structures and on the duration ratio than the quality from the perspective of L2 phonological processing and acquisition.

To what extent does L2 fluency depend on articulatory speed?

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Keywords: fluency, articulation, speech production

Abstract:

When speaking, there are a number of speech production processes that need to run smoothly in order for speakers to be fluent. First, when planning what to say (conceptualization), some plans may be more difficult than others, resulting in differences in utterance fluency. This holds for both speaking in the L1 and in the L2. However, the next step in speaking – constructing the utterances to be produced (formulation) – is usually more challenging and less automatized in the L2 than in the L1 because speakers have more linguistic knowledge and skills in their L1 compared to their L2. The last step in speaking involves articulating the formulated speech plan.

We hypothesize that articulatory skills depend in part on individual differences, irrespective of language, such as the speed with which an individual can accomplish the articulatory targets in the production of sound sequences. Moreover, articulatory skills in a second language would be dependent on the individual levels of automatization of the articulatory gestures in the L2, such that more proficient L2 speakers would be more efficient in producing L2 sounds.

This study investigates to what extent fluency in spontaneous speech can be explained by individual differences in L1 and L2 articulatory skills. In terms of Segalowitz's (2010) model of the L2 speaker, we investigate articulation, the last step in producing L2 speech at which dysfluencies might occur.

A group of EFL learners (n=51) performed three semi-spontaneous speaking tasks in their L1, Spanish, and three similar speaking tasks in their L2, English. In addition, all participants performed two articulatory fluency tasks. The first of these tasks, the diadochokinetic (DDK)-task, measured participants' speed at moving their articulators. The second task, a delayed picture naming task, carried out in both the L1 and the L2, measured the speed at which participants could articulate their speech plans.

The results show that, replicating earlier studies (De Jong et al., 2015), utterance fluency in the L2 can largely be predicted by the same fluency measures in the L1. This finding confirms the hypothesis that measures of L2 fluency are, for a substantial part, measures of personal speaking style, rather than of L2 proficiency. Initial analyses also suggest that speakers' faster movements of their articulators (as indicated by the DDK-task score) might be related to fewer pauses in L1 spontaneous speech, but not in L2 speech. We discuss the implications of these findings for Segalowitz's (2010) model of the L2 speaker and for the language testing practice.

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Do beat gestures and prosodic prominence help when acquiring novel words in a second language?

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Keywords: beat gestures, second language acquisition, audio, visual prominence

Abstract:

Researchers have shown that in human communication, gestures and speech are tightly integrated at the phonological (i.e., temporal), and semanticopragmatic levels (e.g., McNeill, 1992). Beat gestures are a type of rhythmic hand and arm movements that have been shown to be tightly interconnected with speech prominence (McNeill, 1992). Researchers have shown that speakers use auditory and visual marking of prominence to selectively encode and update discourse information and thus facilitate comprehension and recall.

In the field of second language acquisition, most studies have focused on the positive role of representational gestures on L2 vocabulary learning (e.g., Kelly et al., 2009). However, the potential beneficial effects of beat gestures lack solid investigation. Yet, beat gestures have been shown to aid in the recall of native words in both adults (So et al., 2012) and children (Igualada et al., 2014). Previous studies in the L2 field have brought into focus the fact that L2 learners use beat gestures profusely in situations of lack of recall (Gullberg, 1998). Yet to our knowledge, only one study has examined the role of beat gestures on word learning at the phonological level. Hirata et al. (2014) detected a moderate positive impact of hand syllabic-rhythmic beat gestures on auditory learning of phonemic vowel length contrasts in Japanese.

Our study aims at assessing the potential effects of prosodic (e.g., focal pitch accents) and visual (e.g., beat gesture) prominence on L2 novel vocabulary acquisition. Participants will be presented with lists of L2 words in one of the following four conditions: 1) accompanied by no prominent prosody and no gesture; 2) with marked prosody but no gestures; 3) accompanied by beat gestures but by unmarked prosody; 4) accompanied by prominent prosody and beat gestures ("natural beats" condition). We will use an adaptation of So et al. (2012). We expect a positive effect of naturally-produced prosodically prominent beat gestures on novel L2 vocabulary memorization.

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Comparing Input and Output in Early Language Development of Swedish as a Foreign Language

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Keywords: input, output, written language, Swedish, Foreign Language acquisition, verb phrases

Abstract:

In Usage-Based Approaches of language, frequency in the input is regarded as one of the most important factors of language development (see for instance Ellis, 2013 and Goldberg, 2006). Yet, there still is a lot unknown when it comes to input frequencies, because this factor has long been neglected in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research. Furthermore, it is usually quite complicated to investigate the role of input on the learners output. Second Language (L2) Learners often have diverse backgrounds and receive different types and amounts of input. It is therefore not straightforward to study the role of the input in natural second language development in a SLA context. Sometimes artificial languages have been used as an attempt to overcome these problems, but those have indisputable restrictions. In this study, I propose (following Dimroth, Rast, Starren and Watorek, 2013) that beginning Foreign Language learners that are learning a language completely unknown to them at that point, form an interesting group to study the relationship between input and output. Firstly, the learning setting is a controlled setting. Secondly, due to the fact that learners have no prior knowledge and no or little contact with the language outside the classroom, the input they receive is surveyable. In the current case study I looked at verb constructions in written input and output of 51 beginning native Dutch speaking learners of Swedish as a Foreign Language in Belgium. I compared the written input during the first 12 weeks of language development to the written assignments they produced during that same period. During data analysis, the focus was on complex predicates. It will be shown that there are frequency effects on both form and meaning in the output, but that other factors, such as saliency and form-to-function mapping may also play an important role.

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How to measure and integrate socio-affective variables in the evaluation of CLIL

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Keywords: CLIL, Belgium, socioaffective, language attitudes, motivation, intergroup contact

Abstract:

In an era of internationalisation, triggering increased multilingualism, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) provides an interesting alternative to traditional education for the acquisition of an additional language. A new interdisciplinary research project entitled 'Assessing CLIL' has just been launched and aims to tackle the interplay between linguistic, cognitive and educational aspects of the CLIL approach in French-speaking Belgium. Despite abundant literature indicating higher proficiency in the target language for CLIL learners (Admiraal et al. 2006, Dalton-Puffer 2011, Lasagabaster 2008), it largely remains unclear to what extent, in what respect and thanks to which (internal and external) processes/factors CLIL learners outperform traditional learners.

The present study is part of this evaluation project and focuses on socio-affective variables. While it is established that language attitudes and motivation play a significant role in language learning (see amongst others Gardner 1985, Dörnyei 2003 and, for Belgium, Mettewie 2004), this study wishes to investigate the attitudinal profiles and motivational processes in CLIL, including the possible impact of different target languages (Dutch and English in this case) and individual variables, compared to non-CLIL contexts. The aim is to isolate and/or integrate into a model, socio-affective variables both as outcomes of the specific language learning and contact situation CLIL and as predictors of linguistic and cognitive variables. Our hypotheses are that CLIL contexts might not only affect language attitudes, but also enhance self-efficacy and perceived task value (Wentzel & Wigfield 2009) and, as such, influence cognitive, linguistic, and socio-cultural outcomes.

These hypotheses will be tested through three types of data collection within a longitudinal design, comparing CLIL-pupils in Dutch or English in the last two years of primary and secondary education with equivalent non-CLIL pupils. The first data type consists of a large quantitative background and socio-affective questionnaire, which will be administered at the beginning and end of the overall data collection. In the mean time, complementary qualitative data will be collected through focus group sessions, tackling pupils' language use, intergroup contacts, attitudes, motivation, emotions and perceptions about the teaching/learning experience in CLIL/non-CLIL. Finally, qualitative and quantitative data will be contrasted with classroom observations in an attempt to capture the role of socio-affective variables within the teaching/learning process in situ.

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Guangwai Lancaster Chinese Learner Corpus: Filling the gap in learner corpus research

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Keywords: learner corpus, Chinese, interlanguage

Abstract:

So far, the research in the area of learner language has focused predominantly on English as the target language (Paquot, 2014; Granger, 2013; Pravec, 2002) . However, with the rise of China as a global power, Chinese as a major world language has become an increasingly popular foreign language. As a result, the number of L2 Chinese learners is growing rapidly (e.g. Dube, 2009). Yet, the specific challenges that learning Chinese presents still remain to be systematically investigated. In this context, a learner corpus can provide the much needed systematic and robust evidence about the process of L2 Chinese acquisition and help both researchers and L2 practitioners.

This poster presents Guangwai Lancaster Chinese Learner Corpus, a one-million-word corpus of learner Mandarin Chinese, which is a result of the cooperation between the Guandong University of Foreign Studies and Lancaster University. The corpus has both a spoken (400,000 tokens) and a written (600,000 tokens) part and covers a variety of task types: The written corpus data range from essays under test conditions to free compositions; the spoken corpus data consist of structured oral tests and free conversations. In terms of the interaction, the corpus includes both dialogues and monologic tasks. The corpus covers three broadly defined proficiency levels: beginner, intermediate and advanced and includes speakers from 72 different countries (L1 and cultural backgrounds).

The poster focuses on the following areas:

- Corpus design and methodology

- The nature of spoken and written L2 Chinese

- Error coding (different levels: grammatical, lexical, collocational etc.)

- Availability and release of the data

How do Japanese ESL learners perform on a test of phonological manipulation designed for English-L1 dyslexia?

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Keywords: Phonological Manipulation Skill, Reading, Testing, English learners

Abstract:

The motivation for this research is the observation of frequent read-aloud miscues among Japanese university students, and the slow rate of reading on simplified graded readers by many post-secondary learners. Reading in an L2 can be tiring when the writing systems are similar, before considering the effort necessary when they are not. Due to the ''Matthew Effect" (Stanovich, 1985), whereby people read more if they find it comfortable and less if they do not, a gap opens between more and less able learners. Therefore, we investigated what components of the second-language reading complex may remain undeveloped among Japanese learners. Word recognition in different languages employs different phonological processes; therefore, inadequately developed skill in the second-language reading processes may lead to poor decoding. Indeed, research demonstrates (Coulson, 2014) that Japanese English learners have significantly weaker word reading skills compared to the Korean English learners, whose L1 writing system is alphabetic. The situation regarding Japanese learners requires formal assessment. However, practical tests of word recognition subskills for second-language learners are not widely available. Therefore, we adapted a test from Wydell and Kondo (2003), replicating their methodology to test the phonological skill of a Japanese-English bilingual diagnosed with dyslexia. Copies of our adapted test will be distributed in the presentation.

We do not assume dyslexia among Japanese English learners. Rather, the use of this test format aims to elucidate the state of phonological skill of word-recognition ability in ordinary learners. The subjects were university students at discrete proficiency levels.

The results show that this skill of phonological manipulation can be remarkably underdeveloped in Japanese L1 English learners. The average skill of subjects with lower proficiency was similar to the objective standard of Wydell and Kondo's English-reading disabled subject. Higher-proficiency subjects performed much better. The results do not necessarily imply dyslexia, although some lower-proficiency students may, in fact, be English-dyslexic. Instead, they primarily focus attention on the lack of appropriate reading skills development in English education in Japan, and its possible effect on overall proficiency. This situation principally indicates a need for prolonged phonics training and more extensive L2 reading.

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Oral fluency in second language: disfluencies as signs of development?

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Keywords: L2 fluency, cognitive processing, error analysis

Abstract:

Oral fluency is widely used in assessing L2 proficiency, and it is one of the five proficiency dimensions in Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, Council of Europe, 2007). However, the criteria for assessing fluency are unspecified and rather general. This may be problematic, as all the features of oral fluency may not be as indicative of proficiency level as others. For example, some aspects of pausing may be more related to personal speaking style than L2 proficiency (De Jong et al., 2013). Furthermore, as Ehri (1991) proposes, certain types of errors may even be connected with development of language skills.

The current study examines errors based on the limitations of cognitive processing (Segalowitz, 2010) and whether some errors, or disfluencies, may be hypothesized to be to be due to more resources available for language processing. It seeks a detailed analysis of disfluencies in oral tasks, manifested in e.g., trade-off and monitoring own speech (guessing, self-correction). The main question is to see whether different types of disfluencies are more associated with different-level learners and whether some disfluencies could be in fact indicative of development in language skills rather than signs of deficiencies.

Participants were Finnish-speaking learners of English as L2, from Grade 4, Grade 8 and Grade 2 in gymnasium (N = 637). Oral fluency was measured in both L1 and L2, in lexical access tasks (rapid naming and word list reading). Different categories of disfluencies were compared to L2 writing proficiency, measured with age-appropriate writing tasks and assessed in CEFR scale. Comparisons were made independently to both different grades and CEFR levels to see whether some disfluencies that are associated with certain proficiency levels, and especially whether some are more connected to more proficient language learners. These results may help to refine the use of oral fluency in L2 assessment.

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Impact of creativity and control on oral production of L2 German: a closer look at production strategies

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Keywords: creativity, control, oral production, production strategies

Abstract:

According to the multi-competence concept (Cook 2007) it should be interesting to observe cognitive flexibility and creativity of the L2 user in an instructed learning context instead of comparing the output only with the normative description of the target language in task-based production (Housen et al. 2012).

In recent years many researchers have applied the dynamic system framework to SLA research (de Bot et al. 2013; Segalowitz 2010; Larson-Freeman & Cameron 2008) where variability is considered to be the result of systems' flexibility and adaptability to the environment. Among many individual learner variables that have been explored (Dewaele 2014; Dörnyei & Kormos 2000) the cognitive factor "learner creativity" has been neglected until recently (Albert & Kormos 2011). Based on a dynamic view of language use our aim is to go beyond the description of structural characteristics of languages and investigate some effects of learner's creativity by considering the way they deal with production difficulties as an adaptive and creative process (Kormos 2006).

In this study we would like to find out some characteristics of a creative learner in comparison to a less creative learner. We consider lexical innovation in lexical retrieval as an illustration of learner's ability to come up with new solutions, to take risks and to show flexibility, thus as a result of his creativity. Twenty L1 French university students of L2 German with an average level of B2 were shown 30 sets of 2-line drawings and asked to explicit the differences between the two drawings. Based on the criteria of "lexical innovation" we distinguished two groups of learners. We compared their results with respect to accuracy (error analysis), L1 code-switching, control activities observed through self-repair and on-line meta-comments.

Our hypothesis is that, when facing difficulties, creative learners will rely more on L2 based strategies (e.g., loan word creation) than on L1 based strategies (code-switching). Moreover, they will use more on-line meta-comments and self-repairs and they will probably produce more errors to maintain creative fluency by using flexibility, imagination and risk taking.

Preliminary results show that creative learners use all kinds of possibilities to maintain fluency in oral speech production. They create words in L2 and correlatively use code switches. Indeed, a creative L2 speaker will use all possibilities to maintain communication.

They also produce far more meta-comments and self-repair (creative learners are able to correct themselves significantly more) than less creative learners. More creative learners control more and show more productivity which confirms previous results of Albert & Kormos (2011).

These first results promote learner creativity as an important variable in the analysis of L2 speech production which therefore must be considered as a dynamic process and cannot be observed only via proficiency tests. Also these results question the role of code-switching which is not always well accepted in instructed learning even though it seems facilitating in language interaction. Further studies could help to better understand the learner's creativity as a part of cognitive flexibility.

Investigating second dialect imitation by Spanish speakers: an acoustic study

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Abstract:

This study aims to determine whether equivalence classification (e.g., Flege, 1995) operates in the same way in second dialect (D2) phonological acquisition in comparison with second language (L2) phonological acquisition. As such, it will investigate assibilated rhotic production of Ecuadorian Spanish by Andalusian Spanish speakers. Although there has been considerable growth in interest in D2 phonological acquisition (e.g., Babel, 2009; Nielson, 2011), not much is known about whether the same mechanisms that are responsible for L2 production also underlie D2 production. Although Ecuadorian Spanish is characterized by assibilated/fricative rhotics (e.g., Lipski, 1994), Andalusian Spanish is mainly characterized by a trill and a tap (e.g., Blecua, 2001). Moreover, it includes sibilants such as [ʃ] as an allophonic variant of the affricates such as [t͡ʃ] (e.g., Carbonero, 2001). Therefore, based on Flege (1995), similar to English speakers (See Rafat, 2015), assibilated rhotics should be classified as 'similar' sounds and produced as a [ʃ] or other sibilants. 10 adult Andalusian speakers were asked to do two imitation/repetition task. The participants were tested with real words (30), nonce words (30) and fillers (30) at two different times. The stimuli for the imitation task were recorded by a male speaker of Ecuadorian Spanish. The results were analyzed both auditorily and acoustically. Whereas in Rafat (2015) naïve English-speaking participants mostly produced assibilated rhotics as a [ʃ], the preliminary results of our study show that 34.25% of the assibilated rhotics were produced as assibilated rhotics, 24.25% as trills, 25% as taps, 13.5% as sibilants and 3% as laterals. Acoustic measurements (e.g., duration, center of gravity, and intensity) of assibilated rhotics produced by Andalusian speakers will also be reported and compared to the characteristics of the assibilated rhotics produced by the male Ecuadorian speaker in the study. In all, the production patterns of Andalusian speakers of Spanish diverge from previously reported L2 production data. We will explain the new findings by considering the phonemic status of [ʃ] (or lack thereof it) in Spanish and knowledge of the Spanish language.

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Nominal and Verbal Morphology Acquisition in German-Turkish Children: Evidence from an Elicited-Imitation Task

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Keywords: L2 German Turkish, Elicitation, Acquisition Nominal Morphology, Gender, Case

Abstract:

Production studies have shown that German children master most aspects of verbal morphology at age three (Clahsen, 1986) and of nominal morphology at age five (Mills, 1985; Bewer, 2004). For L2 children, verbal morphology is also acquired relatively quickly (Ahrenholz, 2006), but the full acquisition of the German nominal inflection system has been shown to be a difficult and long process (Wegener, 1995 a). This might in particular due to the semantically intransparent gender system and to the syncretism of many forms. The current study aimed at confirming these observations from production data with an elicited imitation task. In the current study we explored how L1 (n=25) and L2 (n=17) Turkish-German children (mean age=7,3) performed during an elicited imitation test, in which they were presented with both grammatically correct (n=12) and grammatically incorrect items (n=12). The rationale behind it is that comparing learners´ elicited sentences with the original auditory stimulus provides insights into their linguistic competence (Erlam, 2006). Changes of the items during the repetitions, such as the failure to accurately imitate grammatically correct sentences and to normalize grammatically incorrect sentences are considered to mirror participants´ linguistic preferences. In previous studies, participants were observed to change the items in ways that closely resemble their own spontaneous speech (Schimke, 2011; Brown, 1973). Going beyond production data, the inclusion of incorrect items in the imitation task furthermore allows insights into which incorrect items are perceived as so deviant that they are almost always normalized, compared to incorrect items that are repeated even though rarely spontaneously produced. There were four types of items, focusing on two nominal phenomena: 1) case marking/gender agreement of the article 2) adjective inflection and on two verbal ones: 3) word order and 4) subject-verb agreement. Children were asked to listen to the items and to repeat them after having performed a quick drawing task, in order to decrease the probability that they repeated the structures verbatim. The findings reveal significant differences between the L1 and the L2 children during the repetition of the correct items for the two noun phrase categories 1,2) (L1 children= 99%, 97% vs. L2 children=73%, 69%; p < .0001). As for the incorrect items, for the L1 children, there were no high differences among the four conditions. For the L2 children the categories 1,2) were again the major source of errors (they were predominantly not normalized) and were significantly different from the L1 children (L1 children= 75%, 76% vs. L2 children=33%, 33%; p < .0001). Interestingly, the L2-children were more different from the L1 children in their treatment of incorrect than in their treatment of correct items. The discussion of the findings will be based on the kind of errors (that is incorrectly repeated and not normalized sentences) by the two groups for the two categories 1,2), during which the major difficulties have been detected. This analysis allows us to get an overview over the errors and reflect on their nature.

A Graph-theoretical Approach to Understanding Japanese EFL Learners' Lexical Organisation and Development

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Abstract:

The mental lexicon is an enormously complex cognitive system, and any insights into its organisation will help us to understand the ways in which words are acquired, stored, and retrieved by EFL learners. The lexicon has been likened in the past to various systems of storage and retrieval; nowadays, the metaphor of choice is that of a network, or 'giant multidimensional cobweb' (Aitchison, 2003).

Attempts have been made to formalise the idea of vocabulary networks and determine their properties (see, e.g., Meara, 2009). One promising approach is the use of graph-theoretical techniques to examine semantic relationships between words in the lexicon. Graph theory can be used to represent the lexicon as a network in which words are 'nodes' and the connections between them are 'links'.

In an exploratory study conducted by the presenters, Gephi (Bastian et al., 2009), a program for large network analysis and visualisation, was used to examine the characteristics of the network generated from an L1 English speaker's word association data (Fraser et al., 2014). The graphs produced by Gephi demonstrated the potential of this software package as a visualisation tool, clearly showing the connectivity of vocabulary items, the position of words within a network, and clustering patterns.

The aim of the present study is to replicate the native-speaker experiment in an attempt to answer the following questions:

1) How typical are these native-speaker responses?

2) How do the network structures of L2 learners at various levels differ from those of native speakers, and what do these differences tell us about the developing lexicon?

3) Are there recurring patterns of linkage that can be observed?

The subjects, five native Japanese learners of English at different levels of proficiency, and five native English speakers, were asked to produce all possible associations within a set of 100 carefully selected high-frequency stimulus words. The word association dataset was imported into Gephi for analysis, and the resulting network visualisations are presented here. The graphs show clear differences between L1 and L2 speakers' word association and clustering patterns, suggesting that visualising lexical knowledge in this way (i.e., as a large-scale structure) is much more informative than looking at lists of individual words. Our preliminary findings imply that by increasing the number of stimulus words, it may be possible to identify a 'core lexicon' and important features such as the 'hubs' that constitute the framework of the developing vocabulary network.

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Set the stage! Looking at the effect of drama-based approaches on L2 oral accuracy, complexity and fluency

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Abstract:

Recognition of the contribution of drama to the field of L2 instruction as a compelling approach for enhancing students' oral skills has been growing over the last years. To date, studies into the value of drama in foreign or second language acquisition have mainly been conducted when drama was implemented within the University context (Miccoli 2003, Ryan Scheutz & Colangelo 2004) or as extracurricular activity. However, the need to extend drama to other settings becomes imperative (Beliveau 2013) as well as the need for substantial inclusion of plays in language teaching (Almond 2005, Carroli 2008). On the other hand, the effectiveness of authentic contemporary plays both as texts and as process-oriented full-scale performance in the compulsory high-school curriculum is currently under-researched (Schewe 2013). Additionally, Marini Maio (2012) highlights the lack of quantitative data in terms of the gains made by students who learned through drama-based approaches in their oral skills. Furthermore, no study using drama pedagogy up to date quantified students' achievement on various indicators of measures of Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency (CAF).

The present experimental study, which employed a mixed-method approach, has been conducted longitudinally with Italian students in their final year of high-school with a level of proficiency which ranged from intermediate low to advanced low (ACTFL). The experimental group (n=10) was exposed to two interventions conducted over a term each: a text-based approach in the first term followed by a process-oriented full-scale performance in the second term, for a total of 40 lessons lasting 60 minutes each. The research question addressed in this paper is: Within drama-based method, which type of drama promotes Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency better: text-based or performance-based instruction? Quantitative data has been collected through the implementation of an oral pre-test, a mid-test and an immediate post-test by implementing a monologic task: students were required to re-tell the story after reading a self-standing play extract. No time limitation was imposed. Statistical results using SPSS on 1) Global accuracy calculated as percentage of errors per t-unit 2) Subordination complexity calculated as ratio of clauses per As-unit, 3) Breakdown fluency, 4) Speed fluency, 5) Repair fluency and 6) Phonation time ratio achieved and trade-off hypothesis will be discussed. Automatic scripts in PRAAT were used for the analyses of fluency. The findings display dissimilarities in the effectiveness of text-based and performance-based approach to developing various measures of CAF of L2 learners.

The Processing of Ditransitive Verbs in Turkish-English Bilinguals

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Abstract:

In theoretical syntax, prepositional object (to-dative) sentences (PO: S-V-O1-Prep-O2) and double object (DO: S-V-O2-O1) sentences have been widely discussed cross-linguistically. While the general view suggests that PO and DO sentences are different structures used for different contexts (e.g., DO is used for causativity), some ditransitive verbs in English allow both PO and DO structures (e.g., send, give). On the other hand, Turkish PO-DO sentences do not have this difference. Turkish has a DO structure (S-O1-O2-V) marked with Accusative and Dative case. Interestingly, Turkish has free word order; therefore, it allows for the scrambling of two objects, and regardless of the word order, the case marking never changes (PO: S-O1ACC-O2DAT-V, DO: S-O2DAT-O1ACC-V). Therefore, Turkish-English bilinguals can process these structures easily but due to the lack of case marking in English, English DO sentences can be hard to process for Turkish-English bilinguals.

Empirically, syntactic priming studies with bilinguals have also focused on PO-DO sentences, and the results show that when primed with a PO or a DO sentence in one of their languages, participants produce the primed structure in their other language. However, this effect is only found when the two languages have the same word order. This is relevant for a particular bilingual group that highly relies on word order - simultaneous interpreters (SI). Simultaneous Interpreting is a cognitively demanding task in which the interpreter has to process two languages at the same time. Since SIs have to be quick and precise, following word order dissimilarities is crucial to perform the task.

The current study investigates whether a free word order effect enhances the processing of PO-DO structures between Turkish-English by focusing on Turkish-English late bilinguals, specifically on simultaneous interpretation students in Turkey. The stimuli consisted of Turkish-English sentences containing PO-DO structures. Participants heard two sentences consecutively, either in a match or mismatch condition in English or in Turkish. Participants judged whether the sentences are the same (within-language) or the correct translation of the previous sentence (cross-language).

Participants were students of Turkish-English translation and interpreting in Turkey (n=39). Within-Turkish results showed that participants processed PO-DO sentences similarly, meaning that they did not have preferences for PO-DO word order. However, when they had a mismatch condition in Turkish, participants found DO final pairs more similar than PO final ones (p= .009). Within-English test results showed that participants distinguished PO sentences more than DO sentences (p< .001), suggesting that participants recognized prepositionally marked sentences. Moreover, when they heard a mismatch condition cross-linguistically (English first-Turkish second), they again judged DO final pairs to be the correct translation compared to PO final pairs (MD= -9.9, p= .013). These results suggest that participants follow DO word order in Turkish even when they hear a PO structure in English, and they process PO sentences better in English. Further investigation will show why Turkish participants have a DO preference in Turkish, and whether free word order is an advantage or a disadvantage in bilingualism.

Cross-linguistic influence in L3 acquisition: The production of Spanish spirants by L1 Romanian-L2 English speakers

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Keywords: L3 acquisition, phonology, crosslinguistic influence

Abstract:

Several studies have focused on the L2 acquisition of Spanish [β ð ɣ] by native English speakers (e.g., Zampini, 1994; Face & Menke, 2009); however, no studies have investigated spirantization among native speakers of languages other than English. Moreover, the L3 production of these segments remains unexplored. Accordingly, this study examined the L3 production of [β ð ɣ] by L1 Romanian-L2 English speakers; while Romanian lacks all 3 spirants, English has a fricative similar to the Spanish interdental approximant [ð]. It was predicted that mastery of the English interdental fricative /ð/ may result in a higher rate of spirantization when producing the Spanish interdental [ð], but not bilabial [β] or velar [ɣ], since positive transfer from the L2 into the L3 can occur if a speaker is highly proficient in the L2 (Gut, 2010; Llama, Cardoso & Collins, 2010; Wrembel, 2010). Participants included 10 L1 Romanian-advanced L2 English-advanced L3 Spanish speakers; their oral proficiency was determined using native speaker judgements of the participants reading a passage in the L2 and L3. Participants performed a repetition task in which they produced [β ð ɣ] intervocalically in unstressed syllables. Duration and manner were measured in order to categorize productions as stops, approximants or fricatives. Results show that spirantization rates were highest for bilabial [β] (95%), followed by interdental [ð] (58%), and lastly, velar [ɣ] (45%). Although [ð] did not have the highest rate of spirantization of all 3 sounds, regarding the type of spirant produced, the interdental was realized as a fricative more often than as an approximant (32% versus 25%, respectively), while the bilabial [β] and the velar [ɣ] were produced as approximants more often than fricatives ([β]: 31% fricative, 63% approximant; [ɣ]: 20% fricative, 25% approximant). This suggests that mastering the L2 English interdental may result in positive English-based transfer, at least to some degree, since as a spirant, [ð] was a fricative more often than an approximant. This study contributes to the growing field of L3 phonological acquisition by investigating the role of cross-linguistic influence in learners' L3 production.

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Mediating factors for alignment in second language users of German

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Keywords: alignment, social perception, German, variation in acquisition

Abstract:

Communication is a joint activity and interlocutors tend to interactively align with each other's expressions, constructions, pronunciations, etc. In psycholinguistics, the cognitive mechanisms underlying alignment have been described as largely automatic operations facilitating communication (Garrod and Pickering 2009), whereas the socio-psychological mechanisms for reducing linguistic differences between oneself and one's interlocutor are well described in the sociolinguistic context by the literature on accommodation theory (Giles, Coupland, and Coupland 1991). Weatherholtz et al. (2014) suggested that syntactic alignment is to some extent independent of social perception, but factors such as the perception of standardness of the interlocutor, the perceived similarity to the speaker, etc. mediate the degree of alignment. More recently, alignment and its possible implications for learning have also entered second language research (e.g. Atkinson 2010; Trofimovic et al. 2014).

The poster focuses on the relevance of social mediation in alignment mechanisms in second language users by contrasting the verbal behaviour of first and second language users in a picture description task that was introduced and accompanied by a speaker whose characteristics of speech varied along two dimensions: use of specific syntactic constructions and speaking either more standard or colloquial German. All participants completed questionnaires on their language learning history – if applicable –, their contact with and use of colloquial German, their perception of the speaker in particular and regional forms of speech in general. The speech data is analysed in the light of this information. Does the social evaluation of the speaker in general as well as the perception of non-standard, i.e. more colloquial ways of speaking, in particular affect the degree of alignment by first and second language users? Do both groups of speakers align in the same way to standard/non-standard-like pronunciation (as measured by /a-/raising) and the usage of specific syntactic constructions? The study aims at further investigating the relevance of alignment on different linguistic levels in second language users, the mediating effects of social and perceptual factors on alignment and their implications for the learning of a second language. Finally, the relevance of alignment in learning and using a language underlines the importance of combining social and cognitive aspects in language sciences in general.

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A cross-sectional acoustic study of L2 intonation patterns in 1st to 3rd year French students of English

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Keywords: anglais, français, intonation, F0, acoustique

Abstract:

Our aim was to determine whether the production of intonation contours by French students of English improved over the course of their first three years at university. Nineteen 1st year, sixteen 2nd year, thirty-four 3rd year students, as well as four native speakers of English, were asked to read a dialogue that we had specially designed to elicit specific intonation contours. The recordings were manually segmented into intonation phrases (IPs), and the fundamental frequency (F0) of each of the (52 contours × 73 participants =) 3796 IPs was computed with Praat software. Due to variation in the duration of each token of the same type of IP, and the resulting varying number of F0 values per token, resampling was performed so that each IP was eventually characterized by the same number of F0 values (11). Objective frequency values were then converted to semitones with reference to 1 Hz for more relevance in terms of perception. In order to compensate for individual differences in average F0 – partly arising from biological constraints – the minimum pitch value in each IP was subtracted from the other values. We then chose one native speaker and computed the Euclidean distance between each IP for each participant and the native's corresponding IP. Our expectation was that the distance between a learner's F0 pattern and the corresponding native F0 pattern for a given IP would decrease as we go from 1st to 2nd, and then from 2nd to 3rd year students. One-way analyses of variance were performed, one for each IP, with Level (1st, 2nd or 3rd year) as the between-subjects factor and Distance as the dependent variable. Out of the 46 analyses (6 IPs had to be discarded), only five reached statistical significance, showing improvement for contours 16 ("Do you know what the Dalai Lama said at Subway") and 18 ("What did he say?"), and worsening in the remaining 3 IPs. Note however that individual variation was substantial.

It remains to be seen if this small number of significant comparisons stems from the students genuinely failing to achieve better intonation contours over the years or if our metric, despite our efforts to factor out non-linguistic individual differences, turns out to be too crude. We are currently working on more fine-grained parameters involving the segmentation of a subset of our IPs into syllables, and the final presentation will include results from a perceptual experiment, which will be correlated with acoustic cues.

The trouble with /v/: Is there a perception and production trade off with /f/ for adult native speakers of Bengali at advanced proficiency levels in L2 English?

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Keywords: L1 phonological transfer, fricative acquisition, shared and not shared in the L1

Abstract:

Labiodental fricatives /f/ and /v/ are not shared between Bengali and English. In the early stages of learning this should, according to the Perceptual Assimilation Model (Best, 1995), amount to good discrimination between the two L2 sounds as English /f/ and /v/ are both assimilated, but not categorized, within the L1 phonological space. For advanced or bilingual learners, the Speech Learning Model (Flege, 1995) proposes that new category formation will occur, facilitating both perception and production which should outperform that of those sounds which are perceived as 'similar' to existing categories in the L1.

This paper focuses on the discrepancies in both the perception and production of L2 English word-initial /f/ and /v/ from two L1 Bengali adult speakers as part of a pilot simulated longitudinal study. As a pilot, the simulated longitudinal study was primarily intended to determine whether evidence of speech learning of sounds, both shared and not shared between the L1 and L2, could be assessed by a process of extrapolation, in imitation of a true longitudinal study. That is, the production and perception of L2 sounds between adult learners from the same L1 background with differing linguistic experience, given a difference of some twenty years in L2 language experience. An AX word discrimination test was used to test perception, whereby the learner was asked to identify two tokens as either similar or different. For production, an imitation production test was conducted with tokens complimenting the perception test, whereby the learners were asked to repeat tokens, which were then transcribed by three native speakers of English as an acceptability judgement test. Only three corresponding acceptance judgements were taken as evidence of intelligibility. In reference to both the perception and production tests, spectrograms and wavelengths were also analaysed, using PRAAT (Boersma and Weenink, 2005)

The findings suggest that the perception and production of the voiced labiodental fricative /f/ had, over considerable time, become compromised as the perception and production of /v/ appeared to develop. In other words, the elementary or naïve learner, in the early stages of learning, had the ability to both perceive and produce L2 /f/ better than the advanced/bilingual learner. At the same time, the elementary learner was unable to produce any L2 word with word-initial /v/ in a target-like fashion, and all transcriptions were annotated with /b/. Whilst the advanced/bilingual learner was able to produce a 'target-like' /v/ in approximately 50% of expected language occasions, the payoff in the production of /f/ was seemingly compromised.

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Costs of the Keyword Method: Cognitive Impairment Due to Confusing Semantic Links in Second Language Vocabulary Learning

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Keywords: vocabulary acquisition, teaching techniques

Abstract:

The current study is embedded in the ongoing debate about vocabulary learning, and whether explicit vocabulary instruction in the foreign-language classroom leads to the same language competence as implicit, first-language acquisition (Krashen, 2003). Mnemonic techniques are one option for explicit vocabulary instruction, and one of the most researched techniques in the field of SLA has been the keyword method, first studied by Atkinson and Raugh (1975). In the keyword mnemonic a word in the native language that is orthographically similar to the target foreign word is used to link the target word and its translation via an interactive image. Some studies have shown that treatment groups using the keyword method perform better on recognition and recall tasks than control groups, but others have called into question the usefulness of this technique, raising concerns about 'mnemonic dependence', slower word retrieval and interference with future vocabulary learning (van Hell & Candia Mahn, 1997). The hypothesis for the current experiment is that use of the keyword method might impair future lexical acquisition because of the confusing, artificial semantic associations that it creates. To test this theory an experiment was designed in which L1 English-speaking participants learned a set of German words using either the keyword method or rote rehearsal. All participants learned the first set of words to 100% accuracy, and then received a second set to learn. Words in the second set were categorized as either novel or non-novel. Novel items had never been seen before by either group while non-novel items had been seen only by the keyword group because these items had been used as keyword links for target items in the 1st phase. It was predicted that, for non-novel target items, recall accuracy would be lower and recognition latency higher for the keyword group. The results of the study were intriguing, though only marginally significant. All of the data trended in the direction predicted, but only the one-way ANOVA for the cued recall data revealed a marginally significant interaction of group and word novelty (whether target items had previously been used as keywords or not). Marginally significant between-group differences were also found for recall and reaction time for old words only. It is likely that straightforward modifications to the current experiment (such as refining the choice of target items) would address most of the limitations and show more statistically robust results. This study suggests that due to the trending in the data, future research in this area is warranted and could contribute to psycholinguistic theory regarding lexical acquisition, as well as inform pedagogical practices in foreign-language classrooms.

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Exploring the acquisition of prosodic competence: word stress in the speech of Polish-English bilingual children

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Keywords: bilingual children, prosodic competence, word stress

Abstract:

Studies of bilingual children's phonological profile have mainly focused on the description and assessment of phonetic inventories (Goldstein & Washington 2001, Anderson 2004). Considerably less attention has been paid to their suprasegmental aspects of the language of bilingual children and how they are acquired in comparison to segmental production.

In this study, we focus on the prosodic competence of Polish-English bilingual children, specifically the word stress. Its acquisition has been widely discussed in the literature on SLA in adults (Archibald 1993, 1994) YoungSholten 1993), but is quite unexplored in the case of bilingual children. Our study investigates whether the acquisition of stress is qualitatively different from the acquisition of segmental phonology in children and whether it is sensitive to the crosslinguistic influence from Polish, their parental language (L1).

To answer our research question, we tested 22 Polish-English bilingual children (mean age 5;4, SD 10,5 months) residing in England on a non-word repetition task (NWR) in English, their environmental language (L2). The English version of the NWR consisted of 60 items of varying length, syllable structure complexity, and stress pattern (Szewczyk et al., 2012). Some of the non-words contained secondary stress, in standard and non-standard combinations. All stimuli were presented auditorily via headphones and children's task was to repeat them. Their productions were recorded, transcribed and auditorily assessed by three independent raters from the perspective of segmental and prosodic faithfulness. The assessment was binary in that no point was assigned for any deviation from the input form, independently in segmental and suprasegmental columns. Positive value was assigned only in the case of faithful mapping of segments or stress. The columns were subsequently compared on the numbers of points.

The preliminary results reveal that children repeat segments with 34% correctness, whereas prosodic faithfulness is at the level of 93%. This difference is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). High prosodic competence is manifested e.g. in faithful mapping of secondary stress, regardless of how non-standard the input stress pattern is. Moreover, the results indicate that prosodic faithfulness reaches high levels independently of the age of our respondents. All these findings suggest that, unlike L2 segmental phonology, L2 prosody of bilingual children is resistant to CLI.

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Cognitive processes underlying the LLAMA language aptitude test: An introspective inquiry

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Keywords: Language aptitude: think aloud: explicit language aptitude: the LLAMA language aptitude test

Abstract:

Language analytical ability which is an encapsulated single label composed of inductive language analytical ability and grammatical sensitivity by Skehan (1989) has been predominant in many aptitude tests in the field of second language acquisition (SLA), the LLAMA language aptitude test developed by Meara (2005) being no exception. A recent exploratory validation study of LLAMA (Granena, 2013) reported two dimensions under aptitude construct: implicit language aptitude represented by LLAMA D (sound recognition) and explicit language aptitude represented by LLAMA B (rote memory), LLAMA E (sound-letter correspondence), and LLAMA F (grammatical sensitivity). LLAMA has been used in a number of studies in the field of SLA; however, it would still benefit from further validation studies providing primarily qualitative insight with respect to its underlying structure and the cognitive processes employed by the test takers considering the scarcity of qualitative studies that investigate the nature of aptitude test.

The present study is an attempt to examine the construct validity of the LLAMA language aptitude test, particularly three LLAMA subtests claimed to tap explicit language aptitude, by using introspective methodology as means of accessing the cognitive processes/strategies deployed by instructed second language (L2) learners. A total of twenty university level students with an advanced English (L2) proficiency level participated in the study. They were asked to complete the LLAMA language aptitude test while simultaneously verbalizing their thoughts. The data was transcribed verbatim and the list of cognitive processes/strategies representative of explicit language aptitude was identified. The verbal protocols of participants in this study confirmed the "explicit" nature of cognitive processes involved during task completion. The analysis showed instances of induction and associative learning such as figuring out rules and relations as well as some instances of memorization of exemplars. The qualitative findings of the study will be discussed in relation to the theoretical construct of aptitude.

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Access to Writing and the Acquisition of Obligatory Liaison in Second Language French

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Keywords: phonology, L2 acquisition, French

Abstract:

Liaison is a phenomenon of external sandhi that involves the production of a latent coda consonant (liaison consonant, LC) in prevocalic contexts (e.g. [z] in des [de] + ânes [an] → des ânes [dezan], (some) donkeys, but not in des [de] + poules [pul] → des poules [depul], (some) hens. The segmental content of the LC is thus dependent on the first word but produced as the onset of the second word: [de.zan]. As a consequence, word and syllable boundaries do not align. It has been argued that this misalignment constitutes potentially different difficulties for L1 and L2 learners (Wauquier, 2009).

In the early stages of L1 acquisition children typically misinterpret the LC as the lexical onset of word2, leading them to substitute the LC and to produce sequences such as [ɛ̃zan] instead of un âne [ɛ̃nan] (a donkey) (Wauquier & Shoemaker, 2013). These errors are unattested in adult L2 learners. Indeed although LC substitutions are present in adult L2 learners' productions, they can typically be attributed to the written form of the word ([gʁɑ̃daʁbʁ] for grand arbre [gʁɑ̃t͡aʁbʁ]) (Thomas, 2004). At the same time L2 learners produce LCs without resyllabification (e.g. [dez.an] instead of [de.zan]), an error that has not been reported in monolingual acquisition. These errors have also been interpreted as being influenced by the written form.

However, to date, the vast majority of previous studies have focused on monolingual preliterate children or highly literate adult L2 learners with primarily written exposure to French. To bridge the gap between these two populations, we propose in this study a qualitative analysis of L2 learners without systematic written input.

This presentation brings together data from two beginning groups of French: preliterate children (n = 3, L1: Swedish, age of onset of acquisition: 3;0-3;5) and adults who have had little to no formal instruction in French (n = 10, L1: Chinese and Bengali). All learners received predominantly oral input without systematic written support. Productions of un/deux+noun (cases of obligatory liaison) were elicited using a picture-naming task.

Results from both groups include productions previously reported for L2 learners (e.g. LC without resyllabification). However, both adults and children in this study also produce L1-like LC substitutions (e.g. [ɛ̃zaʁbʁ] or even [dølaʁbʁ]). These and other results are discussed in the light of previous models suggested for L1 and L2 development of liaison as they bring into question previous assumptions about differing developmental paths for L1 and L2 learners.

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Frequency effects in the development of preverbal obligatory liaison in L2 French?

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Keywords: Liaison, L2 French, Morphosyntactic development, Phonology, Development, Frequency

Abstract:

The acquisition of liaison in spoken French has been studied intensely in the field of psycholinguistics over the last 15 years. However, many developmental aspects of this phonological phenomenon, especially in L2 learners, call for further research. There is for example little consensus in the literature regarding the driving forces behind the acquisition of French liaison. Should it be explained as a gradual automatisation of a morphophonological rule or as the result of lexical learning of individual chunks (Wauquier & Shoemaker, 2013)? In a recent study, Howard (2013) underlines that, in order to better understand the developmental aspects of liaison in L2 French, more research is needed, especially in learners at lower proficiency levels and from different types of tasks.

This paper presents data from a cross-sectional study exploring the production of liaison between a subject pronoun and a verb in third person plural, as exemplified in (1). This is an obligatory liaison context which has rarely been investigated in previous studies.

(1) Ils arrivent à la fête /ilzaʀivalafɛt/ 'they arrive at the party'

The participants are instructed Swedish L2 learners of French (n=40) ranging from level A1 to C1 on the CEFR-scale (European Council, 2001). The learners, as well as 20 native speakers in a control group, conducted an elicited imitation task, including both high and low frequency verbs as well as non-verbs, in order to investigate the influence of proficiency level and input frequency on the use of obligatory liaison as an agreement marker in L2 French.

The results indicate great difficulties in production of liaison in subject-verb agreement at lower levels of L2 French. As in other agreement patterns, learners over-use the singular form *\/ilaʀiv/ in contexts for the plural /ilzaʀiv/ (Prévost, 2009). However, the development is strong and a clear effect of proficiency level was found on the use of liaison in the imitation task (p<0.001). Moreover, no frequency effects could be observed in this study (p.=0.82). This means that the L2 learners used liaison to the same extent with all tested verbs, irrespective of their objective frequency. This result nourishes the theoretical discussion of the field since it could bring into question a usage-based approach to the acquisition of obligatory liaison in L2 French.

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"Righ' here, righ' now." Immediate pronunciation versus audio and visual corrections in second-language speech: unreleased plosives by French learners of English.

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Keywords: Second language speech, acquisition and language teaching, unreleased stops, imitation, audio, visual corrections, perception test

Abstract:

This paper investigates imitation as opposed to audiovisual feedback in second-language speech realization of final unreleased plosives amongst French learners of English having had no prior training in that type of phonetic realization. We aim to test whether unreleasing stops increases the degree acceptability and intelligibility (Kenworthy 1989) in second language speech (Rojczyk 2013). While unreleased stops are rather frequent in French and English - especially in series of two plosives across word boundaries (Davidson 2010), unreleased plosives in final positions are less common in French (Van Dommeln 1983). We thus predict that the production of final unreleased plosives is less frequent among French students when speaking English but that an audio-visual training supplemented with a stimulus for imitation involving gestures (Kröger et al. 2010) can improve the students' pronunciations of unreleased stops. During the experiment, two groups of 20 French native speakers in their second year of English studies were asked to read idiomatic expressions in three different working environments. The sentences or expressions included both homogeneous and heterogeneous sequences of stops straddled between word boundaries, namely in sequences like "that cat" [ðætˀkætˀ] and stops at the end of sentences like "I told him to speak" [təspiːkˀ]. In the second phase of the experiment, each group was given a different task to accomplish. The first group heard recorded versions of new sentences before reading them out loud. Stimuli for imitation contained no release in the contexts under scrutiny – word final and pairs of plosives straddled between words. Contrarily to the first group, the second one had to visualize a video explaining the phenomenon of unreleased stops with a production of phase-two expressions propped up by gestures and mimes. Finally, a third phase involved a second re-reading of phase-one stimuli by both groups in order to test the efficiency of shadowing versus phonetic awareness (Piske 2008). The results were then analyzed acoustically with Praat and SPPAS, and were then perceptually evaluated by native speakers of English, students in English studies in the same academic year and by francophone academic teachers of English. Using the listeners' feedbacks, the current study makes recommendations about what working environment should be prioritized in pronunciation teaching.

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Do sign language dictionaries play a role in adult L2 sign language learners' vocabulary knowledge development?

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Keywords: Dictionary use, sign language, vocabulary learning, adult L2 learners

Abstract:

The role of dictionary use in developing vocabulary knowledge in a second language has been researched extensively (e.g. Nation, 2001; Tono, 2001). While several different factors such as type of dictionary, type of vocabulary and type of learner have been investigated, the majority of studies have concentrated on reading comprehension. Very little is known about the role of dictionaries in developing listening comprehension and speaking.

Sign language dictionaries offer a unique possibility to explore this issue. Since sign languages lack an established written form, learners use sign language dictionaries mainly to look up vocabulary for direct sign production (the equivalent of the 'speaking' skill). Online sign language dictionaries typically represent signs in the form of a video and provide information about their meaning through one or more glosses in the learners' L1. These L1 glosses, however, are often at best only partially equivalent to the sign (Duval, 2008). This paper seeks to establish what role sign language dictionaries play in vocabulary learning and whether the current dictionary format is problematic for adult L2 sign language learners in encoding and decoding.

I report here on two studies that form part of a larger PhD project examining the addition of L1 definitions to sign language dictionaries. Firstly, a think aloud study was carried out with 12 users of a sign language dictionary (the Online Dictionary of New Zealand Sign Language). This study showed differences in lookup patterns between learners of different sign language proficiency levels. All users experienced problems in looking up unknown signs by sign form. Learners in classes used the dictionary most regularly and also 'browsed' the dictionary to develop their vocabulary knowledge. Many learners repeatedly looked up already known signs for production rehearsal.

Secondly, an online error correction test was administered to two classes of intermediate learners of New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL). Learners were directed to look at the online dictionary entry for target signs before evaluating whether the target sign was used correctly in a sentence, and indicating and correcting any errors. Test results indicate that in many cases, the dictionary information did not help learners spot incorrect use of a sign.

Taken together, these studies show that the role sign language dictionaries play in vocabulary learning may currently be limited to increasing rehearsal opportunities and developing depth of knowledge. Learners encounter problems when they look to the dictionary for assistance in the comprehension and production of sign vocabulary in context. While some of these problems are inherent in dictionary use, others may be solved by changes to the content and format of online sign language dictionaries.

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Using relational co-occurrences to trace phraseological development in a longitudinal corpus

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Abstract:

L2 research has witnessed a boom in the number of studies that investigate learners' use of multi-word combinations with the help of measures of association strength such as the mutual information (MI) score (e.g. Durrant & Schmitt, 2009; Li & Schmitt, 2010; Granger & Bestgen, 2014). Most studies so far, however, have investigated positional co-occurrences, where words are said to co-occur when they appear within a certain distance from each other (Evert, 2004), and focused more particularly on adjacent word combinations such as adjective + noun combinations.

Paquot (2014) is to the best of our knowledge the first study that adopted a relational model of co-occurrences, where the co-occurring words appear in a specific structural relation, to compare three learner sub-corpora made up of texts rated at different CEFR levels (i.e. B2, C1 and C2). She made use of the Stanford CoreNLP suite of tools to parse learner data and extract dependency relations such as dobj(win,lottery), i.e. "the direct object of win is lottery", and then used MI score computed on the basis of a large reference corpus to analyse pairs of words in specific grammatical relations. Findings showed that adjective + noun relations discriminated well between B2 and C2 levels; adverbial modifiers separated out B2 texts from the C1 and C2 texts; and verb + direct object relations set C2 texts apart from B2 and C1 texts. These results suggest that, used together, phraseological indices computed on the basis of relational dependencies are able to gauge language proficiency.

The main objective of this study is to investigate whether relational co-occurrences also constitute valid indices of phraseological development. To do so, we replicate the method used in Paquot (2014) on data from the Longitudinal Database of Learner English (LONGDALE, Meunier 2013). In the LONGDALE project, the same students are followed over a period of at least three years and data collections are typically organized once per year. The 78 argumentative essays selected for this study were written by 39 French learners of English in Year 1 and Year 3 of their studies at the University of Louvain. Unlike in Year 2, students were requested to write on the same topic in Year 1 and Year 3, which allows us to control for topic, a variable that has been shown to considerably influence learners' use of word combinations (e.g. Cortes, 2004).

Relational co-occurrences are operationalized in the form of word combinations used in four grammatical relations, i.e. adjective + noun, adverb + adjective, adverb + verb and verb + direct object. We assign to each pair of words in the LONGDALE corpus its MI score computed on the basis of the British National Corpus, and compute mean MI scores for each dependency relations in each learner text. To explore the links between individual and group phraseological development trajectories, a detailed variability analysis using the method of individual profiling and visualization techniques will also be presented (cf. Verspoor & Smiskova, 2012).

To 'err' in L2 is human: How filled pauses contribute to the perception of language proficiency and foreign-accentedness.

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Keywords: foreign accentedness, filled pauses, vocalic hesitations, English, speech perception, SLA

Abstract:

Filled pauses (FPs) are common elements of spontaneous speech that perform paralinguistic functions, such as turn-taking (Rose 2008), speech planning and expressing uncertainty or disagreement (Fischer 2000). While the prosody of FPs, e.g. long duration and stable low pitch, is a universal feature (Vasilescu and Adda-Decker 2008), their timbre displays language-specific properties (Candea et al. 2005). For instance, English FPs are realized as an open central vowel (Candea et al. 2005), whereas Polish FPs fall in the regions of a mid or close-mid front vowel (Aperliński 2010).

It has been shown that non-natives tend to import FPs from their L1, which may contribute to foreign-accentedness (Clark and Fox Tree 2002: 93). Recent work suggests that the native-like use of FPs might be important in L2 communicative competence (Rose 2008). However, there is little experimental research that would confirm the hypothesis that non-native use of FPs contributes to foreign-accentedness nor that native-like FPs improve communicative competence.

The purpose of this study is to identify the role of FPs in the perception of foreign-accentedness and proficiency. One English and four Polish native speakers (C2 English proficiency level), two of whom were experienced pronunciation teachers, were recorded while performing a spoken gap-fill task in their L1 and L2 from which L1 and L2 FP tokens were extracted. Twenty English carrier sentences were recorded by the speakers, three of which were edited to include L1, L2 and no FP hesitations for each speaker. This procedure yielded forty-two sentences which were used as stimuli for the perception survey. Perceptual data has been collected from twenty-six English native speakers so far (ongoing). The task involves listening to the randomized stimuli and rating each sentence using a 7-point Likert scale on accent and proficiency criteria.

The data collected so far suggests that there is a statistically significant difference between the perceived accentedness of the speakers depending on the presence and type of FPs in favor of no FP sentences. Pairwise comparisons revealed that the differences between individual conditions were also significant: Listeners rated the accent of speakers in sentences containing no FPs the highest, followed by sentences containing English FPs, with sentences containing Polish FPs receiving the lowest scores.

Therefore, the results seem to confirm the anecdotal observation that non-native FPs negatively affect perceived accentedness and proficiency of speakers.

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The Role of Accuracy and Complexity in SLA and Speaking Proficiency Assessment

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Keywords: complexity, accuracy, Processability theory, assessment, speaking proficiency, Swedish

Abstract:

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) has been accused both of being vague (Kuiken & Vedder 2014) and of lacking empirical underpinning (Hulstijn 2007). In this study, both language testing and language proficiency are discussed. Twenty test-takers, taking a Swedish certificate test at B2 level, were recorded. Relations between complexity, accuracy, estimated level of processability, and holistic and analytic speaking proficiency assessments were investigated, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

In the quantitative part of the study, seven global and local complexity and accuracy measurements from the CAF (Complexity–Accuracy–Fluency) research, were used (see Housen, Kuiken & Vedder 2012; Norris & Ortega 2009). Also, level of processability, according to the Processability theory (PT), was estimated (see Pienemann 2011). Correlation tests (Pearson's r) indicated that complexity and accuracy, to some extent, co-varied with each other, with PT level, and with holistic assessments. However, overlapping between assessed levels was large, just like in other studies (e.g. Iwashita, Brown, McNamara & O'Hagen 2008). Furthermore, the analytic grade for the 'Formal Complexity and Accuracy' criterion co-varied foremost with global accuracy, whereas complexity measures aligned more with the 'Pronunciation and intonation' grade. Based on these results, assessors' capacity of assessing several conceptually independent features simultaneously can be questioned.

For the qualitative part of the study, four test-takers were selected. Two of these had received high grades and two had received low grades, but according to complexity and accuracy measures, one of those with high grade and one with low grade had produced the same kind of language. Nevertheless, after having examined complexity and accuracy closer, in different kinds of phrases and clauses, the assessors' decisions seemed more reasonable. Out of eight measurements used in the quantitative study, only PT level indicated a difference between these two test-takers. In the qualitative investigation, this difference became very clear. From these results, also linguistic measurements, used in the CAF research, can be criticized (cf. Baten & Håkansson 2014).

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German gender in second language acquisition and first language attrition: an EEG study

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Keywords: Grammatical gender, language attrition, second language acquisition, neurolinguistics, EEG

Abstract:

Grammatical gender is one of the most challenging features for second language acquisition, since it requires the online integration of an unpredictable lexical property of the noun on the one hand and morphological agreement on the other. This paper reports the findings from an EEG investigation of grammatical gender in German, contrasting bilingual and monolingual processing. In order to examine whether variability in the processing of gender violations by bilingual speakers can be ascribed to the more complex task of managing two linguistic systems (bilingualism effect) on the one hand or to the order of acquisition, modulated by biographical factos such as age at onset (second language effect), we will compare four populations: advanced second language learners with different native languages (all L1s are typologically distant from German, some of them do and some of them do not encode gender grammatically) who began acquiring German between the ages of 4 and 32 (L2ers, n = 108), native speakers of German who have lived in an English-speaking setting for upwards of 7 years and were aged 20 years or older when they emigrated (L1 attriters, n=26) and predominantly monolingual German controls.

We present the results from an EEG experiment in which 96 German sentences were auditorily presented to assess responses to gender violations on highly frequent masculine and neuter nouns. 48 sentences contained determiner-noun combinations and 48 determiner-adjective noun combinations. Pairings of grammatical-ungrammatical sentences were created by swapping the masculine and neuter determiners. The experiment also contained 48 sentences testing a different grammatical construction (verb agreement) and 134 filler sentences, so that the overall proportion of correct sentences was 74.1%.

While the EEG responses of the German attriters show no significant difference from those of the controls and both populations have strong and reliable responses to Det-Noun and Det-Adj-Noun violations (P600), the results from the L2 groups exhibit a more varied pattern which is modulated by the structure (Det-N vs. Det-Adj-N), the linguistic background (+gender or –gender language), proficiency in L2 German and the age of acquisition. We discuss these findings in the context of hypotheses of representational deficits in L2 acquisition vs. theories of crosslinguistic interference.

Executive control tasks in bilingualism research: A multi-trait multi-method validity analysis of the Stroop, Simon, and ANT

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Keywords: executive control, bilingualism, task validity, MTMM

Abstract:

Prevailing theory in bilingualism posits that a bilingual's two languages are constantly active, even when only one is in use (the non-selectivity hypothesis). This creates an attentional control problem in bilinguals that is resolved through increased executive control (EC; the locus of domain-general conflict resolution and conflict monitoring) as compared to monolinguals (e.g., Bialystok, 2009). However, this bilingual benefit is often difficult to observe (e.g., Costa et al., 2009). Recent research has begun recognizing the lack of consistency in tasks measuring EC, finding mixed results for reliability and validity for the Simon and flanker tasks (Paap & Greenberg, 2013) and large error terms for the Stroop task in structural equation modeling (Miyake & Friedman, 2012). The present study is the first to incorporate the Stroop, Simon, and flanker tasks—tasks with nearly identical task demands—and is the first to analyze reliability and validity of four different effects that can each be calculated in the same manner from each task.

Nineteen monolingual and 34 bilingual participants took the Stroop task (1935), the Simon task (Simon & Rudell, 1967), and attentional network task (ANT; Fan et al., 2002) version of the flanker task (Eriksen & Eriksen, 1974) in a counterbalanced order, after which they completed a standardized language history questionnaire (LHQ; Li et al., 2006). These three EC tasks are used interchangeably in contemporary bilingualism literature with inconsistent task features (e.g., task length, color words vs. numbers for the Stroop), and with inconsistent statistical analyses. Effects derived from these tasks (the conflict, interference, monitoring, and facilitation effects) are also used interchangeably to investigate the bilingual benefits of EC and recent extensions to individual differences research (e.g., Mercier et al., 2014). An investigation into the convergent and divergent validity of the conflict, interference, monitoring, and facilitation effects as measures of executive control calculated from each of the three tasks was undertaken with a multi-trait multi-method (MTMM) analysis.

Results indicated monolinguals showed faster reaction times (RTs) overall compared to bilinguals, and no consistent EC benefits were found for the bilingual participants. Low reliability estimates were found for a majority of tasks conditions. Further, despite theory holding that all three of these tasks measure the same constructs, the trends of the tasks differed: the Stroop toward the bilingual benefit, the ANT favoring monolinguals, and the Simon with a mixed interpretation. Moreover, the MTMM analysis revealed that RT differences commonly interpreted as indicating conflict, interference, and facilitation effects correlated highly with one another within each task (a lack of divergent validity evidence), while not correlating well with what was supposed to be the corresponding effect across tasks (a lack of convergent validity evidence). Only the monitoring effect exhibited evidence for convergent validity. Suggestions are made for future research to standardize and create reliable task measures of executive control, so researchers can be more confident these tasks are measuring what they purport to measure.

Language Processing in Bilinguals: Evidence from Lexical Organization and Cognitive Control

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Keywords: Bilingualism, lexicon, cognitive control

Abstract:

The goal of the research presented here is to determine the effects of age of immersion (AoI), manner of acquisition (MoA), bilingual context, and proficiency on how bilinguals (and L2 learners) process language. In this research, bilingual participants were studied to 1) investigate the organization of the bilingual mental lexicon and 2) determine the nature of the interaction between bilingualism and cognitive control.

First, the issue of how a bilingual's two lexicons are linked and how bilingual lexical organization is affected by AoI, MoA and proficiency is discussed. This research prompts a number of fundamental questions: are words from a bilingual's different languages organized together in one shared memory system? And, if so, at which level of representation (lexical word-form level or semantic level) are the lexicons integrated? In essence, this research investigates whether English-French bilinguals automatically activate L1 English words (e.g. snow) upon accessing their L2 French translation equivalent (e.g. neige). Second, the issues of how differing levels of cognitive control may affect bilingual processing, as well as how cognitive control in bilinguals may be affected by such factors as AoI, MoA, bilingual context and proficiency will be examined. It is interesting to examine these two issues alongside one another because if bilinguals indeed have a shared memory system for both lexicons, this may increase the need to control the access to the two languages.

Our research at the lexical level, which employed the masked priming paradigm (Forster & Davis, 1984), shows that an early AoI is required for the lexicons to become integrated, at least for the native speakers of English with L2 French tested. However, in a preliminary follow-up study looking at native French speakers with L2 English, it appears that even a late AoI can result in integrated lexicons if the MoA is more naturalistic.

Previous research on cognitive control in bilinguals has not always shown a bilingual advantage (Costa et al., 2009), and its existence has been debated (Paap & Greenberg, 2013). In our investigations aimed at accounting for the conflicting results found in the literature, we investigated the effects of participant grouping and task difficulty on the Stroop task (which measures cognitive control). While we find no differences between simultaneous and early sequential bilinguals (age groups traditionally both classified as "early" bilinguals) when the task uses only one language, we do find a significant difference between these two groups when the task mixes both languages. We therefore suggest treating the two groups as distinct, and note the importance of the bilingual context.

The data collected to date (including earlier studies we conducted at other levels of linguistic processing), indicates that, while AoI is often the most important factor in determining how languages are processed, there is an important role for factors such as MoA and the context of bilingualism.

Nonnative decomposition of inflected nouns: The role of proficiency and early/late start

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Abstract:

There is no agreement on how second language (L2) learners process morphologically complex words. The masked-priming data indicate that L2 learners do not decompose inflected words in lexical access (Clahsen et al., 2010, 2013), which is in conformity with observed L2 morphosyntactic deficits in sentence processing (Jiang, 2007; Coughlin & Tremblay, 2013). Conversely, an increasing body of research supports L2 decomposition of inflected words (Feldman et al., 2010; Gor & Cook, 2010; Gor & Jackson, 2013; Coughlin & Tremblay, 2014).

This study explores the role of two factors in nonnative processing of inflection, as tested in two auditory lexical decision (LDT-1/2) and auditory-visual cross-modal priming (CMP-1/2) tasks. It evaluates the role of proficiency by comparing two groups of Russian learners at different proficiency levels, advanced and superior, and the role of early/late start by comparing early starters (heritage speakers) and late English-speaking L2 learners matched in Russian proficiency.

LDTs used Latin-square design and compared the processing costs to overtly and zero-inflected nouns in the Nominative and Genitive cases (bumag-a paperNomFemSg—bumag-ø paperGenFemPl and zavod-ø factoryNomMascSg—zavod-a factoryGenMascSg). In LDT-1 with native (L1) and late L2 participants, both bumag-ø and zavod-a showed decomposition costs in L1 speakers. A different effect was observed in low-proficiency L2 speakers, who showed a false advantage in processing the zero-inflected Genitive plural bumag-ø as fast as the Nominative singular bumag-a, with no decomposition cost. Decomposition costs emerged in L2 high-proficiency participants. In LDT-2, early and late learners showed similar patterns of decomposition costs for oblique cases, but not for citation forms.

In CMP-1 with ambiguous case-inflected adjective primes (nov-oj newGen/InstrFemSg) and noun targets (mashin-yGenFemSg or mashin-oj car InstrFemSg), L1 speakers responded faster to Genitive-inflected (a high type-frequency inflection) than Instrumental-inflected (a low type-frequency inflection) nouns, while this response bias emerged only in the high-proficiency L2 group. In CMP-2, late but not early learners showed sensitivity to oblique case probabilities. The findings support the special status of the Nominative case, as stated in the satellite-entries hypothesis (Lukatela et al., 1980), and further demonstrate how oblique case differences impact case predictability in adjective-noun case agreement.

The study identifies two reasons why nonnative processing of inflected nouns may lead to morphosyntactic insensitivity. First, L2 speakers decompose inflected words to access the lexical entry via the stem, but they do not necessarily recompose and check it to process morphosyntactic information. And second, nonnative speakers are less efficient in their use of statistical probabilities related to the inflectional paradigm—in particular, case frequencies. Crucially, late L2 learners and early starters use similar mechanisms in decomposing inflected words. Affix stripping (as in zavod-a factoryGenMascSg) is a more basic processing strategy, and is applied by all groups of native and nonnative participants. However, two aspects of nominal inflection—the recomposition and checking stage of inflected word processing (as in bumag-ø paperGen-FemPl), and sensitivity to case probabilities—gradually develop with increasing L2 proficiency.

Individual differences in a beginning language classroom: young adult learners in five European countries

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Keywords: language acquisition, individual differences, complex systems theory

Abstract:

As all language teachers (and learners) know, no two learners in the same language classroom will acquire identical information or skills. The complex systems or dynamic systems paradigm (van Geert 1991, 2007 and 2010) encourages us to look more closely at the complex interactions between individual learner differences and emerging language knowledge and skill (Verspoor et al. 2013). In a project involving 200 young adults in five European countries, an international team of researchers is currently carrying out a detailed analysis of the first two weeks of a beginning-level Polish course. All learners were absolute beginners in Polish, with no previous experience learning a Slavic language. In addition to filming every lesson (with a microphone for every learner, as well as the teacher), the team took regular measures of emerging Polish knowledge and skill (lexical decision tasks, grammaticality judgment tasks, various comprehension and production tasks). This paper will report on a battery of tests and questionnaires completed by every project participant, administered in order to obtain a snapshot portrait of variables that may come into play in classroom language learning, as well as task execution: attentional capacity (the Flanker Task), working memory capacity (digit span and reverse digit span), personality (the Neo-FFI inventory), metalinguistic awareness (Meara 2005), motivation for learning Polish (in-house questionnaire adapted from Gardner 2004), and "learning style" (as measured by two questionnaires: one adapted from Kolb by Cahay et al. 1997, and Barsch's 1980 Perceptual Preference inventory). Implications of between-group differences in the results on these measures will be explored, as well as a few significant correlations between scores on the measures of individual difference and results on the Polish tasks. Complex Systems Theory warns us that group comparisons are of relatively limited interest, however, and our talk will primarily focus on possible relationships between "outlier" acquisitional pathways (particularly high or low performance on measures of emerging Polish knowledge and skill) and individual characteristics. We hope the talk will stimulate discussion on methods of including learner differences more systematically in the SLA research agenda.

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Language learning motivation and projected desire: An interview study with parents of young language learners

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Keywords: L2 learning motivation, interview study, parents, multilingualism

Abstract:

Recent studies on language learning motivation have foregrounded notions of identity, identification with the L2 community, and self-fulfilment. In his highly influential 'L2 Motivational Self System', Dörnyei (2005) proposed a view on motivation that distinguishes between an 'Ideal L2 Self', representing all the attributes a learner would ideally like to possess, and the 'Ought-to L2 Self', consisting of all attributes that a learner believes he or she ought to possess. Focusing rather on the multilingual experience of the language learner, Kramsch (2006) also highlights the hopes and aspirations of said learner/user, but she conceptualizes these in terms of 'desire in language', going beyond notions of motivation. Desire in language is said to represent the need to identify (positively or negatively) with others, their language, and their ways of speaking.

This paper takes Dörnyei's and Kramsch's theoretical frameworks as points of departure, but it looks at the parents of young language learners, rather than at the learners themselves. Parents make decisions about their children's education, frequently with a view to making their children multilingual. So what hopes, dreams, idealised projections inform this parental 'desire' to have multilingual children? Or, in Dörnyei's terms, what about the ideal and ought-to L2 'selves' that parents project onto their children?

In order to explore this line of enquiry, we use data from in-depth interviews about language and identity with 10 parents of various linguistic and social backgrounds in Brussels, Belgium. The participants had all consciously enrolled their children in Dutch-medium education, reputed for its standards in language teaching, even though these parents frequently did not speak the school language(s) (well) themselves. The data reveal that parental choices were not just motivated by a desire to enhance their children's professional opportunities. The parents frequently had vivid mental images of what their multilingual children would achieve in the future (in contrast to their own 'monolingual' achievements), and what various identity options would be available to their children thanks to this multilingual education. Transcripts therefore show that 'desire in language' is not limited to the construction of an "inwardly generated identity" (Kramsch 2006: 102); they can also be projected outwardly onto other individuals, in our case by parents onto their children. In the same vein, the data reveal that the constructs of the "Ideal L2 Self" and 'Ought-to L2 Self' hold up even when they are experienced vicariously.

Past studies on bilingualism and bilingual acquisition have frequently acknowledged the importance of parents as an environmental factor in the language acquisition process. However, there is still relatively little SLA research which uses parents as informants and focuses on them as vital stakeholders in the language learning experience. If we wish to deepen our insight into the motivational variables that contribute to language learning and language use, the impact of parental attitudes, aspirations and projections on these variables should be part of the equation.

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Word Formation in initial Polish L2: L1 transfer and input analysis

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Keywords: word formation, L2 initial stage, naturalness, cue validity, input analysis, L1 influence

Abstract:

This contribution discusses to what extent absolute beginner learners can analyse the input they are exposed to in order to retrieve the morphological structure of target lexical items. This is regarded as a necessary step to develop hypotheses as to word-formation strategies in the target language and apply them productively in L2 speech to comply with lexical gaps.

The data are part of the Italian database of the VILLA project, a multi-national, cross-linguistic initiative dedicated to the earlies stages of Polish L2 acquisition under controlled input conditions (Dimroth et al. 2013). 31 Italian learners with no experience of the target language took part in a 14-hour Polish course taught by a professional teacher, whose speech represents the only input available. This was recorded and transcribed, so as to correlate its features with the results of the numerous tests learners took during the course.

This contribution focusses on a "Question test", which learners took twice after 4:30 hours (T1) and again after 10:30 hours (T2) of exposure to the input. The test requires learners to answer a question regarding a human referent by stating his or her nationality or profession.

Crucially, not all target lexical items had been introduced during the course, which makes it possible to observe the strategies learners employ to fill their lexical gaps.

Focussing on the unknown lexical items, the analysis reveals that the suffix -ka, which in the VILLA input typically characterises feminine nouns, is generalised by learners to produce animate nouns of both sexes. The lexical basis is normally modelled on the corresponding word of either the learner's L1 or other known languages (Rast 2010): thus, for instance, a policewoman (pol. policjantka) may be described with the word [vidʒi'lantko] (it. vigilante) or [po'liska] (engl. police).

Input analysis proves that in addition to being farily common, the suffix -ka is particularly univocal as regards its form-function association (MacWhinney & Bates 1987, Dressler 2006): words ending in -ka are most often feminine animate nouns, and conversely feminine animate nouns are typically construed with this suffix. Therefore, it is argued that it might be relatively easy for learners to associate this formant with a specific meaning (e.g. human noun), albeit not necessarily in a target-like manner.

The findings suggest that learners can analyse the morphological structure of target words even after minimal exposure to the input, identifying at first those formants whose relation to a given, rather generic function seems particularly evident. The paper then proceeds to compare the test results obtained at T1 and T2, in order to verify whether further exposure to the input has any effect on the learners' ability to associate derivational morphemes with the corresponding function. Specifically, the question of interest at this stage is whether additional input might help learners to refine form-function associations, i.e. to select increasingly specific and target-like meanings for the form in question. If this is the case, then at T2 the suffix -ka might be reserved for feminine nouns alone, as required by the TL.

Perceptions of L2 idiom transparency as a function of knowledge of idiom meaning

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Abstract:

Traditionally idioms were seen as frozen multi-word units whose meaning could not be inferred from the individual meanings of the component words (e.g., Cruse, 1986; Katz, 1973; Moon, 1997). However, the supposed arbitrariness of meaning and non-compositionality of idiomatic phrases has been challenged by a number of studies in cognitive linguistics (e.g., Lakoff, 1987; Lakoff & Johnshon, 1980), which argued that a large number of idioms are semantically transparent because their meanings are motivated by different sets of conceptual metaphors that exist independently of the idiomatic expressions. This view of the semantic transparency of idiomatic expressions, however, has been disputed in the studies of Keyser and Bly (1999) and Keyser and Glucksberg (1993), which claimed that idioms are transparent because native speakers know their meanings, and use that knowledge to project relevant structures on compositional elements of the phrases. They observed that when idiom meanings were not familiar, native speakers' interpretation and their perceptions of idiom transparency were influenced by the context in which the idioms were presented, rather than by restrictions imposed by pre-existing conceptual structures. Keyser and Bly (1999) concluded that while idioms may instantiate conceptual metaphors, conceptual mappings per se do not contribute to the meaning of idiomatic expressions.

The purpose of this study was to examine the possible constraining effect that knowledge of idiomatic meanings may have on perceptions of the semantic transparency of L2 idioms. A group of intermediate Japanese learners of English was asked to "guess" the meaning of 30 English idioms for which they had indicated no prior knowledge. The selected idioms had their semantic counterparts in Japanese, but their lexical make-up was different (e.g., apple polishing = goma suri (sesame grinding); love is blind = abata mo ekubo (pockmarks are dimples)). After the learners wrote their "definitions / translations" of the idioms, they were given a list of English–Japanese idiom equivalents, and asked to rate the transparency of the English phrases on a scale of 1 to 5. The target idioms were then taught over three 90-minute sessions with 10 idioms covered in each session. Idiom instruction consisted of verbal definitions and example sentences provided in L2, and a memory card game in which the learners had to match Japanese and English counterparts. One month after the last treatment session, the learners were given a recall test that consisted of 30 Japanese idioms for which they had to produce the English equivalents. After the test had been completed, the learners were asked to rate the semantic transparency of the English phrases once more. The results showed that a knowledge of idiom meaning affected the learners' perceptions of idiom transparency, but that transparency ratings had a limited effect on their ability to recall the target phrases. Data were also analyzed with regard to the strategies that learners used to make sense of unfamiliar idioms for which they had no contextual support.

Effects of Psychotypology and Developmental Trajectories on Transfer in L3 acquisition

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Keywords: cross, linguistic influence, psychotypology, development of morpho, syntax

Abstract:

Theorists debate the extent to which a first language (L1) or second language (L2) influences the word order acquisition of a third language (L3). Whereas some consider L1 and L2 transfer to be developmentally constrained, others claim that L1 and/or L2 transfer shape the L3 initial state (e.g., Bardel & Falk, 2007, Flynn, Foley, & Vinnitskaya, 2004; Håkansson, Pienemann & Sayehli, 2002; Rothman, 2011). A factor that is often considered to promote L1 and L2 transfer is psychotypology: the learner's perception of source and target language distance (Kellerman, 1977). However, even though participants' perceptions are often assumed to be pivotal, they are actually seldom measured. Instead, it is implicitly or explicitly presupposed that psychotypological estimates are identical with the conclusions of linguistic typology. The current study aimed at overcoming this limitation by assessing psychotypological estimates with a multi-item questionnaire. Its results were related to those from an elicited imitation task and spontaneous production. The study examined the acquisition of L3 German by native speakers of Swedish with English as their L2. The similarities and differences among these three languages enabled the exploration of the different transfer hypotheses. A developmental perspective was taken by testing participants of different proficiencies quasi-longitudinally on syntactic structures representing developmental stages of L2/L3 German. The results of the elicited imitation task and the spontaneous production suggested that learners follow general developmental trajectories for syntax. These trajectories did not seem to be susceptible to modification by typological similarity between the participants' L1 or L2 and their target L3. Furthermore, results suggested that whether participants perceived German and Swedish as being more or less similar did not affect their German L3. In sum, there were no indications that developmental trajectories were modified by structural similarities between L1 or L2 and L3, regardless of whether such similarities were perceived or established on objective grounds.

Children's meta-linguistic talk in bilingual kindergarten as a reflexive view on language learning and social interaction

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Abstract:

Listening to young children's talk focused on language helps us to see the inner mechanisms of their thinking about language as they engaged in the process of language learning.According to Blum-Kulka et al (2004), meta-linguistic talk presents a high level of linguistic awareness, which includes an analysis of "the skill component responsible for the structuring and explication of linguistic knowledge" (p. 317). Up to now few studies focused on meta-linguistic talk among preschool L2 learners. These studies suggested a possible link between this type of peer talk and L2 acquisition (e.g., Cekaite & Aronsson, 2005). The aim of this longitudinal study was to examine and analyze a children meta-linguistic talk and its main characteristics in classroom discourses in bilingual Arabic-Hebrew speaking preschool. This talk takes form of short comments or fully-fledged discursive events.

The target Arabic-Hebrew speaking preschoolis placed in the central area of Israel and includes 29 children (19 Arabic (L1) speaking children and 10 Hebrew (L1) speaking children). The preschool applies flexible language practices as a main principle of its bilingual pedagogy.Arabic and Hebrew are the two main spoken languages in Israel. Although Arabic is spoken by an Israeli minority population, it is considered an official language alongside to Hebrew. Most Arab-Israelis understand and speak Hebrew, and use it at work and in other settings, while the Arabic language is scarcely presented in the landscape of cities with a Jewish population and the level of competence of the Jewish children in Arabic is relatively low. In light of this complex socio-linguistic context, the bilingual Arabic-Hebrew education was established in early 1990ies.The data were collected during one year and included: setting-focused video recordings of a) groups of preschool's children talk during engagement in joint play in various areas of the classroom; b) child/children-teacher talk during classroom activities and spontaneous interactions; c) semi-structured interviewers with children. the following content categories were extracted from the children' meta-linguistic talk: (1) focus on language form; (2) discourse management: a. children as language policy makers: who speaks what language to whom and when; b. critical evaluation of L2 competence; c. relation to bilingualism as giving a particular superiority; (3) difficulty in understanding talk (talk about lack of understanding and asking for translation).

We found that through active discourse management within inter-group contexts, children tried to build their social worlds and enhance their ethnic identities.This type of the meta-linguistic talk addressed such macro-level issues as minority-majority language status and asymmetry in L2 input. The relatively central place of the discourse management in peer meta-linguistic talk is conditioned by type of the target educational setting as a two-way bilingual preschool and by its specific socio-cultural context.

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Promoting Self-Regulation Through Collaborative Work: Insights from a Multiple Case Study of Foreign Language Learners

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Keywords: self, regulation, co, regulation, collaborative work, case study

Abstract:

With the rise of self-regulation research not only in educational psychology (Boekaerts, 1999; Boekaets & Cacallar, 2006; Schunk & Zimmerman, 2008) but also in applied linguistics (Bown & White, 2010; Tseng, Dörnyei & Schmitt, 2006), the developmental process of self-regulation (including the social aspect of self-regulation) should be seen as an important aspect of the study of self-regulated language learning. However, empirical investigations focusing on the developmental process of self-regulated language learning are still scarce.

The present study attempts to explore (1) the developmental process of learners' self-regulated language learning (i.e., what facilitates and impedes their self-regulation in foreign language learning) in the light of the theories of cyclical phases of self-regulation (Zimmermann, 1998) and self-regulatory subprocesses of naïve and skillful learners (Schunk & Zimmermann, 1998), and (2) the role of social context in its development (Hadwin & Järvelä, 2011; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1997). More specifically, it attempts to highlight critical points in the participants' previous foreign language learning experiences and perceptual changes in their own language learning through collaborative work.

This paper reports on a multiple case study of two graduate students who took part in a hands-on workshop on self-regulated language learning. It is a descriptive, interpretative, and exploratory case study (Duff, 2014). Data were gathered through students work in the lecture and the focus group interview. Fourteen students who attended lectures on theories of self-regulation (including cycles of self-regulation and self-regulatory subprocesses), were asked: (1) to fill out a questionnaire on self-regulated language leaning; (2) to interview a partner about his or her self-regulated language learning; (3) to engage in group discussion about the partner's self-regulated language learning and about how to remove obstacles in the cycle of self-regulation; (4) to write a short report about their partner's self-regulation, indicating strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement; and (5) to write a report about their own self-regulated language learning. 12 out of 14 graduate students agreed to use their data for this research. Among them, two interviewees were selected from those who agreed to participate in the interview and from those who were willing, collectively, to undertake a deep observation of their partner's and their own self-regulated language learning. On the basis of the case study research method (Yin, 2009), the multiple data sources obtained (the focus-group interview and 1–5 above) were qualitatively analyzed using the theoretical propositions (i.e., cyclical phases of self-regulation and self-regulatory subprocesses of naïve and skillful learners).

Qualitative analysis of multiple data sources revealed that through the hands-on workshop and the focus-group interview, the participants came to be able to monitor what was impeding their language learning and decide what they needed to do to make the flow of the self-regulation cycle smoother. The qualitative analysis also highlighted the reciprocal and cyclical relations between self-regulation and co-regulation, suggesting the need of the social aspect in explaining the cyclical phases of self-regulation. These findings are discussed with implications for teachers seeking to help promote better self-regulation in learners.

The Role of Arabic-Hebrew Bilingualism in Morphological Awareness Development in Arabic and Hebrew among Young Children

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Keywords: morphological awareness, bilingual edcuation, Arabic, Hebrew

Abstract:

Several studies suggested that at an early age, bilingual children appear to be more sensitive to the phoneme structure of words and to the arbitrary nature of words than are monolinguals. The aim of the present study was to contribute to research on bilingual performance in the less examined domain of morphological awareness. Morphological awareness is considered as a kind of meta-linguistic awareness skill, which entails the ability to reflect on and manipulate morphemes, the smallest meaningful units in words (Kuo & Anderson, 2006). A growing body of research indicates a positive effect of morphological awareness on vocabulary knowledge, literacy acquisition, spelling, and reading comprehension. We predicted that morphological awareness can be applied cross-linguistically. This cross-linguistic influence might be in the form of acceleration of bilingual acquisition and might be related to typological proximity between the languages. The acceleration effect might be reflected in the emergence of late-acquired grammatical structures in one of the child's languages, if the other language's counterpart structure emerges earlier in acquisition (Paradis & Genesee, 1996). We investigated the accelerating effect of one Semitic language (Arabic) on another Semitic language (Hebrew) on the development of morphological awareness for specific domains, bound possessive and dual number forms of inflectional morphology. We expected that the earlier development of bound possessive and dual number forms in Spoken Arabic in comparison to Hebrew, together with the higher salience of these categories in Spoken Arabic, would have cross-linguistic influence and accelerate their acquisition by (L1) Hebrew-speaking children.

A sample of 94 six-year-old children participated in the study. The bilinguals attended bilingual Hebrew-Arabic kindergartens and were divided into two groups, those with Hebrew as their home language (L1) and those with Arabic as L1. These groups were compared to monolingual Hebrew speakers and monolingual Arabic speakers. To assess the participants' morphological awareness skills, we used non-words that are similar in their structure to other familiar words in both target languages. The non-words represented six inflectional morphological categories which exist in both Arabic and Hebrew. We also compared the bilingual Arabic (L1) and Hebrew (L1) speaking children with their Arabic and Hebrew speaking monolingual peers, in each of the languages. We found that the bilinguals with Arabic as L1 and Hebrew as L1 performed significantly better than the Arabic speaking monolinguals and the Hebrew speaking monolinguals in the respective languages. The two bilingual groups did not differ from each other. We found also evidence for cross-linguistic influence of morphological awareness in Spoken Arabic on Hebrew in two categories: bound possessive and duality, which we believe is due to the higher saliency of these categories in spoken Arabic than in Hebrew. We assume that the context of bilingual education might also play a facilitating role and therefore contribute to the bilingual advantage.

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Paradis, J., & Genesee, F. (1996). Syntactic acquisition in bilingual children: Autonomous or Interdependent? Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 18, 1-25.

What Makes Learning Inflectional Morphology in a Second Language Difficult? A Cognitive Perspective.

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Keywords: Morphology, Difficulty, Complexity, Eye Tracking, Cognition, Implicit knowledge, Explicit knowledge, Attention

Abstract:

Evidence shows that inflectional morphology is difficult to acquire, particularly in the first stages of the SLA process (Clahsen & Felser, 2006; Marsden et al., 2013) but there is far less agreement on what this difficulty entails (DeKeyser, 2005; Ellis, 2006). In particular, it is still unclear how complexity differentials of L2 inflectional morphology interact with the learning conditions and the learner's cognitive mechanisms in determining learning difficulty in SLA. The research reported on in this talk aims to address the interplay between these constructs, in the belief that a fuller understanding of what makes L2 inflectional morphology more or less difficult requires a cognitive perspective on the matter.

L2 difficulty is defined in cognitive terms as the mental resources L2 learners have to allocate and the cognitive mechanisms they have to employ in processing L2 features (Bulté & Housen, 2012). Accordingly, online measures of language processing are used, namely learners' gaze duration and pupil dilation, to empirically gauge L2 difficulty, whereby gaze duration is believed to tap into the quantity of processing and pupil dilation into the depth of processing of the target feature (cf. Just & Carpenter, 1993; Papesh & Goldinger, 2010; Schotter & Rayner, 2012). Furthermore, the complexity of the input is operationalised in terms of the salience of the inflectional morpheme. Salience itself is seen as a function of perceptual (visual distinctiveness), structural (allomorphy and homophony) and experiential (frequency, L1/L2 contrast) factors (cf. DeKeyser, 2005; Ellis, 2006; Goldschneider & DeKeyser, 2001; VanPatten, 2007).

On the basis of this salience construct, artificial inflectional suffixes of varying degrees and types of salience were designed and combined with familiar existing English stems (e.g., hotelolp 'his hotel') in a reading task presented to 50 L2 learners (adult L1 speakers of Dutch) under three different learning conditions: an incidental, implicit form-focused and explicit form-focused condition. During the reading task, the learners' gaze durations and pupil dilations were recorded by an eye tracker to evaluate the difficulty of processing the target morphemes. After the reading task, the learners took four posttests that evaluated the amount of learning (implicit and explicit, and declarative and productive knowledge) of the target morphemes. The influence of cognitive learner variables on L2 difficulty was assessed via the Modern Language Aptitude Test (Carroll & Sapon, 2002) and the Reading Span Task (Daneman & Carpenter, 1980).

Preliminary results showed that the beginning L2 learners were sensitive to both form and meaning of the target suffixes after brief exposure but that this sensitivity was strongly mediated by the type and degree of salience of the L2 morpheme, by the instructional conditions and by the cognitive abilities of the L2 learner, both in and by themselves and in interaction with each other. The findings thus reveal an intricate interplay between the linguistic input, the learning context and the learner's cognitive abilities in determining learning difficulty in a second language.

From perceiving cross-linguistic similarity to positive cross-linguistic influence in inflectional morphology

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Abstract:

Most SLA theories and models have recognised cross-linguistic influence (CLI) as an important or even the major factor determining second language acquisition, which in interaction with other factors together determine the likelihood of the transferability of a given structure in a given context. Interlingual identifications made by learners between the first (L1) or formerly learned (Ln) and target language (TL) enable both positive and negative transfer from the L1/Ln, depending on the learners' perceptions of the convergence or divergence of the L1/Ln and TL patterns. However, largely due to visibility of non-target like language usage the majority of studies on CLI have been focused on negative outcomes of the issue or dealt with CLI without separate tackling of the positive and the negative influence.

While the importance of CLI has long been acknowledged in the areas of phonology and lexis, morphosyntactic transfer has been treated with a great deal of skepticism throughout the history of CLI research. Morphology, in particular, is an area where some previous research has maintained that CLI is rare or even non-existent (for references, see e.g Jarvis and Odlin 2000). Underplaying morphological CLI, especially positive one, must be seen against the fact that most empirical SLA research on CLI has focused on languages with a scant morphological repertory. In closely related languages like Finnish and Estonian with their rich inflectional morphology, the L1 influence is clearly seen in bound morphology and its outcomes are considerably more often positive than negative (Author 1 2005; Author 1 and Martin 2007).

The paper aims to explore how and why learners' perceptions of similarity do or do not get realised as positive CLI in inflectional morphology on the basis of the following two databases:

1) thinking aloud protocols and retrospective interviews on an experimental inflection test of Estonian university students learning Finnish as a foreign language;

2) longitudinal video-taped data of Estonian primary school children learning Finnish as a second language in a preparatory class (The Long Second: LONGitudinal classroom data about children's development in Finnish as a SECOND language)

Examples gathered from both databases will be discussed by applying a comparison-based approach to CLI research (Jarvis 2010) to identify the positive outcomes of CLI and to shed light on the processes of benefiting from or rejecting converging morphological patterns of L1 and TL by the learners in TL processing.

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Object clitic production by Russian–Cypriot Greek Bilingual Children

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Keywords: object clitic omission, object clitic production, enclisis, proclisis, bilingualism, interpretability

Abstract:

This study investigates linguistic development of bilingual children in Cyprus, specifically with respect to object clitic production. 23 Russian–CG simultaneous bilingual children took part in the study. All of them born in Cyprus, in a mixed-marriage family (Cypriot father and Russian mother); 11 boys and 12 girls, aged from 3;1 to 8;4. Developmental Verbal IQ Test (Stavrakaki and Tsimpli, 2000) together with the background questionnaire were used in order to get the information of children's language proficiency in Greek and their linguistic and socio-economic background. Greek oral production data, obtained via elicited story-telling (Tsimpli et al., 2005), was recorded, transcribed and analysed in terms of object clitic (non)target production/omission and relevant features such as gender, case, number and person.

Given that Russian has no clitics, if Russian–CG bilinguals transfer from L1 Russian, they can omit object clitics in obligatory contexts, and because of the characteristics of the (un)interpretable features, 3rd person clitics can be omitted more often than 1st and 2nd person clitics, as the latter have interpretable animate features (Tsimpli and Dimitrakopoulou, 2007).

Overall, bilingual children produced 9,664 words. The analysis of the data showed that bilingual Russian–CG children produced 306/43.4% overt object clitics, 328/46.5% overt object DPs, 13/1.8% overt object pronouns, while the rate of the object clitic omission was low (58/8.2%). They could misanalyse the clitics as weak pronouns and omit them because of the influence of L1 transfer from Russian or tend to use nouns instead of object clitics to express old/given discourse information (McShane, 2005; Erteschik-Shir et al., 2013). The analysis of the data showed that in root clauses bilingual children prefer to use pre-verbal (172/64.1%) rather than post-verbal object clitics (26/76.4%).

It was found that bilingual Russian CG children omitted only 3rd person object clitics, mainly of neuter gender (35/60.3%). As for overt object clitics, they were of 1st (26/9.7%), 2nd (12/4.4%) and 3rd (230/85.8%) person, mainly of neuter (132/51.1%) and masculine (89/34.4%) gender. The main problem in agreement (between object clitic and its antecedent) was gender, they used neuter instead of masculine (13/32.5%) and feminine instead of neuter (20/5%), mainly due to L1 interference. This can be the evidence in support of the Interpretability Hypothesis (Tsimpli and Dimitrakopoulou, 2007).

The same children were tested on elicitation object clitic production task (within a because-clause island), Clitic-in-Islands tool, developed in Action A33 (Varlokosta et al., to appear), adapted to CG. It elicited more overt object clitics (86%) and fewer instances of DPs (8.3%) or object clitic omissions (4.1%) than the story-telling task. For elicitation task it was found that bilingual children lag behind their monolingual CG peers with respect to object clitic production; for the story-telling task, they performed better than their mothers, who were tested on the same tool and produced more DPs (81%) than overt object clitics (14%) or object clitic omissions (3.5%). The linguistic development of bilingual children depends on the quantity and quality of input and their linguistic environment.

Language proficiency as a predictor of academic success in SLA

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Keywords: diagnostic writing test, grammar test, academic language proficiency, academic success, predictive validity

Abstract:

Over a number of years a lively debate has been taken place on the issue of language proficiency amongst university undergraduates in relation to academic success. As has been shown by a number of studies, language proficiency, particularly academic writing, appears to be significantly related to academic achievement (Bachman 1991; Criper & Davies 1988; Graham 1997; Ferguson & White 1999). Although other factors than language proficiency (e.g. learning style, motivation, aptitude) may contribute as well to lack of academic success, students with inadequate language skills have found to be seriously disadvantaged and hindered. Moreover, significant correlations have been found between language proficiency test scores (e.g. TOEFL or IELTS scores) and first-semester point average (Hill, Storch & Lynch 1999). Research so far, however, has been inconclusive with respect to the minimum level of language proficiency below which students are unlikely to cope with academic study. There is no unanimity, either, with respect to the criteria for judging academic success, the identification and operationalization of relevant components of academic language proficiency, the validity of various proficiency measures and the type of language proficiency test to be used.

The present paper investigates the relationship between academic language proficiency, operationalized in terms of academic writing ability, and academic achievement of L2 students. The research was carried out among 419 first-year L2 students of Modern Languages (Arabic, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Scandinavian languages, Slavonic languages and Spanish) at the University of Amsterdam, with Dutch as their mother tongue. All students took part in a diagnostic test of writing skills, in order to assess their academic writing ability in L1. In addition to the writing test, a grammar test was administered. The grammar test measured knowledge of grammatical relations and analysis of sentence structure, in order to establish to what extent grammar scores, for students of Modern Languages, were related to academic achievement. Prior to the tests all participants filled in a background information questionnaire, comprising questions regarding time investment, commitment, motivation for language learning, and grade point average at high school. Academic achievement was operationalized in terms of overall first- and second-semester point average, point average for foreign languages, and student drop-off rates. The following research questions will be addressed in the presentation:

- What is the predictive validity of both the diagnostic writing test and the grammar test in relation to academic achievement?

- To what extent are there any differential effects concerning the predictive validity of the diagnostic writing test and the grammar test, with respect to (i) overall academic achievement and (ii) academic achievement in terms of successful L2 learning?

The analysis of the data obtained from the study revealed significant correlations between the scores obtained on both the writing test and the grammar test on the one hand, and academic achievement and second language performance on the other hand. During the presentation the implications of the study with respect to language testing and pedagogy will be discussed.

The Effects of Mode and Task Complexity on L2 Performance

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Keywords: tasks, L2 oral production, L2 writing, idea units

Abstract:

As recently acknowledged, the field of SLA has tended to privilege the oral mode over writing in theory, research, and in the language classroom (Byrnes & Manchón, 2014; Ortega, 2012; Williams, 2012). Such neglect of written language learning may clearly compromise the comprehensiveness and ecological validity of SLA theories, constructs, and research outcomes. It would therefore be advisable for SLA research to include both oral and written modalities in future research agendas, pursuing, at the same time, a more nuanced understanding of modality effects in terms of the kind of L2 production they induce, and the distinct opportunities for L2 development they generate (see contributions to Byrnes & Manchón, 2014).

This gap in previous research has recently started to be addressed in several strands of SLA-oriented research that have focused on the potential of L2 writing for language learning. One of these strands, partly framed in the TBLT framework, has focused on task-modality effects (cf. see Ellis & Yuan, 2005; Kormos, 2014; Tavakoli, 2014). The present paper is an attempt to add to the this body of reseach with an exploration of (i) how language mode (written versus oral) influences learners´ task performance, and (ii) whether the effects of cognitive task complexity are constrained by mode (Kuiken & Vedder, 2011; Tavakoli, 2014). In the experiment, N=78 L1 Spanish/Catalan EFL learners performed orally and in writing the simple and the complex versions of a problem-solving task („fire-chief" task from Gilabert, 2009). With task complexity as a within-learner factor and mode as a between-learner factor, we analyzed L2 oral and written production using a range of traditional CAF measures and also employing such measures as idea units, whose analysis makes possible to assess propositional complexity – a subdimension of complexity which has been rarely explored in SLA research (Bulté & Housen, 2012; Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005).

As regards our first research question, the analysis showed that writers exhibited higher linguistic and propositional complexity and spent more time on task than speakers. On the other hand, speakers had less lexical errors and were more fluent than writers (all $p < 0.5$). Concerning the impact of task complexity on L2 oral versus L2 written production, our findings revealed that written production was affected by increases in task complexity to a greater extent than speech, especially in the areas of accuracy and fluency. While the patterns of the results for linguistic complexity were largely similar in the two modes, it was the area of propositional complexity where the increases in the cognitive load played out differently, affecting quantity of idea units in speech and the type (i.e, quality) of idea units in writing. Findings are interpreted in light of the cognitive SLA theories (e.g, Focus-on-form research, Output hypothesis), cognitive-interactionist theories of task-based performance (Robinson, 2001, 2011; Skehan, 1996), and recent theoretical proposals of the language learning potential of L2 writing (cf. Byrnes & Manchón, 2014; Manchón, 2011; Ortega, 2012; Williams, 2012).

Variability at the start of EFL learning. A comparative study

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Keywords: language distance, language exposure, young learners

Abstract:

Driven by usage-based assumptions about language learning (Robinson & Ellis, 2008; Ellis & Cadierno, 2009), this study investigates the relative impact of a range of factors on the initial stage of EFL learning in young learners. Whereas the unquestioned belief is that an early start will necessarily favour young learners, not enough attention has been paid to contextual and linguistic factors that may explain the great diversity in foreign language outcomes that are commonly observed in large surveys, such as the European Survey of Language Competences (ESLC). Indeed in those surveys school pupils in countries with an early start can be observed to attain lower scores than school pupils in countries with an older starting age. Two of the factors that may explain such variability are exposure to the FL outside the classroom (Housen, 2012; Kuppens, 2010; Sundqvist, 2009) and language distance between the mother tongue and the target language (Lindgren & Muñoz, 2013; Van der Silk, 2010).

On the basis of previous research findings showing the effects of out-of-school exposure to English before the start of English instruction (e.g., Lefever, 2010; Unsworth, 2014), the present study assumes that children from a country with considerable exposure to English and small linguistic distance between the first language and the target language will show a higher receptive knowledge of English at the beginning of school learning than children from a country with less exposure and larger linguistic distance. The study compares two samples of young learners of English, Danish and Spanish, respectively, divided into two groups of different age, 7 and 9 year-olds, as determined by the current start age policy in Denmark; the total number of participants is 200. Denmark and Spain differ in terms of exposure to English in society and at home, as well as in linguistic distance of the pupils' first language/s and English. On the other hand, children in Spain begin school English at an earlier age than children in Denmark. The instruments used to collect data include a parental questionnaire about the learners' frequency and type of out-of-school exposure, a receptive vocabulary test (the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test; PPVT-4; Dunn & Dunn, 2007), and a receptive grammar test (TROG, Bishop, 2003). Language distance is gauged by means of cognate linguistic distance measures (Dyen et al., 1992) which represent the percentage of the compared cognates that the languages share. These factors will be integrated into a complex multilevel analysis. Preliminary analyses show that the Danish learners have a greater advantage over the Spanish learners on (receptive) vocabulary than on (receptive) grammar, and that this advantage is larger for the older than for the younger starters. Results also give an indication of the number of additional hours needed by Spanish learners to match the Danish learners' outcomes. The presentation will discuss the results in light of the relative importance of contextual and linguistic factors and the implications in terms of comparative surveys and national language planning policies.

Does lexicon play a role in the development of nonnative phonological categories?

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Keywords: phonological perception, statistical probabilities, nonnative phonological contrasts

Abstract:

To date, the results of the phonological training studies aimed at improving lexical access in L2 have been mixed. Some have shown that it is, in fact, possible to develop sensitivity to a non-native contrast to aid word recognition (e.g., Perfors & Dunbar, 2010), while others have failed to demonstrate this result (e.g., Dufour, Nguyen, & Frauenfelder, 2010).

One potential explanation for the lack of success is the possibility that sensitivity to a phonological contrast could be a consequence of generalization based on the available lexical items that contain the contrast (top-down route) rather than a result of direct phonological influence on the minimal pair discrimination (bottom-up route), which is in line with child language acquisition theories (Charles-Luce & Luce, 1990; Walley, 1993).

The current study aims at identifying which route (top-down or bottom-up) contributes most significantly to the development of adequate phonological representations in a second language (L2).

Bottom-up processing relies on perceptual phonetic properties alone, while top-down processing relies on lexical properties, such as word onset probabilities in the encountered input. The AX discrimination task manipulated both parameters: perceptual complexity and the statistical probabilities of the initial CV sequence.

Four groups (advanced L2 learners of Russian (n=20), superior L2 learners of Russian (n=30), native Russian controls (n=31), and naïve listeners without prior Russian experience (n=20)) completed an auditory discrimination task (AX), consisting of nonce words with palatalized/non-palatalized consonants in the onset, which is a particularly challenging distinction for American learners of Russian.

The study demonstrates that (1) native speakers and superior L2 learners, but not advanced L2 learners or naïve listeners experience a processing advantage of CV clusters of higher statistical probability; (2) with higher proficiency, L2 learners develop a greater discrimination ability for palatalized consonants and a processing benefit of CV clusters of higher statistical probability; (3) some perceptually difficult CV clusters remain insensitive to input frequencies even for superior L2 speakers.

More generally, the results are in favor of the top-down development of the phonological categories in L2.

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Teaching listening in L2: Low-level decoding processes vs. high-level cognitive strategies

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Keywords: listening comprehension, listening strategies, EFL, word, spotting task, motivation, speech perception

Abstract:

Listening in a foreign language is a highly demanding task. L2 learners typically perform worse in listening than in reading comprehension (van Zeeland, 2013), and are acutely aware of it (Farrel & Mallard, 2006), which may in turn affect their motivation for, and attitude towards, listening tasks (Xu, 2011; Bloomfield et al., 2010). Successful listening requires a broad set of subskills ranging from perception to comprehension, i.e. from "low-level" speech signal decoding processes to "high-level" integrative mechanisms, including inference.

For years, listening comprehension skills have been assessed rather than taught in language classrooms (Field, 2008). Most of the effort that has eventually been devoted to teaching listening has focused on (meta-)cognitive listening strategies, with varying degrees of success (Berne, 2004), and very little at all with low-proficiency learners (Renandya & Farrell, 2010). Consequently, some researchers have argued in favor of alternative teaching methods designed at developing low-level processing of oral language through extensive listening (Renandya, 2011) or targeted exercices based on the "word-spotting task" (Cutler & Shanley, 2010).

In this paper, we discuss the results of two studies which, using a pre-test/post-test design, assessed the efficiency of two learning sequences implementing contrasting methods for teaching listening to teenage French EFL learners from Belgium. Study 1 tested a learning sequence based on both implicit (using the word-spotting task) and explicit teaching of word boundary detection using two cues that have proven useful for native English speakers: (i) lexical stress, and (ii) phonotactic constraints. Study 2 evaluated the success of a learning sequence focussing on listening strategies in an integrated teaching approach.

First, the efficiency of the learning sequences were assessed by comparing performances in pre- vs. post-tests. Second, learning processes were investigated by analyzing performances in similar exercices included within the learning sequences. Third, the attitudes and self-reported practices of the participants in relation with listening comprehension were documented (before & after intervention), as well as their opinion on the usefulness of the learning sequence (after intervention), to be confronted with the learners' performances at each step of the procedure.

First results suggested that (i) the learning sequence focussing on "low-level" word segmentation processes was more effective than the learning sequence based on cognitive listening strategies; (ii) the improvement in the performances from pre-test to post-test did not result from a particular didactic mean, but from a combination of teaching practices and speech materials (including individual exercises and theory building in group sessions, implicit and explicit learning, etc.); (iii) students who were self-reportedly focused on the listening task and approached it with a positive attitude performed better. The implications of these findings will be discussed at the conference.

L2 production of formulaic sequences

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Abstract:

One of the precursors of native-like selection and fluency is the proper use of formulaic chunks, which are presumably stored and retrieved as wholes (e.g., Wray & Perkins 2000). Previous research has shown that formulaic expressions reduce processing effort, suggesting that (i) they are faster to read than non-formulaic ones, and (ii) native speakers typically outperform non-native speakers due to familiarity with such sequences (e.g., Siyanonva-Chanturia et al. 2011). While these studies focused on processing dimensions by employing the eye-tracking methodology, the articulatory characteristics of formulaic sequences in L1 vs. L2 speech have remained largely underexplored.

Here we investigate the temporal dynamics of formulaic sequences in production, which have been suggested to differ from non-formulaic sequences with respect to the rate of articulation, pause characteristics, and intonation (Weinert 1995). We hypothesize that (i) native speakers (NS) are faster in the production of formulaic sequences than non-natives, and (ii) formulaic sequences are produced faster than their non-formulaic counterparts due to access to the "phrasicon", where such sequences are linked to a routinized muscular movement. However, non-native speakers (NNS) are expected to show no difference between the two types of sequences in production since they fail to process them holistically. We additionally investigated whether NNS exhibit phonological reduction in a native-like way in the realization of formulaic sequences. Twelve highly proficient German speakers of English and 8 English native speaker controls participated in a read-aloud task. Using 4 formulaic categories (Idioms, Proverbs, Conversational-Routines and Binomials), we embedded most frequently used formulaic sequences in 24 utterances and created the non-formulaic counterparts by replacing the formulaic sequences with the non-formulaic ones (e.g., Binomials: We just have to *wait and see* vs. We just have to *wait and pray*).

Our results showed that NS were generally faster in producing the formulaic sequences compared to NNS. No group difference however emerged in the production of non-formulaic sequences. Furthermore, NS produced formulaic sequences significantly faster than their non-formulaic counterparts in 3 of the 4 conditions, with no difference in Proverbs. Strikingly, formulaic sequences were not produced at a significantly faster speech rate by NNS in any of the conditions but the Binomials. A qualitative analysis of Binomial productions revealed that both the NS and NNS applied phonological reduction to the Binomials (but not to their non-formulaic counterparts) although this was more salient in the NS group. This suggests that the proper application of phonological reduction may reveal native-like patterns in the production of L2 formulaic sequences.

Our production results are on a par with the previous findings that suggested a processing advantage for formulaic sequences only in NS. We suggest that native-like articulation of most idiomatic chunks may be very difficult to attain by post-pubescent learners. Furthermore, prosodic reduction might be a precursor to the acquisition of formulaic language since this arguably accounted for the native-like behavior in NNS, albeit only with Binomials, which not only were highly familiar to our NNS, but also are easy to acquire in SLA (cf. Howarth 1998).

Development of a collocation test for advanced L2 French

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Keywords: collocations, L2 French, advanced learner, test development, item analysis

Abstract:

The current study sets out to develop a productive test of collocations for advanced L2 speakers of French (appr. C1 level). Collocation tests have hitherto been developed for English (e.g. Gyllstad 2007), but no standardized test has addressed L2 French so far. Collocations are indeed one of the most central components of second language proficiency (cf. Schmitt, 2012), especially at advanced and near-native levels of L2 attainment.

For the development of the test, items are drawn from the 200 000 000 word database of journalistic prose Les Voisins de Le Monde, using the measures of MI score and frequency for item selection. The test has been piloted in Sweden with populations of L1 and L2 speakers of French. It has subsequently been distributed in a population of advanced L2 learners (C1 level) in France. The tests have been analyzed with regard to validity and reliability. Results from the different data collections will be presented as well as problems arising in the elaboration of the test.

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Learning words through watching television: the effect of frequency occurrence and word relevance

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Abstract:

Recently, more studies have started to investigate vocabulary acquisition through viewing audio-visual input (Montero-Perez et al., 2014; Rodgers, 2013; van Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013; Vidal, 2011). These studies have demonstrated that it is indeed possible to learn new words when watching television and videos, although the learning gains tend to be low. Research has also explored variables that might increase vocabulary learning through audio-visual input. Studies have indicated that part of speech (Van Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013), frequency of occurrence (Rodgers, 2013; Van Zeeland & Schmitt, 2013, Vidal, 2003), and vocabulary size (Montero-Perez et al., 2014) affect the chances of a word being learned. One factor which is yet to be examined is a word's relevance to understanding the video.

The aim of this study is to investigate English-as-a-Foreign-Language learners' acquisition of three aspects of vocabulary knowledge through viewing a television program: form recognition, meaning recall, and meaning recognition. Specifically, this study explores (a) the effect of a word's frequency of occurrence, (b) the effect of a word's relevance, (3) the effect of Part of Speech and (4) the mediating role of learners' vocabulary size on incidental vocabulary acquisition. A secondary aim is to determine how a combination of the aforementioned factors might affect vocabulary learning through watching television.

An ecologically-valid study was set up in which participants watched a video that was directly related to their course aims. Whereas previous studies have generally used short videos, this study used a one-hour television program. A pretest-posttest-delayed posttest design was adopted. The participants, 70 Dutch-speaking EFL university students, were assigned to an experimental group that watched the video, or to a control group that received no input and only took the vocabulary tests. The video contained 64 target words. They differed in terms of frequency of occurrence (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), in perceived relevance, and in part of speech (noun, verb, adjective). Vocabulary gains were measured in a form recognition test, a meaning recall test and a meaning recognition test.

Preliminary analyses indicated that the experimental group learned significantly more words than the control group in the meaning recall test, recalling on average the meaning of 4.5 words (16% relative gain). However, no significant difference was found in the form recognition test and in the meaning recognition test. Significant correlations were found (a) between frequency and meaning recognition and meaning recall and (b) between relevance and meaning recognition and meaning recall. Part of speech only affected gains in the meaning recognition test. Finally, participants' vocabulary size positively affected learning gains in the meaning recall and meaning recognition test.

The results indicate that vocabulary may be learned incidentally through watching a single television program in the same way that relatively small vocabulary learning gains occur through reading a single text. The pedagogical implications of the findings will be discussed in detail.

La cena es/está en la sala: copula selection with locatives in L2 Spanish

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Keywords: SLA, ser/estar, locatives, Spanish

Abstract:

Selection of copular verbs in Spanish (ser/estar 'to be') is a classic challenging area for L2 learners. Most of the studies have concluded that estar is more problematic than ser, particularly with adjectives (Bruhn de Garavito & Valenzuela, 2006; Geeslin, 2002; 2003; Schmitt & Miller, 2007; among others); yet, very few studies looked at the acquisition of location, with the exception of Sera (1992), Pérez-Leroux, Álvarez & Battersby (2010), Dussias, Contemori & Román (2014), and Perpiñán (2014, 2015). Generally speaking, these studies showed that L2 speakers of Spanish have difficulty expressing location of events, which requires ser; whereas location of objects, which requires estar, is acquired earlier. Still, none of these studies looked at the semantic interpretation of the choice of copular verbs in locative constructions, and its developmental stages of acquisition.

The present study investigates the production and comprehension of locatives with ser and estar in English-speaking learners of L2 Spanish (n = 36) with a low-intermediate proficiency as determined by the DELE. In a Picture Matching Task, participants had to choose between pairs of pictures according to the meaning of the sentence provided as in La cena es/está en la sala (Dinner is on the living-room.). Crucially, the nominals employed could have a double interpretation—as an event (the act of having dinner) or as an object (the food)—and the use of the verb—ser or estar—disambiguated the meaning. There were 6 pairs of pictures, with two interpretations each (one with ser and one with estar), a total of 12 target responses plus 12 distracters. In an Elicited Production Task, participants were presented with a map of a city to locate a list of objects or events (k = 8), such as la cita (the date) or las palomitas (popcorn).

Results indicated that low-intermediate level English-speaking learners of Spanish have weak intuitions about the semantic entailment of the ser/estar distinction in locatives. Accuracy responses were higher for events with ser (56% correct) than for objects with estar (40% correct). In the production task, we found similar results: correct use of ser with events was higher (60%) than the location of objects with estar (42%).

These results in low-intermediate learners show a different pattern than the previous findings for the acquisition of copulas with locatives, which reported that the acquisition of events with ser was more challenging than the acquisition of objects with estar. However, we do not believe that our results go against previous findings; instead, we interpret these higher accuracy responses with ser and events not as the complete acquisition of the copular alternation in locative contexts, but as instances of the general delayed acquisition of estar, as proposed by VanPatten (2010). In the initial developmental stage depicted here, estar is underused for location and ser is overgeneralized; as a result, higher accuracy is found with location of events than with objects. Finally, these results show that the process to master the semantic differences that the two copulas entail is problematic also in locative contexts.

Nominal gender and agreement relation outside the DP domain in code-switching

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Keywords: Gender agreement, Code, Switching

Abstract:

Under the feature-checking approach to code-switching (MacSwan 1999 and subsequent work), the grammatical status of mixed DPs has become a puzzle. Theoretically, in language pairs involving one genderless language, such as English and Spanish, switching between D and N should not be available, contrary to facts. Crucially, the analogical gender (i.e. the gender of the equivalent noun) in mixed DP - such as "la(f) house" - calls into question the architecture of the Lexicon (Halle and Marantz 1994) and consequently the whole process of Borrowing. In fact, analogical gender may be analysed: a) as true concord (among others Liceras et al. 2008), or b) as the output of a lexical rule assigning the analogical gender to the English noun (the "temporary" borrowing account; see Poplack et al. 1982).In this talk we will try to provide an adequate solution to the puzzle by testing the ability of nominal gender to be "infinitely reusable as an 'active goal'" by the operation Agree (Carstens 2010) in code-switching sentences.We will provide data obtained through judgement grammaticality tasks (JTG) administered to 4 adult Italian-German bilinguals: two L2 learners (German L1) and two adult 2L1, living in Italy. German and Italian are two gendered languages which overtly spell-out gender agreement relations. Our test sentences include the following mixed relative clauses, given in (1-2), and mixed passive clauses, given in (3-4):

(1) Der luna, die/den ich gestern gesehen habe

" the moon(mix), which(f/m) I have seen yesterday"

(2) La luna, die/den ich gestern gesehen habe

" the moon(f), which(f/m) I have seen yesterday"

(3) Der sedia è stata/stato riparata/riparato

"the chair(mix) has been(f/m) repaired(f/m)"

(4) Der Stuhl è stata/stato riparata/riparato

"the chair (m) has been(f/m) repaired(f/m)"

In the mixed sentences in (1) and (3), the "active goal" for the operation agree is a mixed DP, while in (2) and (4) a monolingual one, more precisely an Italian DP in (2) and a German DP in (4).The results we obtain from the JTG suggest that the analogical gender cannot simply be analysed in terms of a temporary borrowing. The Italian/German bilingual speakers seem, in fact, to be able to assign the analogical gender even to a monolingual DP. They also accept pattern such as "der(m) luna(f), die(f) ich gestern gesehen habe", where the Italian feminine noun "luna" (receiving the analogical gender from the German corresponding word "Mond(m)"), values the German relative pronoun as feminine. We also record a difference in judgements between L2 Learners and adults 2L1.

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The Development of Receptive and Productive L2 Grammar Processing Skills: Shared Processing Mechanisms, Similar Stages?

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Keywords: developmental stages, Processability Theory, morphology, English, self paced reading, grammaticality judgement task, online processing

Abstract:

Introduction. This paper focuses on the developmental relationship between receptive and productive second language (L2) grammar processing skills – an aspect of L2 acquisition which, although a crucial component of any model of L2 acquisition (Ellis 2008), is still open to many questions. More specifically, the project reported in this paper investigated whether the acquisition of receptive and of productive L2 grammar processing skills are driven by the same cognitive mechanisms, resulting in similar acquisition orders for certain morphosyntactic structures.

Theoretical Framework. The theoretical framework is Processability Theory (PT) (Pienemann 1998). PT claims that L2 learners' development of productive grammar processing skills is governed by their acquisition of a set of universal, implicationally ordered "processing procedures" which allow them to exchange information within increasingly larger sentences constituents (e.g. phrase, clause). Originally intended as a theory of language production, there is a recent but growing interest in the applicability of PT to receptive grammar acquisition (e.g. Spinner 2013). The question asked, then, is whether the processing procedures hypothesized by PT also operate in receptive grammar acquisition, leading to the same developmental patterns.

Design and Methodology. The study looked at learners' developing ability to process L2 English morphology. Participants were eighty-one adult learners with different proficiency levels and different L1 backgrounds (the latter to allow us to test PT's claim that the processing procedures are universal). Online processing skills (Ellis 2009; Roberts 2012) were measured by means of a self-paced reading (SPR) task and a timed grammaticality judgment task (GJT). Productive processing was measured by means of a movie-retelling task. The SPR task and GJT both test learners' ability to process six morphological phenomena hypothesized by PT to become processable at different stages of acquisition: genitive –'s and past tense –ed (Stage 2), plural –s (Stage 3), be + -ing-form and have + past participle (Stage 4), and 3SG –s (Stage 5). In the SPR task, participants read grammatically correct and incorrect sentences on a computer, word-by-word and at their own pace, pressing the space bar after every word. For every morphological phenomenon, the reaction time (i.e. time passed between every space bar press) on critical words in grammatical sentences was compared to the reaction time in ungrammatical sentences. A significantly delayed reaction time in ungrammatical sentences is interpreted as evidence that learners can process the morpheme. In the timed GJT, participants read the same set of sentences, replying with 'grammatically correct' or 'incorrect'. In the production task, participants described what happened in a fragment of Charlie Chaplin's Modern Times. To determine whether the receptive grammar data confirmed PT, the data were analysed using implicational scaling – the commonly used method in PT-oriented research.

Results. Results from the movie-retelling task confirm PT's predictions about mechanisms and stages in productive L2 grammar development. In contrast, results from the SPR task and GJT yield no evidence for the operation of the processing procedures posited by PT. Implications for the status of PT and for research on L2 development in general will be discussed.

Processing of Inflected Morphology in Native and Non-Native Speakers of English

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Abstract:

Second language (L2) research investigating native and non-native differences has recently set out to identify processing procedures in these groups. Within this line of research, the mental representation/processing of inflected words in the L2 has received particular attention. It has been suggested that the two principal routes to processing of morphologically complex words (i.e., full-listing and decomposition) are available to native speakers but not to adult L2 learners (Clahsen & Felser, 2006; Clahsen et al., 2010). For example, while in the L1 English lexicon, irregular verbs (e.g., flew), are stored as a whole, regular verbs are decomposed into the root and suffix (e.g., walk – ed) (Pinker, 1999). In the L2 lexicon, however, regularly inflected words, like irregular words, are assumed to be stored as chunks due to L2 learners' problems with implicit linguistic computations (Ullman, 2004).

The present study tested this hypothesis via a masked priming experiment measuring recognition/response time (RT) for regular and irregular verbs in L2 English. The prime-target pairs were presented in three prime conditions: i) Identity (save-SAVE; build-BUILD), (ii) Test (saved-SAVE; built-BUILD), and (iii) Unrelated (carry-SAVE; share-BUILD). Preliminary data from L1-Turkish-L2 English learners (n=45 advanced; n=45 upper-intermediate) and native English speakers (n=24) revealed significantly faster RTs for irregular verbs [$F_{(1,111)}=23.119$, $p=0.00$] and a main effect of condition [$F_{(2,222)}=64.752$, $p=0.00$] across all groups. Further paired-samples t-tests revealed priming effects only for regulars in all groups, suggesting decomposition. As for the irregular verbs, no priming effects were observed, possibly due to storage effects. These results lend support for the dual-mechanism view in morphological processing of past tense inflection in English. It seems that mid-to-high proficiency L2 speakers of English can employ the decomposition route in accessing inflected forms in the L2 similar to native speakers, as suggested by some of the earlier studies (e.g., Feldman et al., 2010; Gor & Jackson, 2013). Thus, comparable processing patterns in native and nonnative groups obtained in the present study oppose to earlier views that L2 learners are less sensitive to the morphological structure of the target language compared to native speakers (e.g., Clahsen et al. 2010).

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Interplay of semantic and discourse criteria in marking of ongoingness Evidence from narratives of L1French-L2 English advanced learners

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Keywords: advanced learners, ongoingness marking, narratives, semantic/discourse criteria, crosslinguistic influence

Abstract:

The present study is part of an investigation concerning what and why basic features of the L2 remain non native like at very advanced stages of L2 acquisition.

Focus is on the extent to which L1French-L2 English learners have internalized the intricate interplay of semantic and discourse criteria underlying the use of ongoingness marking on events in film retellings. Previous studies have shown that the availability or not of grammaticalized progressive marking has implications on the way events are sequenced and linked in narratives and influences focus of attention to certain perceptual or conceptual features of events (v. Stutterheim & al. 2013).

Ongoingness marking is envisaged in 3 retelling tasks varying on memory load (1 online 2 offline). It is predicted that the proximity of the visual input will influence the frequency of progressive marking and coding of specific event types as ongoing vs. temporally bounded. Research questions are the following:

- To what extent do situation types or features of events trigger ongoingness marking?

- To what extent do discourse functions (backgrounding/framing) trigger ongoingness marking in the 3 elicitation conditions?

- To what extent do criteria for selecting aspectual forms evidenced in L2 use converge and diverge with those of L1 English and L1 French in the context of the same tasks?

The database comprises 3 groups of L2s and 3 control groups of L1English and L1French. Participants are all university students. L2 speakers' competence was tested all along their university studies as English majors.

Findings

The overall frequency of ongoingness marking (be+ -ing, start + gerund, there's + ing, as + be+-ing) decreases according to task in both L1 and L2 in order: online, offline medium and high memory load, confirming predictions.

In the offline condition, frequency of progressives in the time line is significantly less in L2 than in L1. Learners tend to restrict ongoingness marking to background information. In the online condition occurrences are roughly equivalent but learners tend not to anchor events via 'now', which is systematic in L1.

Contrarily to L1 speakers who typically express [-goal] events in the progressive (he is walking/looking around (73%)), learners hardly ever select those events for expression at all. In L1, they serve to establish an overarching temporal relation of inclusion to a set of events. This framing function is never attested in L2 data. Bounded events such as dig a hole tend to be coded with start + gerund more often in L2 than in L1.

These results with be discussed in relation to the current debate on crosslinguistic influence in L2 use: Do the findings reflect persistent reliance on L1 patterns? a combination of L1 and L2 components in organizing information at discourse level? or do they reflect specific learner strategies? (Jarvis & Pavlenko, 2008).

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Validating the LLAMA aptitude tests

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Keywords: Aptitude, testing, age, bilingualism

Abstract:

This study further investigates whether Meara's (2005) LLAMA tests are reliable for use in aptitude testing. The LLAMA tests were designed as shorter, free, language-neutral tests that are loosely based on the MLAT tests (Carroll & Sapon 1959). They contain four sub-components testing vocabulary acquisition, implicit learning, sound-symbol correspondence and grammatical inferencing. Since development they have been used in over 45 research projects including several PhD theses. This is of some concern to Meara (p.c.) as they have not been validated. Previous studies by Graneña (2013) and Authors (2014) have provided some initial results relating to the validity of these tests. This study further examines three questions that have arisen from the results of these previous studies.

- Are the LLAMA tests language neutral?

- What is the effect of age on LLAMA test scores

- What is the effect of bilingualism on LLAMA test scores?

Authors (2014) had a small sample size for the first research question (n=14) and grouped Arabic and Chinese native speakers together as a non-Roman script group. This study separates these groups. These results will be compared with matched second language learners from a roman script background. Each group contains over 30 participants.

The LLAMA tests were not originally designed for use with children. As the question of aptitude and age has been contested in the literature (e.g. Abrahamsson & Hyltenstam 2008, Muñoz 2014), it seems appropriate to investigate the use of these tests with younger populations. To address this second research question, we will examine the test results of 4 groups of 30 learners. Group 1 contains 9-10 year olds, Group 2 contains 14-15 year olds, Group 3 contains 18-21 year olds and group 4 contains adults over the age of 40. These age groups were chosen to examine a range of ages including both younger and older participants who are long past any possible critical period.

The third research question arises from previous research suggesting that aptitude can be trained (e.g. Grigorenko et al, 2000; McLaughlin, 1990; Sternberg, 2002) or changed due to experience, (e.g. Kormos, 2013; Sáfár & Kormos, 2008; Sawyer, 1992; Sparks, Ganschow, Fluharty & Little, 1995; Thompson, 2013). Authors (2014) did not find any significant differences in a post-hoc analysis of reported language experience. However, this did not take into account the level of language proficiency. This study specifically targets bilinguals (two L1s before age 5) and advanced L2 learners. Each group contains over 30 participants and will be compared to matched monolingual controls.

Data collection is ongoing with over 100 participants already tested and a further minimum of 80 scheduled. This study aims to provide a further step in the validation of Meara's (2005) LLAMA tests by testing much larger numbers and targeting some of the questions that have arisen from previous studies.

Bilingualism, Vocabulary Knowledge and IQ Scores

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Abstract:

There is a long tradition of research on the relation between bilingualism and academic achievement. Generally there is now an agreement that bilingualism does not have negative effects on cognitive development and a large number of studies show that bilinguals outperform monolinguals in a variety of verbal and non-verbal tasks (for an overview see Barac and Bialystok, 2011). There is also a widely accepted assumption that proficiency scores in the two (or more) languages of a bilingual are related (Common Underlying Proficiency Hypothesis, Cummins 1980), and that support in one language will be beneficial for the other language as well (Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis, Cummins 1979). In the present study we investigate the relation between the vocabulary knowledge of bilingual children in both of their languages and the relation of non-verbal intelligence scores and vocabulary knowledge. In addition we investigate the role that language dominance preferences of the parents might have on the development of vocabulary and IQ scores of bilingual children. The participants in the present study are 100 Turkish-English bilingual children (age range 7 - 11) who grew up in the UK. The parents were all immigrants to the UK from Turkey and at least one of them had an academic degree. The findings of our study can therefore only be representative for bilingual families with a certain Socio-Economic Status. We used a receptive vocabulary test in both languages (X-Lex; Meara and Milton 2003), a productive vocabulary test in both languages (a verbal fluency task), a non-verbal intelligence test (Raven, Raven and Court, 1998) and a questionnaire about language dominance (Dunn and Fox Tee, 2009). The vocabulary and IQ tests were administrated to the children, the dominance questionnaire to the parents. Our findings show that there is a clear relation between vocabulary scores in both languages. Children with a large vocabulary in Turkish will also have a larger vocabulary in English (receptive vocabulary: r = .61, p <.01; productive vocabulary: r = .74, p < .01). The receptive vocabulary and the IQ scores are also significantly related. A partial correlation controlling for age yields: IQ/Turkish receptive vocabulary (r = .47, p < .001) and IQ/English receptive vocabulary scores r = .56, p < .001). The language dominance of the parents has a clear influence on the vocabulary and intelligence scores of the children. Turkish dominance of parents and children's IQ scores are significantly positive related (r = .54, p < .01). Our study shows that there is clear evidence for the Common Underlying Proficiency Hypothesis in the area of vocabulary knowledge. Furthermore, we conclude that non-verbal IQ and vocabulary knowledge are related, and that a positive attitude of the parents towards the minority language in an immigration setting (Turkish in this case) has a positive effect on vocabulary knowledge in both languages and on non-verbal IQ scores. One question for further research is whether we can identify a psychological trait that underlies vocabulary knowledge and non-verbal IQ scores for both, bilingual and monolingual children.

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Sentence Repetition Tasks in investigating children's morpho-syntax: a study of Polish-English emergent bilinguals

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Keywords: bilingualism, sentence repetition tasks, morphosyntax

Abstract:

Bilingual children differ from their monolingual peers in language development (Bialystok et al., 2010). Although bilingualism results in significant cognitive benefits later in the lifetime, any peculiarities or delays in linguistic development of child bilinguals may be misinterpreted due to the erroneous use of monolingual norms and research tools (Armon-Lotem, 2012). To counteract this problem, it is essential to examine the child in his/her two languages using adequate procedures to reduce assessment bias.

Sentence Repetition Tasks (SRT) are speech elicitation tools used to assess both monolingual and bilingual linguistic abilities. Properly designed SRTs tap into implicit linguistic knowledge and allow for accessing internalized grammatical representations (cf. Marinis & Armon-Lotem, 2015). To serve their diagnostic functions, the English and Polish SRTs used in the present study (Marinis et al., 2011; Banasik et al., 2012) were carefully developed in terms of morphosyntactic complexity and lexical item selection, taking into account word frequency and age of acquisition. The tasks consist of, respectively, 60/68 sentences and target 15/17 structures organized in three blocks of increasing complexity, including, the use of auxiliaries, modals, negation, wh-questions, passives, bi-clausal sentences, relative clauses, clefts and conditionals.

Here, we present data of an in-progress study on the morphosyntactic development of Polish-English bilingual preschoolers raised in the UK (N=30) matched for age and socio-economic status with Polish monolinguals (N=30). The mean age of the whole sample is 67 months. Following the scoring schemes for SRT (Marinis & Armon-Lotem, 2015) we calculated the number of exact verbatim repetitions of stimulus sentences, overall grammaticality of each output sentence, and the number of changes (i.e. omissions, additions, substitutions) in the realm of the lexical items, functional words and inflectional morphemes. We also applied a structure-oriented scoring scheme, in which the targeted grammatical construction (e.g. negation, passive, wh-question) was isolated from the structure-irrelevant linguistic material (e.g. adjunct phrases) and subjected to binary assessment (right-wrong).

Our partial results calculated for Polish show that the monolingual group significantly outperformed their bilingual counterparts on most scales, excluding simple wh-questions and bi-clausal sentences. The most pronounced difficulties were noted for verb phrases with auxiliaries, modals and negation, as well as for object relative clauses and long passives. However, as revealed by linear regression analyses, initially less developed Polish morphosyntactic abilities of bilinguals progress steadily with age to approximate the level of the linguistic skills of their monolingual counterparts. As for the comparison of the languages of the bilingual children, we did not find significant differences in the acquisition of the corresponding Polish and English structures, except for wh-questions, which turned out to be significantly better developed in Polish than in English.

In the discussion part, the obtained results are interpreted in relation to the quantity and type of linguistic input (i.e. environmental vs. home language), selected social and sociolinguistic factors as well as the current theories of bilingual development.

Incidental L2 vocabulary learning in dialogue

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Abstract:

Even though many people nowadays spend one or more periods of their adult lives immersed in a second-language (L2) environment, not much is known about the underlying mechanisms of natural second language acquisition. One of the challenges in researching this is finding the right balance between naturalness of conversation and experimental control. This paper presents a novel method for investigating natural L2 word learning and some preliminary findings.

German learners of Dutch were invited to participate in a study ostensibly about making price judgements. They thought the study was open to anyone who could speak Dutch, including Dutch people themselves. The study consisted of two parts. In the first part (the pre-test), participants were asked to sort pictures of familiar objects according to price, and afterwards presented their ranking to the experimenter out loud. In this way, it became apparent which objects they did and did not know the name of. This allowed for an individualised item and filler selection for every participant.

In the second part of the study, the participant and the experimenter took turns comparing two objects in price. Exactly 24 objects whose name had been found to be unknown in the sorting task were always rated and named by the experimenter first, but would at a later point appear in the participant's trials, and have to be named by him/her. This showed whether or not the word had been learnt. Because of the refined cover story, participants were completely naive with regard to taking part in a vocabulary learning study.

The study was intended to investigate whether natural word learning takes place at all under these implicit circumstances, and whether learning rates are sensitive to three factors that are expected to affect memory performance. The first of these factors was cognate status: are non-identical cognates (for example: schort – Schürze, English apron) acquired more easily than non-cognates? The second and third factor were number of exposures and time between exposure and testing: are words learnt better after having heard them four rather than two times, and are they retained better after a short rather than a long lag?

A preliminary look at the data reveals that natural word learning indeed takes place, although post-test performance had declined relative to immediately after learning. Furthermore, the data suggest that all factors exert the expected influence. This provides us with a method for implicit vocabulary learning that is sensitive to factors commonly known to affect memory performance under explicit learning conditions. The method can be used in the future to investigate the role of other factors in natural L2 word learning, such as 'nativeness' (do people more readily learn from a native than a non-native conversational partner?), attention (does learning improve when attention is drawn to the unknown items?) and proficiency (do advanced learners learn new words more easily?).

Explicit grammar instruction for young L1 English learners of German: Form-meaning mapping practice versus noticing practice

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Abstract:

Opportunities for drawing on implicit mechanisms for learning L2 morphosyntax are limited in the minimal exposure context of primary school classrooms in England. However, the extent to which explicit information and practice is useful for young L2 learners is poorly understood. Previous research shows that practice in making task essential form-meaning mappings is more beneficial than exposure to enriched input (Marsden & Chen, 2011). However, we do not know whether practice in noticing the form (Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis, N. Ellis's Implicit Tallying Hypothesis), without task essential mapping to function, can be equally effective.

The current study investigated the extent to which English learners of L2 German aged 9 to 11 benefitted from explicit instruction on accusative case-marking on masculine definite articles in German. This is problematic for L1 English learners due to a reliance on word order when assigning grammatical roles (as predicted by both MacWhinney's Competition Model and VanPatten's First Noun Principle). Learners tend to misinterpret: 'Den-ACC Opa umarmt der-NOM Mann' as 'the grandfather hugs the man' (Jackson, 2007).

The interventions aimed to improve learners' processing of the input by providing explicit information followed by EITHER: Task Essential-Form Meaning Connection (TE-FMC) activities forcing attention on the article and understanding its role-assigning function; OR Task Essential-Form (TE-F) activities forcing attention on the article only ('spot the form').

Young learners were randomly assigned to the TE-FMC (n = 45) and TE-F (n = 41) treatments, delivered in 5 x 50 minute weekly sessions. A control group (n = 52) received instruction on lexical items, but no exposure to den. Two untimed written tasks (sentence matching; gap fill) and three one-to-one oral tasks (act out comprehension and production; elicited imitation) were administered as pre- (week 1), post- (week 7), and delayed post-tests (week 16) to assess knowledge of der and den. A metalinguistic task tested learners' verbalisable explicit knowledge.

Both the TE-FMC and TE-F interventions resulted in large, significant gains on all measures at post-test. By delayed post-test performance on the outcome measures was maintained, though verbalisable explicit knowledge had deteriorated. No gains were made by the Control group. Principle component analysis suggested that learners in both conditions developed explicit knowledge, available during untimed written tasks, and a different, more proceduralised knowledge type, available under time and communicative pressure. That is, all learners attended to form and function in the input, despite the TE-F intervention making attention to only the form task essential. Analysis of individuals' learning trajectories revealed that group level gains could be accounted for by the performance of a sub-group of learners within each group, demonstrating how individual differences mediate the effectiveness of instruction. The findings extend previous studies (e.g.Marsden & Chen, 2011; Stafford et al, 2012), suggesting that providing explicit information combined with noticing can be equally as effective as providing form-meaning mapping practice.

Jackson (2007), Comprehension by L2 learners of German. MLJ, 91(3).

Marsden & Chen (2011). The roles of structured input activities. Language Learning, 61(4).

Stafford et al. (2012). Optimizing language instruction. Language Learning, 62(3).

Real(ia) Instruction: Authentic materials in the teaching of syntax-discourse constructions

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Abstract:

Generative SLA (GenSLA) findings have always had the potential to translate into pedagogical implications, but this potential has been earnestly explored only recently (e.g. Whong, Gil, & Marsden, 2013). Following Widdowson (2000), we maintain that GenSLA researchers should act as mediators between linguists and teachers,translating insights from linguistic theory to instruction. As an example, we offer*a syntax-discourse construction in Spanish: Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD)*. Although most instructional L2 Spanish-language textbooks devote sections to properties of accusative clitics, most notably placement and interpretation (Bruhn de Garavito, 2013), virtually none present examples or explanations of CLLD. CLLD, exemplified in (1), is a frequent and salient construction in which a left-dislocated (Topic) object is resumed by an agreeing clitic later in the sentence.

(1) CONTEXT: Are you not going to the party with Elena? (Elena= topic)

[A Elena]i sí *(lai) invitaron, pero a mí no.

to Elena (fem.sg) yes cl.ACC.3f.sg invited.PAST.3rd.PL but to me NEG

"Well, Elena was indeed invited, but I wasn't."

In Spanish, CLLD must be distinguished from Fronted Focus (FF), a similar construction that involves a dislocated phrase that is not clitic-doubled. FF has different interpretative properties, given that the dislocated element is Focus. Thus, successful comprehension and production of CLLD depends not only on knowledge of clitic placement but also on discourse-felicitousness considerations.

In a recent study (Authors, 2014), we use a self-paced reading task to investigate whether L2 Spanish learners (English NSs; n=120) could successfully predict the upcoming appearance of a clitic based on a previously-appearing cue: a left-dislocated topic. Although English also uses fronted objects, albeit less frequently, for topicalization, topics cannot be resumed because English lacks clitics. Results demonstrated that learners were indeed able to predict the agreeing clitic, as shown by an emergent sensitivity to the expectation violations set up by the syntactic and discourse context. Not surprisingly, L2 proficiency (intermediate vs. advanced) was a strong predictor of native-like processing. Most relevantly, however, native-like processing of CLLD was strongly correlated with study abroad but not length of study. This result underscores the fact that the quality of linguistic experience influences the ability to acquire such sensitivity.

Following the insights of Slabakova (2008), we argue that L2 learners would benefit from instruction on CLLD that highlights the syntax-semantics-discourse mismatches between Spanish and English and is developmentally appropriate (i.e. only advanced learners would benefit from instruction). We suggest three areas of improvement: a) *Professional development*: L2 Spanish instructors should be aware not only of the syntactic properties of CLLD (e.g. case, agreement, placement) but also of the discourse-felicitousness conditions of CLLD (e.g. the dislocated element should be a topic) and how these differ from other, similar, constructions; b) *Authentic input*: learners should be exposed to contextually-rich authentic materials in which CLLD is used, such as movies and TV shows; and c) *Communication-based practice*: learners should be encouraged to use this property through communication-oriented activities which are strongly based in real-life discourse. We conclude by offering examples of such instructional materials.

Developing Second Language Narrative Literacy Using Concept-Based Instruction and a Division-of-labor Pedagogy

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Abstract:

A well-documented curricular gap exists in second language (L2) pedagogy between the introductory courses, focusing mainly on language, and advanced courses, focusing mainly on content (Byrnes, Maxim & Norris, 2010). Advanced learners, despite their proficiency, generally have difficulty in bridging this curricular gap, as it requires a shift from decoding basic information in texts to interpreting and analyzing texts. In order to bridge or close the gap for L2 learners, this research aimed to promote the development of intermediate learners' L2 narrative literacy abilities while studying this development in the process of formation. A concept-based instructional (CBI) approach (Haenen, 1996), based on Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), was developed and then implemented during a twelve-week pedagogical intervention. This study investigated the extent to which a CBI approach promoted the development of learners' L2 narrative literacy abilities as well as their understanding and use of three concepts. These concepts included Foundation (see Cole, 1996), Organization (see Mandler, 1984), and Genre (see Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010; Halliday & Hasan, 1989).

Two groups of four L2 learners of French (7 L1 English and 1 L1 Chinese) were provided with the three theoretical concepts, materializations of these concepts, and literacy activities. A division-of-labor pedagogy was created to complement the CBI approach, which entailed dividing each of the three concepts into four roles. At the beginning, learners had the opportunity to work on one role at a time for each concept during the literacy activities, before they took on more responsibility. With each learner providing their role work to the group, each member of the group was able to participate in the entire literacy activity while only bearing a portion of the responsibility. Mediation was provided as needed at both the individual and group level.

The data includes audio/video recordings of the learners' performance during the twelve weeks of L2 literacy activities, written verbalization data, a written summary for each text, and survey data. In addition, independent raters were used to rank order the texts in terms of level of difficulty as well as to score the pre- and post-test text summaries. The summaries were scored using a rubric with the following five categories: main idea, supporting details, synthesis, generalizations, and accuracy. To trace the learners' development, the text summaries, verbalization data, and performance data were analyzed. Learners' scores on written summaries of both mid- and high-level texts improved significantly after instruction ($t(7)=2.68$, $p<0.05$, $d=1.67$; $t(5)=4.62$, $p<0.05$, $d=2.71$, power=0.95 respectively). The learners' understanding of the concepts developed along with the manner in which they used the concepts to guide their thinking/performance. They were able to take on more responsibility for roles in the division-of-labor pedagogy. Learners felt more confident in reading, interpreting, and analyzing texts and knew how to investigate textual elements. They understood that language involves making choices to create particular effects. These findings suggest that the learners were able to use these concepts as tools for thinking in literacy activities and therefore, the language-literature gap can be bridged or closed.

Recognising emotions in a foreign language

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Keywords: Emotion recognition, L1 versus LX users, proficiency, culture

Abstract:

This presentation focuses on individual differences in the Emotion Recognition Ability (ERA) of 920 participants (687 females, 233 males). The sample consisted of 356 first (L1) and 564 foreign language (LX) users of English from all over the world. Recognising emotions can be particularly challenging in LX contexts (Pavlenko 2005, author a, b). Depending on their linguistic and cultural profile, individuals may interpret the input very differently, and LX learners and users have been found to perform significantly worse than native control groups (Rintell 1984). Part of the difficulty in recognising emotion in an LX is that fact that people from different cultures focus more on certain cues and may struggle when they are absent or less obvious (Tombs et al 2014).

We investigate the effect of three independent variables, namely L1 versus LX status, proficiency in the LX, and cultural background on ERA.

We used an online survey, where participants had to identify a basic emotion portrayed by a native English-speaking actress in six one-minute-long audiovisual clips. She improvised situations in which she expressed happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise and disgust. Just as in real life, ERA depends on verbal, vocal and visual cues: in some videos the verbal channel was the most informative one, in others the vocal and/or visual cues were more prominent.

Participants also filled out the LexTALE, a 60-item lexical test developed by Lemhöfer and Broersma (2012) to gauge their English proficiency.

Against expectations, no significant difference emerged between English L1 users and LX users' ERA scores. For the LX sample, a significant positive relationship was found between lexical test scores and ERA. A significant effect of L1 culture was found on ERA scores, with Asian LX users scoring significantly lower than European and North-American LX users, possibly because of differences in affective socialization in East and West (Pavlenko 2014).

The most original finding of the present study is thus that audiovisual input allows (advanced) LX users to recognize emotions in an LX as well as L1 users. That said, LX proficiency and L1 culture do have an effect on ERA.

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Pavlenko, A. (2005). Emotions and Multilingualism. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Pavlenko, A. (2014). The Bilingual Mind and what it tells us about Language and Thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rintell, E. (1984). But how did you FEEL about that?: The leaner's perception of emotion in speech. Applied Linguistics, 5(3), 255-264.

Tombs, A.G., Russell-Bennett, R., & Ashkanasy, N.M. (2014). Recognising emotional expressions of complaining customers: A cross-cultural study. European Journal of Marketing, 48(7/8).

The importance of the self in second language learning: Identity construction in narrative discourse

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Abstract:

Second language learning has traditionally been associated with acquiring language structures (and other aspects of language) and measured with various means to reveal the learner's increasing level of language development. Success in language learning, however, has been more recently linked to subjective dimensions of language and language learning in an era of globalization – what Kramsch (2009) refers to as the "multilingual subject". Ortega (2014) emphasized that the likelihood and degree of success in language learning is related to the experience one has with language, and more importantly, that this experience is "at once linguistically, cognitively, and socioculturally constituted" and that it "unfolds in embodied, singular events and practices". Language learning is thus associated with identity and it is precisely through narratives of singular events that learners may construct various identities. Second language narratives provide insight not only into the language learner's competence in the second language but also into conceptions of the self and the other within a cultural context, as narrators affirm aspects of their own identity and of the identity of others via the presentation and evaluation of behaviors (De Fina 2003).

In this presentation, we will discuss identity constructions in adult migrants' narratives involving conceptualizations of language learning and literacy, and the presentation and positioning of self in social experiences related to the adaptation to new languages and cultures. The emphasis will be on how second language speakers employ their linguistic resources in narrative discourse in their identity constructions. The data to be presented come from focus group interviews, or rather conversations, with highly skilled migrants, namely medical doctors, who have come to a European capital. In these conversations, language, language learning and literacy, and the notion of self are recurrent themes. In the presentation, the narratives of two of the doctors will be analyzed – the one doctor from another European country who migrated voluntarily and the other from an African country who came to Europe as a refugee. A particular focus will be on the use of the linguistic resources these second language users employ in the negotiation of identity as categorization, and in their accounting of, and comparing with, their reactions and reflections concerning life before their migration and now in their new homeland. Identity constructions are analyzed as emergent in the narrative discourse through the speakers' use of various lexical resources in categorization strategies. Moreover, metaphors, defined in line with Conceptual Metaphor Theory, are analyzed in their narrative context. Hence the approach employed in the analysis is cognitive as we study metaphors in identity constructions and discourse-analytic as we study the conversational contexts in which identity constructions emerge in interaction. In conclusion, implications for SLA theory will be discussed in light of the "multilingual subject".

De Fina, A. 2003. Identity in Narrative. A Study of Immigrant Discourse. Benjamins.

Kramsch, C. 2009. The Multilingual Subject: What foreign language learners say about their experience and why it matters. Oxford UP.

Ortega, L. 2014. Experience and success in late bilingualism. Keynote AILA, Brisbane, Australia.

Why we need to mind the gap: Ideal L2 and L3 selves in a globalizing world

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Abstract:

Background

In parts of northern Europe and Scandinavia English is near ubiquitous in everyday environments. It is a preferred medium of communication in many social practices and, from early ages, young people have widespread encounters with English in leisure-time domains. In such contexts research indicates that school students' motivation to learn L2 English and L3s (e.g. French/German/Spanish) can be negatively impacted (see e.g. Henry, 2015; Ushioda, 2013). However, motivation researchers have yet to offer conceptually coherent explanations. One plausible reason for declining L2/L3 motivation may lie in the processes that generate motivated learning behaviour. Drawing on theories of self-discrepancy, Dörnyei (2005) proposes that L2 motivation is generated by the learner's sense of unease about the gap between current and future-oriented language-speaking self-images. In situations where the learner has either (i) a strong current self-image, or (ii) a weak ideal self-image, this gap can appear small. Little unease will be generated and motivational energy will consequently be low. In a context such as Sweden the first of these two scenarios may be particularly true for school-aged learners of L2 English. The second may similarly be true for learners of L3 French/German/Spanish.

Purpose, Methodology and Results

To investigate these proposals this study adopts a novel methodology. Unlike previous research where only ideal selves are measured, here, in a questionnaire administered to a sample of students (n=116) taking CEFR B1.2 English and CEFR A2.2 French/German/Spanish, both current and future selves were measured. While for English mean scores for current and ideal selves were both high (m=4.12; m=4.27), for French/German/Spanish scores were both low (m=2.71; m=2.86) (all measured on 5-point Likert scales). In both cases the discrepancy between current and ideal selves was small (Cohen's d < 0.20). Further, for English, the impact of the ideal L2 self on a criterion measure of intended effort (r=.34) was substantially smaller than for six reference studies involving similarly-aged students from contexts where English is not extensively encountered in social/societal domains (correlation coefficients ranging from .62 to .75).

Implications

The findings have methodological and pedagogical and implications. In the increasing number of contexts where English is highly present in social/societal domains, account needs to be taken of learners' current L2/L3 selves. This is important not just in empirical investigations; ideal self-supporting/enhancing interventions need also to be calibrated with the nature of the discrepancy. While for English action should be directed to generating visionary content additional to that contained in current L2 selves (e.g. self-images in professional, vocational and higher educational domains), for L3s focus needs to be directed to generating self-in-future images as a multilingual speaker; someone fluent in English and another foreign language.

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Ushioda, E. (2013). International Perspectives on Motivation: Language Learning and Professional Challenges. Houndmills: Palgrave.

The role of classroom discourse in the use and effectiveness of incidental focus on form

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Abstract:

The role of incidental focus on form (FonF) has recently received considerable attention in the field of second language acquisition (SLA). Incidental FonF refers to attention to form that arises naturally and spontaneously "in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication" (Long, 1991, pp. 45-46). In recent years, a number of studies have investigated the role of such FonF in L2 classrooms (e.g., Ellis et al., 2001a, 2001b; Ellis, Basturkmen, & Loewen, 2002; Loewen, 2005; Loewen & Philp, 2006; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Nassaji, 2010, 2013; Panova & Lyster, 2002; Sheen, 2004, 2008; Williams, 2001; Zhao & Bitchener, 2007). These studies have provided important insights into the use and effectiveness of incidental FonF. However, important variations have also been noted in the results of these studies. These differences have often been explained in terms of cognitive/linguistic factors or characteristics of FonF. However, factors such as those related to the nature and organization of classroom discourse have not been examined. The present study investigated the role of two aspects of classroom discourse, episode activity orientation and episode exchange type, and their relationship with the use and effectiveness of FonF. The study involved an extensive database of classroom interaction collected from 7 adult communicatively-oriented ESL classrooms. The classes were video- and audio-recorded using a digital recorder with a wireless clip-on microphone attached to the teacher. The interaction data were transcribed and examined for the different types of episode activity orientations and different types of FonF. Following Ellis et al (2001), three types of FonF were identified: reactive, student-initiated preemptive, and teacher-initiated preemptive FonF. Reactive FonF was FonF that took place in response to an actual error or a linguistic problem. Preemptive FonF took place irrespective of an error and was initiated either by the teacher or by the student. Based on the type and nature of the talk in which the learners and the teacher participated (Nassaji and Wells 2000), each FonF exchange was further coded in terms of their higher-order discourse activity goals and episode exchange relations. Four types of discourse activity orientations (instruct, explore, plan, and report) and two types of episode exchange relations (nuclear and bound) were identified and coded. Learners' immediate uptake and repair in response to FonF were used to measure the effectiveness of FonF during interaction. The results showed a significant relationship between episode activity orientation and type of FonF, with the largest proportion of both preemptive and reactive FonF occurring in episodes with 'instruct' as their episode activity orientation. Significant relationships were also found between the amount and type of FonF and the episode exchange type, with preemptive FonF occurring in more bound and nuclear exchanges than reactive FonF. Learner uptake and repair tended to occur more frequently in bound exchanges than in nuclear exchanges. These findings provide evidence for the important role that classroom discourse may play in the occurrence and usefulness of classroom FonF.

Interaction, Negotiation for Meaning, and Second Language Speech Learning: A Longitudinal Study

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Keywords: Interaction, recasts, task, based language learning, pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, grammar

Abstract:

According to the interaction hypothesis (Long, 1996), second language (L2) learning takes place when non-native speakers encounter communication breakdowns during conversational interactions with other non-native and native speakers. To repair these communication breakdowns, L2 learners must incidentally focus on linguistic form by noticing the gap between their own linguistic errors and targetlike production, as well as through modified output with a primary focus on meaning (i.e., negotiation for meaning). While much research attention has been given to examining how interaction promotes L2 acquisition processes, most existing studies have been exclusively concerned with the role of interaction in L2 morphosyntax development, and have only involved a brief amount of interaction treatment (1-2 hours).

Using a pre- and post-test design, the current study aimed to re-examine whether and to what degree conversational interaction can be facilitative of the longitudinal development of global (comprehensibility) and linguistic (pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar) compositions of spontaneous L2 speech production. During the nine-week treatment over one academic semester, the students in the experimental group (n = 20) engaged in weekly, one-hour conversation exchanges with native speakers via Google Hangout. The native speaking interlocutors were encouraged to provide interactional feedback in the form of recasts whenever the non-native speakers' utterances hindered successful understanding. The students in the control group (n = 20) received regular foreign language instruction which mainly consisted of reading and listening exercises without any interaction with native speakers. The spontaneous production of the participating students was elicited via two speaking tasks—a timed picture description and IELTS long-turn interview—at the beginning and end of the project. These samples were first judged by 10 native speaking raters for overall comprehensibility (ease of understanding) and foreign accentedness (linguistic nativelikeness), and then submitted to pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary and grammar analyses.

The results showed that: (a) the experimental group demonstrated significant improvement in terms of enhanced comprehensibility, but not reduced accentedness; (b) such comprehensibility development was particularly ascribed to the students' use of adequate and varied prosody, optimal speech rate, and proper lexicogrammar; and (c) the gains were unclear regarding how the students could further refine the sophisticated aspects of their language (i.e., segmentals, lexical richness, grammatical complexity) not directly linked with successful comprehensibility. The findings suggest that the effectiveness of interaction on L2 oral ability development is substantially related to learner goals (comprehensibility vs. accentedness) as well as language domain (pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar). While L2 interaction alone can impact the development of those linguistic features linked with comprehensibility, it may be necessary to intentionally draw learners' attention to those linguistic features which have less communicative value and are more associated with accentedness.

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Can monologic and dialogic task performance be measured in the same way?

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Abstract:

Research in development of L2 speech fluency has mainly focused on monologic task performance (de Jong & Perfetti, 2011; Skehan & Foster 1996; Tavakoli, 2011) with little research examining the development of fluency in dialogic tasks (Michel, 2011; Witton-Davies, 2014)), mainly because dialogic task performance is less controllable, and measuring it is complicated. Fluency in a dialogic task is inherently different from that in monologic task since it is affected by other factors such as the interlocutror's fluency and speaking skills and their willingness to communicate. Issues such as who should claim the between-turn pauses or how to account for the overlaps often add to the complexities involved in measuring fluency in a dialogue. This paper presents the findings of a study examining the development of fluency in both monologic and dialogic task performance of 35 learners studying EAP at a university in the UK. After discussing the complexities involved in defining and measuring the interactive aspects of a dialogue, the paper will present a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences between different aspects of fluency in monologic and dialogic task performance. While the results indicate that in the current study the L2 speakers consistently produced longer runs, shorter pauses, and faster articulation and speech rates in dialogues, with many of the measures statistically different from the monologues, the data analysis suggests that the operationalization of fluency measures may also affect the results. The paper will argue that a more clearly defined set of measures and a more systematic approach to measuring fluency in dialogic task performance is needed if a scientific approach to exploring L2 fluency is expected.

L'accord sujet-verbe en FL2: l'impact de la complexité syntaxique et lexicale

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Keywords: français langue seconde, FL2, morphologie verbale, oral, accord sujet, verbe, complexité

Abstract:

Dans l'acquisition du français langue seconde (FL2), la maîtrise progressive de la morphologie verbale représente une dimension centrale du processus de grammaticalisation de la production d'apprenants (Klein & Perdue 1997 ; Véronique 2009). Un aspect particulièrement délicat dans l'appropriation de la morphologie verbale est l'acquisition de l'accord sujet-verbe, dont le développement graduel est décrit comme étant lent et long en FL2 (e. a. Nadasi 2001 ; Bartning & Schlyter 2004 ; Howard 2006), ce qui se reflète par la production de formes de base singulières, c'est-à-dire de verbes conjugués à la 3ème personne du singulier, construits auprès d'un sujet pluriel (ex. ils *prend), et ceci même auprès d'apprenants avancés.

Un second phénomène essentiel de la présente contribution est l'impact de la complexité, qui sera étudiée comme variable indépendante, facteur favorisant ou ralentissant le processus acquisitionnel d'autres phénomènes linguistiques propres à l'interlangue de l'apprenant L2 (Bulté & Housen 2012).

La présente contribution a donc pour but, d'une part, de succinctement décrire le développement de l'accord sujet-verbe à l'oral des apprenants FL2 étudiés, mais surtout, d'évaluer l'influence de la complexité sur le développement de celui-ci. S'inspirant d'hypothèses formulées dans Bartning (1998) et dans Howard (2013), nous étudierons plus particulièrement l'impact de la complexité syntaxique et de la complexité lexicale sur le développement de l'accord sujet-verbe à l'oral en FL2. La contribution permettra ainsi dans un premier temps d'examiner si l'emploi de structures syntaxiques plus complexes entrave en effet le marquage de l'accord verbal avec le sujet. Elle évaluera ensuite l'éventuel impact de la complexité lexicale sur le développement de l'accord sujet-verbe. La richesse lexicale du système verbal des apprenants sera à cet effet mesurée, permettant d'observer à quel point l'adéquation de l'accord verbal est entravée ou stimulée par la richesse croissante du répertoire lexical de l'apprenant FL2.

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Bartning I. & Schlyter S. (2004). Itinéraires acquisitionnels et stades de développement en français L2. French Language Studies, 14 ; pp. 281-299.

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Nadasi T. (2001). Agreeing to disagree : Variable subject-verb agreement in immersion French. Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 4, 1-2 ; pp. 87-101.

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The interaction of complexity, accuracy and fluency in long-term bilinguals' spontaneous speech productions

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Abstract:

Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency (CAF) are three dimensions along which L2 writing and speaking are frequently assessed (Housen, Kuiken, & Vedder, 2012). Trade-off effects along the three dimensions have been empirically demonstrated, especially with regard to changes over time (Robinson, 2001; Skehan, 2009). However, the exact nature of these interactions is subject to debate. Robinson's (2001) Cognition Hypothesis assumes that Complexity and Accuracy grow together, while Fluency suffers. Also Skehan's (2009) Trade-off Hypothesis expects a growth of two dimensions at the expense of the third, but opposes Robinson in predicting that Complexity and Accuracy will never grow together. Additionally, it is unclear whether these proposed interaction effects also hold for advanced bilingual speakers.

The current study therefore analyzes a corpus of interviews of German L2 English speakers (n=99) and L1 German attriters (n=73) who have been living in an English-speaking environment for the majority of their lives. For each CAF dimension, multiple measures were generated. The scores were z-transformed and log-transformed where necessary. Additionally, composite scores were calculated for Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency. Using mixed-effects linear regressions, we then investigated 1) the effect of one Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency measure on the others and 2) the effect of one composite Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency measure on the other composite measures.

Preliminary results indicate an overall positive relationship between accuracy and complexity, i.e. the more accurate the productions, the more complex. Fluency appears to remain unaffected being neither positively or negatively related to accuracy and complexity. At the level of individual measures we find e.g., the higher the lexical diversity (complexity), the fewer the total number of errors per 100 words. The results will be discussed in the light of Robinson's Cognition Hypothesis and Skehan's Trade-off Hypothesis.

Housen, A., Kuiken, F., & Vedder, I. (2012). Dimensions of L2 Performance and Proficiency: Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency in Sla. John Benjamins Publishing.

Robinson, P. (2001). Task complexity, task difficulty, and task production: exploring interactions in a componential framework. Applied Linguistics, 22(1), 27–57. doi:10.1093/applin/22.1.27

Skehan, P. (2009). Modelling Second Language Performance: Integrating Complexity, Accuracy, Fluency, and Lexis. Applied Linguistics, 30(4), 510–532. doi:10.1093/applin/amp047

Morphological complexity in written ESL texts

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Keywords: morphological complexity, interlanguage morphology, computational linguistics, L2 academic writing

Abstract:

Morphological complexity (MC) is a relatively new construct in L2 studies. Most SLA research to date has focused on other aspects of complexity, namely lexical and syntactic complexity (for a review see Bulté and Housen 2012). The measure proposed here, called the Morphological Complexity Index (MCI) is based on a purely structural view of complexity, conceptualising a text's morphological complexity for a given word class as a function of the number and variety of different inflectional exponents found in that text (Pallotti 2015). More specifically, morphological complexity can be operationalized by randomly drawing sub-samples of N forms of a word class (e.g. verbs) from a text and computing the average within- and across-sample range of inflectional exponents. This produces a morphologically complexity index, which can be used to compare different texts.

In this paper, we focus on morphological complexity as manifested in concrete L2 texts taken from the ICLE corpus (Granger et al. 2002) which were compared with similar texts produced by native speakers from the LOCNESS corpus (Granger. n. d.). Altogether 130 different texts (argumentative essays) were analysed, 90 coming from non-native speakers of Italian origin, 40 from the control group (native speakers of the British variety of English). The data was analyzed using a computer tool developed by the authors of this study that implements the operational definition of morphological complexity outlined above. In addition, different measures of lexical complexity - standardised TTR, Guiraud's Index and new-GSL coverage of basic vocabulary (Brezina & Gablasova 2013) - were computed. The L2 users' essays were also rated for accuracy and overall writing quality according to CEFR levels (Council of Europe, 2001) as well as for comprehensibility and coherence (Kuiken & Vedder 2014). These indices were used to assess the proficiency level of the learners' scripts.

The results show that morphological complexity varies in the individual texts, but is not strongly related to proficiency of L2 users once the threshold (B1) level is reached. This result can be seen as complementary to De Clercq's (2014) finding that MCI tends to grow at lower proficiency levels.

There was no statistically significant difference in MC between native and non-native users. Moreover, in the L2 group, there were only two statistically significant weak negative correlations between the new-GSL coverage and MCI for both verbs and nouns as well as one weak positive correlation between MCI for verbs and the general writing quality according to the CEFR descriptors. This shows that a larger vocabulary range and a more sophisticated writing style are somewhat positively correlated to morphological complexity. Nonetheless, all of these correlations explained only a small proportion of the overall variance in the data ($R2 < 0.06$). We can therefore claim that morphological complexity represents a fairly independent index that should be considered in combination with other complexity measures of L2 production such as lexical or syntactic complexity.

A new perspective in analysing task effects on fluency development in L2 Mandarin

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Keywords: Fluency, tasks, acquisition, Mandarin, residence abroad

Abstract:

The investigation of L2 fluency in recent decades has brought increasing rigour and understanding of its complex nature and role within the broad sense of L2 acquisition (Freed et al., 2004; Kormos, 2011). Nevertheless, L2 fluency remains difficult to define and measure consistently, particularly across the two dimensions of cognitive and utterance fluency (Segalowitz, 2010). There is, we argue, a separation of methods between these two dimensions, effectively creating a distinction between linguistic and temporal fluency research. Linguistic fluency studies, e.g. using CLAN, tend to focus on changes across a mix of measures, including morphosyntactic accuracy and lexical diversity, using both monologic and interactional tasks. Temporal fluency studies, e.g. using PRAAT, tend to focus on more fine-grained changes in speech rate and breakdown to reflect automaticity in utterance production, usually measured in monologic speech. The two dimensions clearly overlap in many aspects, but studies which specifically focus on combining both are rare, despite their value in understanding fluency in a more holistic way. This is particularly true for L2 Mandarin, currently under-researched in SLA fluency studies.

The study reported here, examining longitudinal changes in L2 Mandarin fluency, thus aims to add to our understanding of fluency at the linguistic/temporal interface by reporting on data, gathered across four monologic and dialogic tasks, involving prepared and unprepared speech, and analysed using both CLAN and PRAAT. Participants are ten adult L1 English learners of Mandarin, assessed before and after a year's Study Abroad. We found that across tasks, oral measures generally showed clear improvement: in particular total mean output, speech rate, phonological accuracy increased significantly (p <.01). However, other measures such as accuracy and lexical diversity, hesitation and mean length of run differed between task, and were very variable across the group, highlighting individual differences particularly in processing prepared vs. unprepared speech demands. Even within the same task expected correlations between CLAN-based and PRAAT measures were not consistently found.

This study highlights the value of collecting detailed longitudinal SLA-motivated datasets of language learners moving between instructed and immersed contexts (Du 2013), and using theoretically-grounded comparisons of linguistic and temporal fluency. However, there remain clear challenges for researching L2 fluency, especially comparing monologic vs dialogic tasks and prepared vs. unprepared speech (Pallotti 2009). We discuss theoretical, methodological and pedagogical implications of our data for systematic analysis of L2 oral development, particularly in L2 Mandarin.

Du, H. (2013). The development of Chinese fluency during study abroad in China. The Modern Language Journal 97(1): 131-143.

Freed, B., Segalowitz, N. & Dewey, D. (2004). Context of learning and second language fluency in French. Studies in Second Language Acquisition 26 (2): 275-301.

Kormos, J. (2011). Speech production and the Cognition Hypothesis. In Robinson, P. (ed.). Second Language Task Complexity. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, p. 39-60

Pallotti, G. (2009). Complexity, Accuracy, Fluency: Defining, refining and differentiating constructs. Applied Linguistics 30: 590–601.

Segalowitz, N. (2010). Cognitive bases of second language fluency. New York: Routledge.

Should teachers pitch in? Exploring L2 knowledge of phrasal verbs

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Abstract:

It is well-established that formulaic language is an essential part of the English lexicon (Wray, 2002), and thus should be known by L2 speakers in order to produce fluent and authentic language. Phrasal verbs are one type of formulaic sequences that are very common in English. For example, based on a search of the British National Corpus (BNC), Gardner and Davies (2007) estimated that learners will encounter one phrasal verb in every 150 words of English on average. Phrasal verbs are therefore an important component of English vocabulary. Because they are widely used in spoken informal discourse, failure to use them in such situations is likely to make language sound unnatural and non-idiomatic. However, they are often considered as one of the most challenging features of the English language, and have been shown to be prone to avoidance by previous research. Contrary to other types of formulaic sequences such as idioms or collocations, very little research has been carried out on phrasal verb knowledge until now. In addition, vocabulary research has over the years pointed to some determining factors in predicting word acquisition, notably word frequency, semantic opacity, amount of L2 instruction, and degree of involvement/exposure with the language. But the effect of these factors on phrasal verb knowledge is unknown. Therefore, the aim of this presentation is to offer an insight into L2 knowledge of English phrasal verbs on one hand, and to assess its relationship with each of the afore-mentioned factors on the other hand. To this aim, 128 participants were recruited (all MA TEFL students from Chile) to take an off-line productive test in the form of a gap-fill task, assessing form recall knowledge of some of the most frequent phrasal verbs in English (N=100). This was followed by the completion of self-report questionnaires in which the participants provided information about their language learning background. The results show that participants knew less than half of the tested items on average (Mean: 40.5; Min: 4; Max: 93; SD: 18.5). Word frequency as extrapolated from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) was found to have a moderate effect on knowledge, accounting for 16.5% of the variance in item scores. Semantic opacity and amount of L2 instruction had no effect on test scores. A significant positive relationship was found between participant scores and the amount of everyday engagement with the L2, and more specifically the number of hours spent reading and watching films or TV in English. The study has a number of teaching implications. First, it emphasizes the need for teaching phrasal verbs as they present difficulties for many learners of English, including presumably advanced ones. Second, it highlights the importance of maximizing learners' exposure to authentic language (for example, via reading books or watching films in English).

Gardner, D., & Davies, M. (2007). Pointing out frequent phrasal verbs: A corpus- based analysis. TESOL Quarterly, 41(2), 339-359.

Wray, A. (2002). Formulaic Language and the Lexicon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Processability Theory and lexical development

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Keywords: L2 development, Processability Theory, Lexical development, Swedish

Abstract:

Almost since the beginning of second language acquisition research, there has been a strong interest in developmental stages of grammar (cf. Ellis 2015). One example of this perspective is Processability Theory (Pienemann 1998), which assumes universal developmental stages of morpho-syntactic structures. Studies of lexical development, on the other hand, have not explored developmental stages to the same extent, but they often take comparisons between native and non-native speakers as a point of departure (e.g. Meara 2009). An exception is Viberg's (1993) study on Swedish L2 vocabulary development.

A large number of studies of L2 Swedish have confirmed the PT stages for morpho-syntax (e.g. Pienemann & Håkansson 1999, Håkansson & Norrby 2010, Schönström 2014). However, the stages have not been related to Swedish L2 lexical development. This paper presents the first attempt to combine levels of Processability with lexical development in Swedish.

Since there are no Swedish standardized vocabulary tests, we use quantitative measures to assess the learners' vocabulary (lexical variation and lexical density). Written essays from 20 L2 learners were collected longitudinally on three occasions over 8 months (Håkansson & Norrby 2010). The lexical analysis consisted of two measures: lexical variation in type/ token and lexical density by counting the proportion of content and function words in relation to total amount of words (cf. Bardel et al 2013). The analysis of grammar relied on the Processability hierarchy.

The results demonstrate a tendency for lexical variation to increase with grammatical proficiency whereas lexical density stays stable over time (cf. Johansson 2009). However, lexical variation is not only sensitive to grammatical development, but it also points to individual differences, as some learners combine a low grammatical level with high lexical variation. The results will be discussed in the light of individual differences in learner profiles.

"Write it down and then what?" Student teachers reflect on the use of vocabulary notebooks for vocabulary acquisition and teaching

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Abstract:

Vocabulary knowledge is recognized as one essential element for second language acquisition and reading comprehension (for example Laufer 2009). One known method to encourage and support vocabulary development amongst second language learners is keeping a vocabulary notebook (Schmitt & Schmitt, 1995). Vocabulary notebooks aid in the "noticing" of, and attention to, new lexical items – essential components of vocabulary development (Schmitt 2008). They also allow students, under their teachers' guidance, to explore their own learning strategies and to choose which strategies are more suitable and useful for them. This exploration might contribute to the development of the learners' metacognitive skills, leading to enhanced independent learning (Anderson, 2002; Hudson 2007).

This study is based on the use of vocabulary notebooks amongst 3rd- year student teachers participating in a Vocabulary Acquisition and Teaching course. The primary purpose of the study was to document three aspects of the student teachers' own development: (1) linguistic (expansion of their own vocabulary), (2) metacognitive (understanding of the best strategies for them, raising awareness to their own vocabulary development), and (3) pedagogical (internalization of the method and their readiness/will to use vocabulary notebooks in class, empathy towards their own students and comprehension of the learning processes in view of their successes and failures in vocabulary acquisition). The study also examines the impact of the use of vocabulary notebooks by student teachers of ESL in their process of internalizing the use of this learning and teaching tool.

Participants are fifteen 3rd-year students in an English teaching program in a teachers' college. English is a foreign language (not second language) for the participants, so English input and output are limited. Consequently, subjects provide both a view into advanced learners' use of vocabulary notebooks and a teacher's perspective of its use. A mixed methodology was implemented. For the qualitative part three tools were be used: 1) an examination and analysis of the student teachers' vocabulary notebooks; 2) an analysis of the participants reflections on their use of vocabulary notebooks as learners and as student teachers; and 3) in-depth interviews with participants. For quantitative measurements of vocabulary acquisition a personal vocabulary test was devised for each participant, based on her own vocabulary notebook. This test measured the acquisition of target words and effectiveness of the vocabulary notebook strategy.

Results indicate that student teachers at first had difficulty in implementing vocabulary notebooks as learners. Constant modeling was necessary for internalization of the method but through repeated use and instruction many participants increasingly developed their skills and interest in using notebooks as a vocabulary teaching and learning tool. Some development of their metacognitive skills was also documented: Through guidance, entries increasingly developed from simple translation to more sophisticated and in-depth use of vocabulary notebooks.

Grammatical development during study abroad: a longitudinal comparison of different conceptual entities

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Abstract:

This paper is situated in the burgeoning field of Study Abroad research which explores the impact on L2 processes and outcomes of the supposedly rich naturalistic exposure afforded to L2 learners in the foreign language classroom who spend a sojourn in the target language community. In the case of grammatical development, findings are oftentimes mixed, with some studies pointing to significant benefits compared to learners who do not venture abroad, such as Howard (2001), Llanes & Muñoz (2014), Pérez Vidal & Juan-Garau (2011), while others fail to find such beneficial effects, such as Collentine (2004), Freed (1991). Various hypotheses are forthcoming to explain such discrepancies in findings, especially relating to effect of the proficiency level, duration of stay abroad, as well as the type of analysis undertaken in terms of whether it attempted to capture grammatical development as a single test score, such as in relation to complexity and accuracy or whether it offered more fine-grained exploration into the development that might occur depending on the type of analysis applied, e.g. with a focus on a specific component of the learner's grammatical repertoire, as opposed to grammatical development as a whole entity, and using different measures of development.

Against this background, this study attempts to capture the role of such factors by presenting findings from a longitudinal study of 9 Anglophone university learners of French at different stages within the advanced learner variety (see Bartning 1997, 2008). Data were collected at three different times over the course of a year through extensive oral conversations. The data were analysed quantitatively in relation to different conceptual entities relating to verb, nominal and adjectival morphology, namely the expression of past time, aspect, futurity, conditionality, modality, number, person, and gender, thereby allowing more fine-grained detail to illuminate grammatical development through a multidimensional conceptual prism. Moreover, the longitudinal nature of the data, as well as the fact that the learners differed in their initial proficiency level at the outset of the study allow for interesting correlation with differences in how development may differ across the different components of the learners' grammatical repertoire. Findings suggest that grammatical development is by no means a uniform phenomenon in a study abroad context, but rather some components develop more than others in terms of a distinction between marked versus unmarked items, with an important correlation for the time at which the data collection occurred, as well as the learners' initial proficiency level.

As the first comprehensive study of a range of grammatical conceptual entities for the same learner cohort within a single project on study abroad, the findings will be discussed in terms of their implications for the role of learning context in relation to study abroad within a theory of Second Language Acquisition, as well as methodological issues in the study of grammatical development during study abroad. Taken together, the findings highlight the complexity of capturing grammatical development during study abroad, and thereby, underscore the limitations of previous research in terms of the potential conclusions that they provide.

Lexical Development during Study Abroad

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Abstract:

Over the last few decades, growing research attention has been devoted to the role of the different types of learning contexts within the field of second language acquisition (SLA). The supposed superiority that is socially attributed to studying abroad (SA) has inspired considerable research focusing exclusively on this learning setting (e.g. Pérez-Vidal, 2014; Dewey, 2004; Freed, 1995). Although the results of most empirical studies to date remain mixed and inconclusive, immersion in the native community appears to substantially intensify the L2 acquisition process, particularly in the domain of speaking skills (DeKeyser, 2007; Segalowitz and Freed, 2004; Valls-Ferrer, 2011). However, SA research to date is scarce in the area of vocabulary. Few studies, to our knowledge, have assessed the development of productive vocabulary after a SA period (Collentine 2004; DeKeyser 1991; Meara 1994; Milton & Meara 1995) and even fewer combined both oral and written linguistic modalities (Pérez-Vidal et al. 2012).

Drawing on previous research, the present study attempts to investigate oral and written lexical development during residence abroad by advanced adult EFL learners (N=30). Participants are Spanish/Catalan undergraduates who spend a compulsory 3-month SA period in an English-speaking country, following formal instruction at home. The study focuses on the effect of SA on their lexical accuracy, fluency, diversity and sophistication. To that end, data were collected by means of two elicitation tasks consisting of a semi-guided interview on the subject University Life and a composition on the following topic: Someone who moves to a foreign country should always adopt the customs and way of life of his/her new country. Students' productive vocabulary development was assessed by means of lexical output (types and tokens), lexical diversity (Guiraud's Index, D) and frequency-based measures (Lexical Frequency Profiles) as well as the Greco-Latin or Anglo-Saxon Cognate Indices. Accuracy was measured as the number of grammatical, lexical and pragmatic errors per word under the umbrella measure of the total number of errors per word.

Preliminary results indicate that as far as writing is concerned, the amount and types of words produced increase significantly after the SA period. Learners also tend to vary the vocabulary they use, as shown by a significant improvement in lexical diversity. Their lexical errors and total number of errors also decrease significantly over time in both written and oral production. In speaking, in contrast, significant differences are found in some of the frequency-based measures, revealing that learners rely on high-frequency words even after the SA. Our findings suggest that gains in vocabulary, particularly visible in writing, may be related to the task planning factor.

The short- and long-term effects of a study abroad experience on degree of foreign accent: The case of children

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Keywords: study abroad, learning context, foreign accent, age, pronunciation

Abstract:

The impact of learning context has been the focus of much research lately, especially the effects of the study abroad (SA) context, probably because of the need to speak a second language (L2) imposed by globalization. Research on the effects of the SA context has mostly compared the gains that SA participants experience in certain L2 areas to those of participants studying the L2 in a regular course in their home country, being L2 pronunciation one of the least researched areas and one yielding unclear results (Mora, 2008; Muñoz & Llanes, 2014; Stevens, 2011). Moreover, these studies have mainly focused on the immediate effects of learning context, and extremely few studies document the long-term effects of SA programs (Pérez-Vidal & Juan-Garau, 2009). Additionally, only one study includes children since the majority focus on college students (Llanes, 2012). The aim of the present study is to fill the gap in the SA and age literature by documenting the changes of the degree of foreign accent (FA) by a group of children before (pre-test) and after (post-test) the SA experience, and one year after their SA experience (delayed post-test).

Eight Catalan/Spanish learners of English aged 11 years old engaged in a 2-month SA experience in Ireland, whereas six learned English (L2) in their home school. Participants were asked to narrate a story that consisted of six vignettes (Heaton, 1966) a week before and after their SA experience, and a year after their return. In order to keep content constant, the first 20 seconds of the story were selected and were randomly administered to a group of 11 judges who were native speakers of English. These judges rated the degree of perceived foreign accent on a 7-point Likert scale (1= strong foreign accent, 7= no foreign accent). Results show that SA participants significantly reduced their degree of foreign accent from the pre- to the post-test and from the pre-test to the delayed post-test results were marginally significant. However, AH participants did not experience any significant changes.

Heaton, J. B. (1966). Composition through pictures. Essex, UK: Longman.Llanes, À. (2012). The short- and long- term effects of a short study abroad experience: The case of children. System, 40, 179-190.

Mora, J. C. (2008). Learning context effects on the acquisition of a second language phonology. In C. Pérez–Vidal, M. Juan–Garau, & A. Bel (Eds.), A portrait of the young in the new multilingual Spain (pp. 241–263). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.

Muñoz, C. & Llanes, À. (2014). Study Abroad and Changes in Degree of Foreign Accent in Children and Adults. Modern Language Journal, 98, 1, 432-449.

Pérez-Vidal, C. & Juan-Garau, M. (2009). The effect of study abroad on written performance. Eurosla Yearbook, 9, 269–295.

Stevens, J. (2011). Vowel duration in second language Spanish vowels: Study abroad versus at-home learners. Arizona Working Papers in SLA & Teaching, 18, 77–104.

Does learning context have an effect on the acquisition of formulaic sequences? Comparing "study abroad" with two "at home" programs

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Keywords: formulaic sequences, learning context, study abroad, intensive language courses, EFL

Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the acquisition of formulaic sequences (FSs) in English as a second language (L2) in three different contexts that provide intensive exposure to the target language. Previous research on FSs has suggested that they are an important aspect affecting learners' proficiency (Stengers, Boers, Housen, & Eyckmans, 2011). Several studies have shown that FSs can be effectively learned in instructional settings, especially if there is some kind of intervention that makes learners notice these forms (Boers & Lindstromberg, 2012; Webb, Newton & Chang, 2013). However, there is not much research examining how learners in different settings develop their knowledge of FSs. The objective of this study is to fill this gap by examining three contexts: intensive classroom instruction in the participants' home country (Spain), a stay in an English-learning summer camp (also in Spain), and a stay abroad in the UK. Although the learners in all three contexts received classroom instruction for a minimum of 3 hours/day, the opportunities to use English outside the class were quite different, which is what makes each context unique.

The participants of this study (n=209) are a group of young learners (mean age=13.21) who enrolled in one of these three programs for 3-4 weeks in the summer. Their knowledge of FS in English was tested at the beginning and at the end of their respective program through two tasks, one that examined receptive knowledge and the other that tapped productive knowledge of FSs. In the first task, the learners had to judge the acceptability of 20 formulaic expressions in English. The second task was a written dialogue completion task, in which the participants had to fill in some bubbles of a comic strip. The analyses performed suggest that the stay abroad context offers a better environment for the acquisition of formulas in English than the other two. This finding provides evidence for the importance of naturalistic, out-of-class L2 exposure for the learning of FSs.

Boers, F., & Lindstromberg, S. (2012). Experimental and intervention studies on formulaic sequences in a second language. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 32, 83–110.

Stengers, H., Boers, F., Housen, A., & Eyckmans, J. (2011). Formulaic sequences and L2 oral proficiency: Does the type of target language influence the association? International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching (IRAL), 49, 321–343.

Webb, S., Newton, J., & Chang, A. (2013). Incidental learning of collocation. Language Learning, 63, 91-120.

Age and CLI: Insights from a longitudinal classroom study

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Keywords: age, cross, linguistic influence, classroom instruction

Abstract:

The investigation on which this paper focuses is part of a large-scale longitudinal project, undertaken in Switzerland between 2009 and 2015, which investigates unexplored issues regarding the effects of starting age in relation to the learning of English which emerge in the course of secondary school. The study represents the first of its kind in Switzerland. It provides further evidence for the position that, in contradistinction to the general pattern in naturalistic settings, late classroom beginners are as successful as early classroom beginners, and in a shorter period. This research will be reported in full in a volume to be published in 2016 (Pfenninger & Singleton, in preparation a).

In the current paper, we home in on the interaction of starting age for English with the role of knowledge of other languages (notably French) in an array of productive and receptive (oral and written) performance. In particular we give an account of our establishment of differential cross-linguistic influence (CLI) in areas where CLI effects have previously been claimed not to occur, or to be relatively rare, such as in respect of inflectional morphology. We also explore the differential influence of experience of additional languages on different skill areas. In addition we examine the impact of the learning order of languages on CLI.

Using longitudinal data from the same student cohort (200 learners) over a period of five years has made it possible to examine in real time and in a thorough and detailed manner (cf. Pfenninger & Singleton, in preparation b) the relationships among (1) onset variables, (2) different types of evidence that are critical to investigations of cross-linguistic influence and (3) ultimate school achievement at the end of the period of normal schooling.

Our results indicate that CLI is related to task effects and the learning order of languages rather than target language proficiency: with proficiency controlled for, L4 English was influenced by L3 French (in the late English starter data) more than L3 English was influenced by L4 French (in the early English starter data), both in terms of code-switching/mixing and grammatical morpheme transfer. However, these differences disappeared with time. For both starting age groups, we found overt inflectional morphology being transferred more often from L3 French to L4 English than from L1 Swiss German to L4 English.

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Pfenninger, S. E., & Singleton, D. (in preparation b). Recent advances in quantitative methods in age-related research. In J. Navracsics, & S. E. Pfenninger (Eds.), Implications for the Future – Perspectives from Applied Linguistics. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Valoriser les acquis lexicaux dans la langue seconde pour enseigner des langues tierces apparentées. Fréquence d'emploi et analogies

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Keywords: langue passerelle, analogies, transparence, lexique, fréquence, didactique du plurilinguisme, traduction, corpus

Abstract:

Notre proposition de communication s'inscrit dans la didactique des langues tierces (L3). Nous posons les bases d'une méthode visant à valoriser les acquis lexicaux d'apprenants en langue seconde (L2), passerelle vers des L3 apparentées.

Cenoz (2001) a montré que lorsqu'on apprend une L3, c'est en partie grâce à des acquis préalables en L2, et que l'influence interlinguistique est plus importante si les langues apprises sont perçues par l'apprenant comme typologiquement proches. Singleton et Ó Laoire (2006) ont même formulé la théorie du facteur L2, selon laquelle un apprenant privilégie des transferts issus de langues autres que sa langue première (L1). Certains didacticiens (Forlot : 2009) réfléchissent au rôle que l'anglais, par exemple, peut jouer comme passerelle vers une L3, même si les deux langues ne sont pas apparentées.

A la suite de didacticiens du plurilinguisme tels que Klein & Rutke (1997), Grzega (2005), Degache (2006), et Castagne (2007), nous nous appuyons sur le phénomène de la transparence lexicale en vue d'élaborer un dispositif didactique plurilingue à distance.

Nous faisons l'hypothèse qu'un apprenant dont la L1 est typologiquement éloignée d'une L2 passerelle peut développer des compétences écrites dans des L3 qu'il ne connait pas s'il est mis systématiquement face à des termes des L3 analogues à des termes fréquents de la L2. Pour cela, il convient de déterminer les bases de transfert lexicales que l'apprenant est susceptible d'avoir acquises.

Notre public cible est un public de professionnels ou de futurs professionnels de la santé, il a pour L1 une langue des langues chinoises, le japonais ou le coréen, il a appris l'anglais en L2 et cherche à acquérir des compétences partielles en L3 espagnol, français, italien ou portugais.

Nous présentons la partie lexicologique de notre thèse de doctorat en cours, où nous convoquons des outils de la linguistique informatique (Kraif : 2003) pour extraire du corpus ScienText le lexique anglais fréquent du domaine de la santé (adjectifs, noms et verbes). Nous expliquons comment nous délimitons des équivalents de traduction afin d'établir un interlexique anglais-espagnol-français-italien-portugais, c'est-à-dire les termes transparents de ces cinq langues susceptibles d'être reconnus visuellement en contexte par un lecteur qui a appris l'anglais. Nous définissons des degrés d'analogie entre les mots obtenus et nous appuyons sur Dijstra (2005) pour préciser l'intérêt que nous voyons à présenter en même temps à des apprenants des énoncés en plusieurs langues apparentées, énoncés extraits de corpus écrits multilingues alignés tels qu'Europarl, Acquis ou EMEA.

SLA within and across language families: The case of Portuguese children in Switzerland

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Keywords: heritage language, literacy development, transfer, interdependence

Abstract:

Linguistic distance between a known and a new language is often used to predict the difficulty or ease of the acquisition of the new system. Distance can be operationalized as perceived typological proximity (Kellerman, 1979) or via the comparison of linguistic properties of the two systems involved (e.g. Bohnacker, 2006; Jarvis, 2000; Schepens, 2014). In this presentation we tie together the concept of linguistic distance with another classic topic of multiple language learning, Cummins' hypothesis of linguistic interdependence, i.e. the notion that, among other things, literacy skills and resources learned in one language can be brought to bear when learning and using another language.

In this paper, the acquisition of German or French by child second language learners whose L1 is Portuguese is investigated. About 200 schoolchildren in either French- or German-speaking Switzerland, i.e. children whose main language of instruction is French or German, are investigated longitudinally over two years (average age at T1: 8;8). Reading, writing and general language skills (C-Tests) are measured three times both in Portuguese and either French or German.

The presentation has three related goals: First, our talk addresses the question of how a longitudinal study that focuses on the development of literacy skills can operationalize and statistically model interdependence effects.

Second, we give an account of the development of the skills in both L1 and in the two L2s investigated.

Third, we attempt to measure the degree of interdependence of L1 and L2 proficiency. We use the notion of interdependence cautiously since the direction and amount of transfer is difficult to assess, as we will discuss in detail. As recent research on other migrant populations shows (Schepens, 2014), the linguistic proximity of the systems is a robust predictor of learnability of the second language. In our data, therefore, we expect the subjects in the French-speaking part of Switzerland to experience fewer difficulties learning the language of instruction than those in the German-speaking part thanks to the closer relatedness between Portuguese and French than between Portuguese and German. By the same token, interdependence effects between the L1 and L2 should be stronger in the French learners than in the German learners. However, the results do not lend unequivocal support to this hypothesis: while the longitudinal cross-linguistic effects are stronger in the French learners (compared to the German learners) for writing skills, this is not the case for either reading or C-test performance.

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Non-native characteristics in the ultimate grammars of highly proficient child L2 starters of English

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Abstract:

In age-related research in L2 acquisition, one of the well-known generalizations is child starters outperform adult starters in the long run (Singleton & Ryan, 2004). However, very few studies have closely examined the ultimate grammars of child L2 starters to ascertain their target-like convergence (e.g., Hyltenstam & Abrahamsson, 2000, 2003; Nishikawa, 2014). These studies have found that not all child L2 starters can be target-like in the domains of lexical-grammar or morpho-syntax even after many years of sustained exposure to the target language.

This study aims to go some way towards filling the empirical gap by testing whether highly proficient child L2 starters when scrutinised on subtle linguistic detail would ultimately pass as target-like. Adopting a generative approach, the study attempts a detailed analysis of L2 performance on a cluster of morphosyntactic properties that differ in feature interpretability between L1 Arabic and L2 English. In a maturational-based account, properties associated with uninterpretable features (but not interpretable) are assumed to be vulnerable in post-puberty L2 acquisition (Tsimpli & Dimitrakopoulou, 2007).

The tested properties include the impermissibility of resumptive pronouns in English complex wh-interrogatives (e.g., Who do you think Mary met (*him)?) and null-operator constructions (e.g., The paint on the shirt is hard to remove (*it)), verb phrase ellipsis in strict and partial morphological identity conditions (e.g., John will be here, and Mary will too vs. *John is happy, and Mary will soon), and adverb placement (e.g., Mary quickly revised the lesson vs. *Mary revised quickly the lesson).

A bimodal timed acceptability judgment task was designed to collect intuitive L2 data. It had 164 items with 48 testing resumptive pronouns, 40 verb phrase ellipsis, and 48 adverb placement. To obtain overall balance in (un)-grammatical conditions, 28 ungrammatical distracters were included.

The study sample consisted of 34 highly proficient Arabic L2 speakers of English and 15 English controls. Their average age at testing was 27.18 years. By age of onset, two groups were defined: 1-6 years (n=19) and 7-13 years (n=15). Their length of exposure to English in an English-speaking country varies from short to long extended study abroad experience (2-13 years). The L2 speakers were highly educated and active bilinguals in both languages. From a population of university instructors and graduate students, they were objectively screened using the oxford placement test, vocabulary levels test (Nation, 2002), and background questionnaire.

Results provide further evidence that divergence from target-like grammars is inevitable even among child L2 starters regardless of their apparent high proficiency level. Results from error rates produced on ungrammatical conditions show that resumptive pronouns are the most problematic, whereas conditions on adverb placement and verb phrase ellipsis are the least problematic, respectively. Of all properties, the error rates on resumptive pronouns were significantly higher than that of the native speakers'. Individual results show inter-speaker divergence across age of onset. The study concludes age of onset is not sufficient to account for divergence. The implications of these results for accounts that claim that L2 acquisition is maturationally constrained are discussed.

Typology and/or proficiency? Cumulative learning experience helps understand an unknown language

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Keywords: multilinguals, crosslinguistic influence, affordances, cumulative language learning experience

Abstract:

Language learning can be greatly enhanced by activating prior linguistic knowledge and making use of crosslinguistic similarities (e.g. Gibson, 2003). Multilinguals are known to recognize such similarities more readily, being aided by their well-developed metalinguistic awareness (Jessner, 2006). For a given person using crosslinguistic influences and activating other languages known may depend on typological (Cenoz, 2003) and psychotypological language distance (Kellerman, 1995), proficiency in the languages (Van Hell & Tanner, 2012), and a number of contextual factors, which constitute a set of affordances for that person (Aronin & Singleton, 2013).

In the present study we explore the relation between multilinguality and factors responsible for activating prior linguistic knowledge. We investigate how multilingual learners/users of English with various L3-Ln languages (Germanic, and/or Romance), deal with a text in an unknown language. In the study, 40 students with L1 Polish, L2 English (C1/C2) and various proficiency levels in L3-Ln German/Norwegian/French/Spanish were presented with an excerpt from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Danish, a Germanic language unknown to them. In the think-aloud task the learners were asked to translate the text into English. At the same time they had to comment on their associations and mental operations.

We grouped the participants according to High/Low Affordance – a cumulative score of typological relatedness, number of languages and proficiency in L3-Ln. We analysed the participant's ability to draw inferences (recognize international words and Danish content and function words), to use top-down strategies (e.g. guessing meaning from context) and bottom-up strategies (analysing grammar and morphology). The analysis showed that the High-Affordance participants recognized significantly more words than the Low-Affordance group. Both groups relied more on top-down than bottom-up strategies.

The results of the study reveal that it is proficiency in L3-Ln languages together with cumulative language experience that matters in enhancing the inferencing strategies. Typological proximity of languages helps but only if proficiency in L3-Ln is high enough (here: B1). Our data suggest that metalinguistic awareness needed to tackle challenging language tasks develops alongside with gaining proficiency in L3. It therefore follows that metalinguistic awareness is both a product of multilinguality and a trigger that stimulates additional language acquisition.

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The role of cognitive factors, proficiency, and age in explaining crosslinguistic influence from the L2 in L3 acquisition

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Keywords: Cross, linguistic influence, L3 Acquisition, Age, Proficiency, Working Memory, Attention

Abstract:

The present study is a preliminary exploration of the role of cognitive factors on the occurrence of crosslinguistic influence or transfer from L2 German in the acquisition of English as a third language. More specifically, the study investigates whether the factors working memory, attention control, or attention switching have any effect on the occurrence of transfer at the levels of lexis (lexical inventions) and syntax (verb placement). The effect of these factors was investigated on data from two different written tasks that differed from each other in terms of their difficulty and of the cognitive load required in order to perform them. The first task was a picture description task based on "The Dog Story" (Muñoz, 2006; xxx and xxx, 2008; xxx, 2014). The second task was an immediate recall task based on Chaplin's silent film "Modern Times". Learners were asked to listen twice to a 2-minute narrative that explained the first part of Modern Times, while looking at visual stimuli consisting of 3 photographs extracted from the film. Afterwards, they were asked to write it to somebody who had never heard it before. Both tasks were time-controlled, and they were given 10 and 20 minutes, respectively, to carry out each of them. They were administered to a group of 94 Spanish/ Catalan bilingual school-age learners (age range: 10-16 year-olds).

The cognitive factors were measured using different tests. A letter span task was used in order to measure the learners' working memory capacity. In turn, parts A and B of the trail making test were employed in order to measure their attention control and attention switching capabilities. Besides these tasks, learners also performed two standardized tests that measured proficiency in the target language (L3 English) and in the source language of influence investigated (L2 German). These were the Oxford Placement Test and the Goethe Placement Test. Even though age was not a factor specifically addressed in the research questions, the sample was split into two age groups (younger vs. older) to avoid any interference of this factor on the data.

The raw frequencies of occurrence of the types of transfer under examination were registered in quantitative variables that served as dependent variable in a series of multiple regression statistical tests conducted in each age group and for each task separately. The results suggest that attention control was the most important cognitive factor explaining transfer. Moreover, together with both L2 and L3 proficiency, the model could explain more than 55% of the variance. This, though, was true in the group of older learners. In younger learners the effects of the cognitive factors were overridden by those of age, as these were the learners who transferred to a greatest extent. Likewise, attention switching did not seem to have any effect on the occurrence of transfer, whereas working memory did so only to the extent that it was tested along with attention control.

Crosslinguistic interference in simultaneous acquisition of Turkish and Italian

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Keywords: bilingualism, interface, crosslinguistic influence

Abstract:

It has been suggested that crosslinguistic influence is relevant even in simultaneous bilinguals acquiring two languages that differ with respect to a particular parameter. Hulk & Müller (2000) and Müller & Hulk (2001) propose that crosslinguistic influence occurs at the interface level between syntax and pragmatics, when the syntactical structures of two languages of the bilingual partially overlaps. Recent studies (e.g., Sorace & Serratrice, 2009; Sorace et al. 2009; Serratrice et al. 2012) have found crosslinguistics interference in contexts, which involve two typologically similar languages. For example, in a study examining the production of overt and null pronoun in English-Italian and Spanish-Italian bilinguals, Sorace et al. (2009) found that not only English- Italian, but also Spanish-Italian bilinguals preferred overt pronouns even where null pronouns would have been a more felicitous choice, underlining the need for further research in this area.

This study reports on acceptability judgment (AJ) and translation task data from 10 simultaneous Turkish-Italian bilinguals (mean age 9,5). The linguistic property investigated is postverbal subjects occurring with unaccusative verbs. Both Italian and Turkish are null subject languages. Subject inversion is accepted as one of the property for null subject languages (Rizzi 1982, Jaeggli & Safir 1989). Although both Turkish and Italian allow post verbal subjects with unaccusative verbs, this position is regulated by different discourse requirements in the two languages: in Italian the postverbal subject position with unaccusative verbs is favored in neutral contexts (a) (Pinto, 1997), while in Turkish postverbal subjects can only be used as background information (b) (Erguvanlı, 1984).

(a) A: É affondata una nave

sink-PST-3RD a ship-SBJ

'A ship sank'

(b) A: O gemiye ne oldu?

That ship-DAT what happen-PST-3RD?

B: Battı o gemi.

sink-PST-3RD that ship-SBJ

'That ship sank'

Besides the bilingual children and the age-matched Turkish and Italian monolinguals participated the study as the control group. The results of the AJ task in Turkish revealed no significant difference between monolingual and bilinguals. However, in the Italian AJ task, significant variability was found among the groups but only in contexts involving less frequent unaccusative verbs. Translation task involving 10 sentences was administered only to the bilingual group. In translation from Italian to Turkish, the children always produced pragmatically appropriate sentences. When translating from Turkish into Italian, the children were sensitive to the position of the subject in the Turkish stimulus: children produced translated sentences in Italian reproducing Turkish word order even if this word order was not pragmatically appropriated.

Those results support previous findings (e.g., Sorace & Serratrice, 2009; Sorace et al. 2009; Serratrice et al. 2012) in that interference at the interface occurs also with languages sharing the same parametric setting, Effects of task type, presenting different degree of processing load, need further consideration and discussion.

Interlanguage as a Composite Matrix Language: The adjectival noun phrase in the acquisition of French as an L3+

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Keywords: Third Language Acquisition, Multilingualism, Crosslinguistic Interaction

Abstract:

This study investigates how the languages in a Spanish-English-French contact situation interact in structuring the Adjectival Noun Phrase (NP) in French as an L3+. The research focuses on the examination of convergence between syntactic and lexical Cross-linguistic Interaction (CLI).

Transfer in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) may be regarded as a language contact phenomenon (Treffers-Daller 2009) which may be accounted for through models developed in code-switching (CS) research (Myeres-Scotton 2002). The structure underlying Interlanguage (IL) can be depicted as a Composite Matrix Language (CML). CML is defined as an abstract grammatical frame structured by the Target Language (TL), the developing IL, the L1 and L2s (Jake 1998, Wei 2009). This perspective on IL is advantageous as it provides a holistic approach to the study of CLI in SLA, particularly regarding typologically related languages that may overlap syntactically and lexically.

Qualitative data was elicited from 8 Spanish L1 informants (2 at Initial State, 2 at Post-Initial State, 2 at Intermediate State, 2 at Lower-Advanced State of acquisition of French L3+) and 3 English L1 informants (1 at Post-Initial State, 1 at Intermediate State, 1 at Lower-Advanced State of acquisition of French L3+) residing in the UK. Informants completed a language profile questionnaire, which established language use and perceived typological distance, and three speaking tasks (informal interview, picture description task focusing on colour adjectives, and sentence formation task). The CML Model (Jake 1998) was used as an analytical tool to examine Adjectival NP structures concurrently with the analysis of Lexical CLI using typologies developed in the fields of CS and SLA.

Results indicate that for the two L1 Spanish informants at the L3+ French Initial State the Adjectival NP predominantly displays a structure that suggests syntactic CLI from English. This type of structure was occasionally observed in the Adjectival NP of the remaining L1 Spanish informants. Conversely English did not appear to structure the Adjectival NP of L1 English informants suggesting that the formation of IL is not exclusively determined by the structures of the source systems, and that other factors are involved such as language status and language use.

Further qualitative analysis indicates that the language that frames the IL at the level of the Adjectival NP is not automatically the source of lexical CLI. Lexical CLI from Spanish can be accompanied by an "English-like" structure, while lexical CLI from English can occur within an "English-like" structure and a target-like structure. This suggests that lexical and syntactic CLI are separate phenomena and that lexical CLI do not automatically trigger syntactic CLI.

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Using eye-tracking to examine L2 incidental learning of collocations from reading

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Keywords: collocation, reading, incidental learning, formulaic language, vocabulary

Abstract:

Despite the importance of mastering collocations and other types of formulaic language in order to achieve high levels of language proficiency and fluency, empirical studies exploring the acquisition of collocations are still scarce. Previous research suggests that incidental learning from reading can be an effective method of learning collocations in a foreign language (Webb & Kagimoto, 2009). However, with few studies available to date, little is known about the collocational knowledge that can be acquired incidentally from reading. In addition, earlier studies have largely used off-line measures, such as post-reading tests. Although informative, these measures tell us little about the mechanisms and processes involved in the reading of novel collocations.

In the present study, we used a combination of off-line (pen and paper) and on-line (eye movements) measures to investigate collocation learning from reading. The aim of the study was to examine whether L2 speakers of English can incidentally acquire Adjective+Noun collocations, where the adjective is a real English word and the noun is a legal pseudoword (magic salp 'magic ring'), as well as to explore the on-line processing of such multi-word units. Participants read a story containing six target collocations while their eye movements were recorded. The effect of frequency of exposure was examined by manipulating the number of occurrences of the collocation. Following the reading experiment, participants completed a battery of tests which assessed their knowledge of the target pseudowords as well as collocational knowledge (both recall and recognition).

The following eye-tracking measures were examined: first fixation duration, gaze duration, total reading time, and the total number of fixations. The eye-tracking data and post-experiment test scores were compared to examine the relationship between reading times and performance in the tests (in line with Godfroid, Boers, & Housen, 2013; Williams & Morris, 2004).

The results of the present study are discussed in the context of (1) the effect of repetition on the speed of processing, with reading times decreasing as the effect of frequency of exposure, and (2) the correlation between reading times of the target collocation and the readers' performance in the vocabulary tests, with longer reading times linked to higher test scores., The study demonstrates the application of the eye-tracking methodology not only in the exploration of incidental learning of single words (Pellicer-Sánchez, forthcoming), but also longer stretches of language. Overall, the study provides further evidence for the effectiveness of eye-tracking in the investigation of second language acquisition, in general, and incidental learning from reading, in particular.

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What type of vocabulary knowledge predicts reading comprehension: word meaning recall or word meaning recognition ?

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Keywords: vocabulary, lexis, testing, vocabulary and reading, vocabulary size

Abstract:

Vocabulary knowledge has been shown to be a good predictor of reading comprehension, if not the best one (Bernhardt , 1995; Laufer, 1992; Nation 2001, 2006; Qian, 1999, 2002; Ulijn & Strother, 1990). Studies relating vocabulary size to reading achievement suggest that 6000-8000 word families cover 98% of a text's vocabulary and assure independent reading,whereas 4000-5000 cover 95% and enable minimally accepted reading comprehension with a dictionary or with teacher support (Hu & Nation, 2000; Laufer, 2010).

Vocabulary size in such research has typically been measured by tests of meaning recognition. However, word comprehension during reading requires recall of words' meanings not choosing the meaning from various options. The present study investigates how reading comprehension is predicted by meaning-recognition vocabulary size tests and meaning-recall vocabulary size tests. This information is essential for establishing the validity of vocabulary tests for reading purposes, for setting vocabulary goals in reading courses, for researching the vocabulary-reading relationship and for a better understanding of vocabulary knowledge construct.

The research questions were as follows:

- How are the two vocabulary tests (meaning recognition and meaning recall) correlated with learners' reading scores?

- How well does each test discriminate between learners' reading proficiency levels?

- How accurate is each test's prediction of vocabulary size at each reading proficiency level when compared with corpus studies?

In our study, reading was measured by a standardized national reading test and vocabulary knowledge – by two versions of a validated vocabulary size test: meaning recall and meaning recognition. Eighty eight college learners enrolled in English as a Foreign Language courses took the three tests. Based on their scores in the standardized national reading test, the students were divided into three proficiency levels. We correlated the reading scores with the two vocabulary scores, compared the three reading groups on each vocabulary test, and compared the vocabulary size ranges for each of the three reading proficiency groups with corpus studies.

Both vocabulary scores (recall and recognition) correlated well with reading comprehension. All three reading proficiency groups were significantly different from one another in both vocabulary scores. Both size scores in the different reading proficiency groups corresponded to the sizes suggested by corpus studies (e.g. Nation, 2006), but the recognition scores were significantly higher than the recall scores in the entire learner sample and within each reading proficiency group. We conclude that both vocabulary scores are good predictors of reading comprehension and relate the results to test validity, lexical thresholds and vocabulary knowledge construct.

Bridging the Gap Between Students' L1 and L2 Writing Cultures

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Keywords: Cross cultural rhetoric, academic writing, pedagogy

Abstract:

Although academic writing has long been a central component of English language courses in Japan many Japanese students still have problems mastering this skill (McFeely , 2002). Early studies in the field of contrastive rhetoric suggested that the cause of this problem stemmed from the fact that the rhetorical structures used in Japanese were very different from those needed to write well in English (Hinds, 1983). However, as researchers have gained a greater understanding of the processes that lead to language transfer they have begun to call this idea into question and the current direction of research has been focused on using students' L1 writing knowledge to assist them in their L2 writing activities. (Friedlander, 2005; Conner and Farmer, 2005) Recent research suggests that, with proper knowledge of the rhetorical structures that students are using in their L1 and how these are transferred to the students' L2 writing activities, ESL instructors can use their students' existing L1 knowledge to scaffold their L2 learning (Cummins, 2000).

This presentation will look at the information the presenter has gathered about the organizational patterns found in samples of academic writing, done both in English and Japanese, taken from ESL students studying at universities in Japan over a three year period. First, the presenter will explain the similarities and differences between students' L1 and L2 writing and look at some of the difficulties students have with writing in English. The presenter will then look at the the correlation between the students' ability to write well in English and their L1 writing skills. In light of these findings, and using current research in the field of contrastive rhetoric, the presenter will look at how English language teachers can collaborate with their Japanese counterparts to help improve the level of their students' academic writing in both English and Japanese. While the research in question focused on students studying at a Japanese university this presentation will show how these findings would be applicable to students from any discourse community.

Acquisition du vocabulaire à travers la lecture et l'enseignement centré sur la forme: le cas des apprenants adultes du français langue seconde à Montréal

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Keywords: Acquisition du vocabulaire, Lecture, Enseignement centré sur la forme, Enseignement intégré, Enseignement isolé

Abstract:

En didactique des langues, la recherche sur l'acquisition du vocabulaire a apporté au cours des 20 dernières années de nombreuses clarifications à propos des enjeux, des difficultés et de l'importance de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage du vocabulaire (Nation, 2001). Cependant, le débat autour de certaines questions empiriques telles que les mérites de la lecture et de l'enseignement explicite ou implicite, est loin d'être terminé. Plusieurs études ont montré les effets que la lecture extensive peut avoir sur le développement du vocabulaire (Pigada et Schmitt, 2006; Nation, 2001). Ces mêmes travaux reconnaissent que l'acquisition incidente (sans effort délibéré de la part de l'apprenant) à travers la lecture est un processus lent et propice aux erreurs conduisant à un gain limité du vocabulaire (Laufer, 2005). Cependant, Hustijn (2011) estime que ce gain pourrait être renforcé par des activités favorisant un traitement détaillé des relations forme-sens, une fois la lecture effectuée. Mais, que peut faire l'enseignant pour favoriser le traitement approfondi du vocabulaire? Un enseignement explicite centré sur la forme (FFI) (enseignement qui attire l'attention des apprenants sur les propriétés formelles de la langue cible) pourrait représenter une solution avantageuse. Cependant, cette hypothèse n'a pas été largement testée et validée. L'objectif de cette étude est de combler ce vide empirique et d'étudier les effets de différentes approches sur l'apprentissage du vocabulaire.

Vingt-trois apprenants du français langue seconde dans trois classes ont participé à cette étude. L'intervention expérimentale (quatre périodes de 45 minutes chacune) visant 36 mots ciblés dans quatre textes a été réalisée à travers trois conditions expérimentales (l'enseignement intégré, l'enseignement isolé, la répétition) et une condition de contrôle (l'apprentissage incident à travers la lecture). Tous les participants bénéficient des quatre types d'approche. Un certain nombre de mots est enseigné de façon isolée avant le début de la lecture de texte. Un certain nombre est enseigné de façon intégrée pendant la lecture de texte et chaque fois qu'un mot destiné à cette condition est rencontré. Le vocabulaire destiné à la condition de répétition n'est pas enseigné. Au lieu de cela, le mot est répété trois fois dans le texte et pour ce faire, les textes sont légèrement manipulés. Et finalement, le vocabulaire destiné à la condition d'apprentissage incident n'est ni répété ni enseigné. Des tests réceptifs et productifs du vocabulaire cible ont été administrés une semaine avant, une semaine après et deux semaines après l'intervention. Les résultats indiquent les avantages significatifs du FFI en comparaison avec l'apprentissage incident et la répétition. Cependant, aucune différence n'a été observée entre le FFI isolé et le FFI intégré. Les résultats et leurs implications pédagogiques sont également discutés.

Speech segmentation and listening comprehension in a second language: The role of bi-modal input

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Keywords: second language listening, speech segmentation, listening comprehension

Abstract:

Listening to a second language (L2) is often a difficult task. Deciding where one word ends and the next begins is a non-trivial task even in one's first language, but can be particularly problematic when "listening to a second language through the ears of a first" (Cutler, 2001). Furthermore, if speech is not appropriately segmented, comprehension is likely to be compromised. In this study, we focus on proposals that simultaneous presentation of aural and orthographic information in the same language (as in when watching a television programme with teletext subtitles; henceforth 'bi-modal input') could help L2 learners to better hear what is being said and develop their listening abilities (Vanderplank, 1988).

In Experiment 1, we investigated whether bi-modal input could help a population of L2 users who normally fail to segment 30-40% of speech improve their ability to hear what is being said. Forty-eight international students in UK higher education underwent a 4-week pretest-treatment-posttest experiment. During the treatment (weeks 2&3), they watched English documentaries either with sound and subtitles (bi-modal group), with sound but not subtitles (no-subtitles control), or with subtitles but without sound (no-sound control). Their segmentation abilities were tested each week using the shadowing task adopted from Mitterer and McQueen (2009): each participant heard short, pause-bound utterances (e.g. "had-been-closed") which they had to immediately repeat. Test items consisted of a) utterances previously heard; b) utterances from the same documentary not previously heard; c) utterances from another (unseen) documentary, spoken by speakers of a similar accent (British English). The number of correctly repeated words was counted for each utterance and turned into proportion scores.

Mixed design ANOVAs, with time as a within-subject and group as a between-subject factor, revealed that the participants in the bi-modal group improved more than the controls in their ability to segment speech. Crucially, this included not only previously encountered utterances, or different utterances by the same speaker, but also utterances from programmes and speakers to which they had not been exposed, demonstrating the generalisation of learning.

One question arising from Experiment 1 was whether the observed improvement in speech segmentation would also have an impact on speech comprehension. Listening comprehension is a complex process, and the use of top-down listening strategies, such as informed guessing or the use of context, could compensate for some problems in low-level signal processing (Vandergrift, 2003).

Experiment 2 was of a broadly similar design as Experiment 1, but we tested both the participants' segmentation abilities on the shadowing task, and their listening comprehension by using the Cambridge Advanced English exam. Thirty-two participants from the same population took part, divided into a bi-modal and no subtitles group. A strong correlation was found between speech segmentation and listening comprehension results, and the bi-modal group improved more both in their ability to segment speech (previously heard and new) and in their ability to answer comprehension questions. The results, thus, support the view that bi-modal input contributes not only to the development of L2 speech segmentation but to better comprehension, as well.

Pay an invoice, pay a visit, pay the piper: Testing the predictions of a phraseological continuum model for processing in a second language

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Abstract:

Phraseology (the study of word combinations) is a booming discipline of linguistics, but research on second language learners' representation and processing of word combinations is still scarce. In one theoretical approach to word combinations (Howarth 1996) a phraseological continuum model is assumed where word combinations vary in semantic transparency and restrictedness, from the most transparent category – free combinations – through a semi-transparent category – collocations – to the least transparent category – idioms. To date, the predictions of this model have not been subjected to solid empirical testing, and it is unclear to what extent the postulated categories in this descriptive framework have psycholinguistic validity. In other words, are free combinations, collocations and idioms different in terms of how they are represented and processed? Previous research has indicated that the semi-transparent category of collocations comes with a processing cost compared to the semantically transparent category of free combinations (Gyllstad & Wolter, in press), but idioms have not been tested against those two categories.

To address this gap, an experiment was designed to investigate how second language learners of English process all three word combination types, using verb + noun combinations, and controlling for factors such as word and phrasal frequencies, cognateness and phrasal familiarity. To this end, a semantic judgement task was administered to advanced L1 Swedish learners of English (N = 20), measuring reaction time (RT) and error rates (ER). Employing linear mixed effects modeling, the results show that the less transparent categories of collocation and idiom come with a statistically significant processing cost compared to free combinations in the range of 200 ms (p > .001) , but very little difference was observed when comparing collocations and idioms (not significant). The results also show that the following variables were significant predictors for RTs: verb frequency (p = .002), participants' vocabulary size (p = .007), and participants' phrase familiarity (p = .002). The results seem to indicate that there is not a stair-step fashion in which gradually lower semantic transparency leads to gradually more costly processing, but rather that the most opaque category – idioms – benefits from a marginally quicker, but not statistically significant, processing compared to the semi-transparent category of collocations. This could be due to an idiom superiority effect, stemming from a direct retrieval from a stored whole representation, rather than an on-line computation based on the component parts. This is in line with predictions from dual route models (Van Lancker, 2012). In terms of implications for the phraseological continuum model, the present study provides no evidence for making a clear distinction between collocations and idioms.

Gyllstad, H. & Wolter, B. (in press). Collocational processing in the light of a phraseological continuum model: Does semantic transparency matter? Language Learning.

Howarth, P. (1996). Phraseology in English academic writing. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

Van Lancker Sidtis, D. (2012). Two-track mind: Formulaic and novel language support a dual-process model. In M. Faust (ed.), The handbook of the neuropsychology of language (pp. 342–367). Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Task repetition and second language speech processing

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Keywords: fluency, task repetition, monitoring, speech production

Abstract:

Previous research has investigated the role of task-repetition in enhancing the fluency, accuracy and complexity of L2 learners' performance (e.g. Ahmadian, 2011; Bygate, 2001; de Jong & Perfetti, Lynch, 2001; Wang, 2014). Most of these studies, however, asked students to engage in the same task only once and the time interval between repetitions was often several days or weeks. Little is known about the role of immediate massed repetition and how such repetition contributes to the development of second language speech production processes across different types of tasks and for learners at different levels of proficiency. This study aims to fill these gaps and investigates the relationship between the repetition of oral monologue tasks and immediate gains in measures of second language fluency. It considers the effect of repetition on speech rate, frequency of filled pauses and self-repairs across different task types and proficiency levels in order to address the question of how many times EFL learners need to repeat tasks in order to optimize their linguistic encoding and monitoring processes within a time frame comparable to a typical lesson. 32 Japanese learners of English sampled at three levels of proficiency based on their TOEIC scores completed three oral communication tasks (instruction, narration, and opinion) six times each. The treatments were counterbalanced to control for performance effects and interlocutor proficiency.

Results revealed that repetition was related to gains in oral fluency across proficiency levels and tasks. The gains in speech rate were the largest and most uniform across the first three repetitions of each task type, but participants continued to increase their speech rate through the fifth task repetition. Gains in speech rate began to level off after the third repetition and the pattern of development began to diverge across the three task types. There were no significant gains in speech rate between the fifth and sixth repetition of any of the tasks. A parallel trend could be observed in the case of the frequency of filled pauses, which continued to decrease in a statistically significant manner through the fourth repetition. Interestingly, statistically significant changes in self-repair behavior could only be observed after both speech rate and the frequency of pauses stabilized indicating the possibility of a conditional relationship between linguistic encoding and monitoring (Levelt, 1989; Kormos, 2006). The findings suggest that four repetitions might be necessary for learners to proceduralise their task-relevant linguistic formulation processes, and only after this can they devote more attentional resources to monitoring the accuracy of their performance. The presentation discusses the implications of these results for theories of second language use and development.

Language Typology in Second Language Acquisition Research: Theoretical, Methodological and Empirical Considerations

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Abstract:

The proposed thematic colloquium comprises 4 papers on second language acquisition that are driven by a number of recent insights from language typology. Our work draws on different areas of language typology, both semantic (the typology of motion and causation events) and syntactic (word order typology). We first present a model of SLA grounded in the idea that language is a complex adaptive system and that acquiring a second language can be successfully studied if the relevant mechanisms of such as system are properly understood. The proposed model CASP (Complex Adaptive System Principles) based on an extensive electronic corpus of L2 English learner data, enables us to explain and predict when, why and how typological similarities and differences will interact in second language acquisition, sometimes resulting in transfer (positive or negative) and sometimes not. We use examples from typologically different L1 languages (e.g. Chinese, French, Japanese, Spanish) in order to illustrate how CASP works. In the second presentation we show how typological differences can affect second language use in a study that reveals the influence of the L1 on memory for causation events while speaking L2. The third paper in this session is a discussion of the ways in which inter- and intra-typological differences between three different L1s (French, German and Italian) and Spanish as a common L2 affect learners' acquisition of deictic motion expressions. Finally, our fourth presentation focuses on the effects of different pedagogical approaches to bilingual L1 language instruction that (English/Spanish or Catalan) children receive in a specific multilingual environment (Catalonia, Spain) and we explain how the variability in their instruction results in variable degrees of both successful L1 acquisition and L1 attrition. In this way, the colloquium highlights areas of second language and bilingual research where linguistic typology provides important theoretical insights that are then tested empirically using different methodologies and different datasets, as illustrated in the colloquium presentations. Finally, we contextualise our discussion within the broader implications of this research for our understanding of both language-specific and more general language processing factors that play a role in second language acquisition.

Multiple Factors in Second Language Acquisition : The CASP model

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Abstract:

We outline a new model of second language acquisition consisting of multiple interacting principles and inspired by work on *complex adaptive systems* (Gell-Mann,1992). The model is referred to as CASP, short for complex adaptive system principles for second language acquisition (Authors, 2013). It is informed by relevant findings from a broad set of linguistic and psycholinguistic research areas and, crucially, by attested second language learner data (Author, 2004; Authors, 2012). The novelty of this model lies in the definitions that we propose for a set of general and specific principles of learning and processing, in the interactions that we demonstrate between them, in the predictions that we make and support empirically, and in our integration of research findings from language typology, grammatical models, language processing, first language acquisition and second language acquisition. The result is a richer and more broadly based theory of second language learning and processing, which can potentially solve some of the traditional puzzles in this field, such as when and why transfer from an L1 does and does not occur. CASP enables us to determine acquisition stages and interlanguages and those are offered here as an illustration of a predictive model for the relative sequencing of learner progress.

We would argue that the relative weight of competing principles in L2 acquisition can be observed and measured within CASP and we can account for which principle wins. For example, CASP explain why Japanese speakers tend to master English SVO word order really early even though their SOV word order is substantially different from that in English. The cost of transferring the Japanese SOV is too high because it can result in a serious breakdown of communication and runs against the ultimate goal in language learning, namely to understand and make yourself understood. By contrast, Spanish speakers transfer their SVO word order variations into English even at more advanced acquisition stages (e.g. *Yesterday came my boyfriend*) because the communication of the message is not as seriously impaired. Further, while some of our general principles are found across the board regardless of L1 (e.g. all learners tend to minimize learning and processing effort), the CASP model can predict possible versus impossible, and more versus less likely interlanguages. We exemplify our predictions with different L1-L2 pairs (Japanese, Spanish, Chinese, English) and illustrate the patterns in second language acquisition in relation to a number of grammatical and lexical categories.

Speaking in L2 but thinking in L1 : Language-specific effects on memory for causation events in English and Spanish

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Abstract: This paper offers new insights into the effects of language on memory in a second language context. Following the experimental design of Filipović (2013) we carried out a recall memory experiment with proficient speaker groups of L2 English and L2 Spanish. The participants were either L1 Spanish- or L1 English-speakers and they were all university students in their final year of L2 English and L2 Spanish language studies respectively. They were actively using only their L2s during the experiment. We wanted to see whether proficient second language learners, in addition to learning the relevant construction differences, have also learned how to re-think for speaking in L2 (Slobin 1987, 1996; Ellis and Cadierno 2009). The cognitive domain of causation is an ideal platform for this investigation since intentional and non-intentional causation events are clearly and consistently differentiated in Spanish (e.g. Intentional: *Botó la botella*. -She threw the bottle vs. Non-intentional: *Se le cayó la botella.* -To-her-fell-the-bottle) whereas in English, causation events are lexicalised as ambiguous with respect to intentionality (e.g. *She dropped the bottle*). Previous research has demonstrated, for monolingual populations, that typological differences in the lexicalisation of causation events between English and Spanish affect the quality of information content and memory for those events in language-specific ways (Fausey and Boroditsky 2011; Filipović 2013). For example, Filipović (2013) has demonstrated that Spanish monolingual speakers remember whether events were intentional or not better than their English peers. In our study we wanted to check whether the proficient second language users have benefited from the acquisition of more finely grained lexicalisation strategies (in the case of the English learners of L2 Spanish) or have lost their L1 benefit due to the lack of the relevant precise structures in the L2 (in the case of Spanish learners of L2 English).

Our results show that, even though highly proficient second language learners in both groups do restructure their expression in line with the L2 grammatical rules, their processing still exhibits significant L1 influences on memory even when they are actively using only their L2s. Spanish learners of English performed significantly better on the recall memory task, which indicates that their habitual L1 linguistic focus on intentionality persisted even when they were asked to speak or write in L2 English, where the relevant intentionality distinctions are not habitually lexicalised. On the other hand, English learners of Spanish had more erroneous memory recalls even though they were using an L2 that could help them draw the relevant distinctions. We were able to conclude that even though they acquired the relevant grammatical knowledge in the L2 Spanish they did not acquire the relevant awareness of the event features (such as intentionality) that native speakers of Spanish habitually attend to in language (and consequently, in memory). We conclude that raising *awareness* about these and other relevant typological differences in the lexicalisation patterns, as well as their potential consequences, should be one of the fundamental goals of second language instruction.

Cross-linguistic influence in deictic motion verbs in Spanish as a second language

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Abstract:

Deixis is a complex phenomenon in language that encompasses several diverse features, such as social aspects of the communicative context, time and space. Cross- linguistic differences in this domain are important. Gathercole (1977) studies how some languages allow just the speaker as the deictic centre of the utterance (e.g. Spanish), while others allow both speaker and addressee as the deictic centre (e.g. English). For example, in Spanish it is not possible to use the verb *venir* 'come' in utterances such as **Vendré a tu casa mañana por la tarde* 'I will come to your house tomorrow evening", because the addressee is not allowed to be the deictic centre. The verb ir 'go' is the only verb allowed in this context: *Iré a tu casa mañana por la tarde*.

The aim of this paper is to examine how the deictic motion verbs ir 'go' and venir 'come' and their causative counterparts traer 'bring' and llevar 'take' are acquired in a second language. Data are elicited using video stimuli. The participants in this study were all students of Spanish in an immersion context with a B2 level of the *Common European Framework of Reference for languages* (CERF) and they were grouped according to their L1s, French, German and Italian. Contrasting the L1-L2 dynamics in the acquisition of Spanish by speakers of these three other languages gives us an ideal opportunity to see what happens when an L2 only allows the speaker to be the deictic centre while the L1s allow both the addressee and the speaker to be the deictic centres. Further, as Jarvis and Pavlenko (2008) argue, motion is one of the prone domains for conceptual transfer and deictic motion verbs are therefore a perfect testing ground for the nature and size of transfer effects.

The results of the data analysis confirm cross-linguistic influence, realised as L1 transfer, though there is a variation in how this transfer is manifested across the three different L1 populations. We shall discuss these transfer effects in the context of intra- typological and inter-typological differences between the L1s and the L2 Spanish. In addition, these results add further support to previous research on cross-linguistic influence detected in motion event lexicalisation (in the case of Spanish as a second language; for example, Cadierno 2004, Hijazo-Gascón, forthcoming) and they also contribute new insights to our understanding what thinking-for-speaking in a second language involves.

Cadierno, T. 2004. Expressing motion events in a second language: A cognitive typological perspective. In M. Achard and S. Niemeier (eds.) Cognitive Linguistics, Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning, 13-49. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Gathercole, V. 1977. Study of the Comings and Goings of the Speakers of Four Languages: Spanish, Japanese, English and Turkish. Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics 2, 61-94.

Hijazo-Gascón, A. forthcoming. Acquisition of motion events in L2 Spanish by German, French and Italian speakers.

Jarvis, S. & Pavlenko, A. (2008). Crosslinguistic Influence in Language and Cognition. New York: Routledge.

First language education provisions in a second-language-speaking environment : How the Catalan language policy affects the first language proficiency of native English speaking children

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Abstract:

We studied the multiple factors that contribute to first language attrition (FLA), with a hypothesis that one of the key factors in this process could be the teaching of L1 as an L2. We used a methodological tool attested in numerous studies of both first and second language acquisition as well as studies of typological differences in event lexicalisation (*Frog Story* narrative elicitation; Berman and Slobin 1994). The purpose of the research was to detect whether the level of attrition can vary as a result of a specific language policy and its resultant language provision.

Our target population were L1 English-speaking children living in Catalonia, Spain. Spanish and Catalan on the one hand and English on the other belong to two typological groups when it comes to motion event lexicalisation (Talmy 1986). This is why the studied combination of languages gives us a clear insight into the nature of the L1-L2 interaction, especially with regard to the L2 influence on L1. In addition, Catalonia has a unitary linguistic model that has Catalan as its principal vehicular language, whereby the Catalan language "has to be used normally as a vehicular and learning language in university and non- university teaching" (art. 35, Statute of Catalonia 2006). This means that once a child starts their State education in Catalonia, regardless of their nationality, they receive schooling in Catalan from the age of 3, and both Spanish and Catalan from the age of 6. However, unlike other nationalities living in Catalonia, such as the German and Dutch population, the Catalan government does not provide native English-speaking children with the support of L1 English classes, stating that as English is already part of the curriculum, providing L1 lessons would give native speakers an unfair advantage. Therefore, unless parents can afford to send their children to private schools (which offer teaching of English as an L1), the children must continue the development of their *English* in *English as a Foreign Language* classes.

To examine the effects of the variability in L1 teaching provisions, this study uses the recordings of 26 child *Frog Story* narratives. For the purpose of our central comparison, the narratives were provided by children who attend state schools, where no L1 instruction is offered, and private schools, where L1 instruction is offered. Other factors of the children's home environment are also taken into consideration, for example the language(s) spoken at home and the age of acquisition. Our results show that, when we control for all the other relevant factors, there is indeed a difference due to the nature of the L1 instruction received. We further discuss these results in the context of the current typology-driven second language acquisition research and pedagogy.

Differential effects of explicit and implicit feedback on the acquisition of a rule-based and an item-based structure

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Abstract:

Most studies which support the effectiveness of oral corrective feedback (CF) have investigated the impact of CF on one specific grammar item, such as articles or question forms. Few studies have compared the impact of CF on a range of linguistic targets. However, there is some evidence that different types of CF may affect rule-based and item-based structures in different ways. For example, while Yang and Lyster (2010) found that recasts were equally effective for the acquisition of the rule-based regular past tense as for that of the item-based irregular past tense, they discovered that prompts or output-pushing feedback had larger effects on the rule-based regular past. Since prompts comprise a range of explicit and less explicit techniques, it can be hypothesized that separate prompts will also affect rule-based and item-based structures differentially. To investigate this, the present study compares the effects of two kinds of prompts, the more explicit metalinguistic feedback (MF) and the more implicit elicitation, on the acquisition of the English regular and irregular past tense. A quasi-experimental classroom study involving 31 intermediate learners of English was carried out over a period of two consecutive weeks. The study consisted of an oral and written pre-test (a storytelling test and a grammaticality judgment test), two treatment sessions of one hour each in which the students carried out two communicative storytelling tasks and a post-test. During the treatment, one group received oral CF in the form of elicitation ("One day the man....?") every time an error was made against the regular or irregular past tense, while the other group was prompted to repair their past tense errors by means of MF ("You need past tense"). When the students' performance during the treatment was analysed, it was found that elicitation had a similar effect on the students' ability to repair regular and irregular past tense errors. However, the students in the MF-group were more successful at repairing regular past tense errors than irregular forms. The comparison of the pre- and post-test scores showed that both types of CF positively affected the students' acquisition of past tense forms in general, but statistical analysis also revealed a difference between the rule-based and item-based structure. A series of unpaired t-tests was carried out on the gain scores for the regular and irregular verbs in both groups. For the regular verbs, no significant difference between the impact of elicitation and MF was found, while in the case of the irregular verbs MF was found to outperform elicitation and this difference was statistically significant.

Yang, Y. & R. Lyster (2010). Effects of form-focused practice and feedback on Chinese EFL learners' acquisition of regular and irregular past tense forms. Studies in Second Language Acquisition 32.2, 235–263.

Error-Prone and Error-Free Exercises on Verb-Noun Collocations

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Abstract:

Many contemporary L2 study materials include exercises which require learners to match the constituent parts of collocations, for example by supplying the appropriate verb (e.g., meet) to precede a given noun phrase (e.g., the deadline) in gapped sentences. However, a study by Boers, Demecheleer, Coxhead and Webb (2014) found that wrong choices made in this type of exercise can leave undesirable memory traces, despite corrective feedback. This finding suggests that, in the case of collocation learning, at least, it may be advisable to design procedures where wrong exercise responses are avoided. The quasi-experimental study reported in this presentation investigates this possibility.

Two groups of high-intermediate EFL learners (n = 19) were given exercises consisting of gapped sentences where the verb of a collocation was missing. In one treatment condition (the error-prone procedure), the students tried to supply the verbs and were subsequently given (corrective) feedback on their responses. The students crossed out any wrong responses and wrote down the correct ones on their work sheets. In another condition (the error-free procedure), the students were given a hand-out with examples of the target collocations to help them complete the blanks in the exercise. Both groups of students were given four exercises each targeting 14 verb-noun collocations, spread over four lessons. They took a pre-test two weeks prior to doing the first exercise and a post-test two weeks after completing the fourth exercise. Like the exercises, the tests consisted of gapped sentences with the verb of the verb-noun collocations missing.

Comparisons of pre-test to post-test performance on all the item responses which were wrong in the pre-test (totalling 505) show a significant advantage of the error-free over the error-prone exercise procedure, in particular where wrong exercise responses were given under the latter procedure. Only 16.5% of the incorrect exercise responses in the error-prone condition were followed by correct post-test responses, indicating that the corrective feedback often failed to entrench the correct collocation in the learner's memory. In addition, almost 4% of these students' correct pre-test responses were replaced by wrong ones in the post-test. We argue that the lack of semantic distinctiveness of the verb (e.g., make, do, have), in many collocations as well as competition from semantically related verbs (e.g., say, tell, speak) makes it particularly hard for learners to block unhelpful cross-associations during the deliberate learning of sets of verb-noun collocations.

While the exemplar-modelled, error-free procedure yielded generally better outcomes – 38.5% of incorrect pre-test responses were replaced by correct post-test responses – it evidently did not work wonders either. The direct provision of exemplars probably made the task too easy and shallow. We conclude by proposing ways of designing and implementing collocation exercises that can promote more engagement and yet minimize the risk of error.

Boers, F., Demecheleer, M., Coxhead, A, & Webb, S. (2014) Gauging the effects of exercises on verb-noun collocations. Language Teaching Research, 18, 54-74.

From micro-analyses to macro-considerations: CA-SLA research outputs and their applicability

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Keywords: conversation analysis, topical backlinking, interactional competence, second language acquisition

Abstract:

It is a widespread idea that one of the best ways for improving one's second language (L2) skills is going abroad (Howard, 2001; Regan et al., 2009; Kinginger, 2013). Such an example are au pair girls: as L2 speakers, they are confronted with a hybrid context (König, 2014; Pochon-Berger et al., in press), in which both formal (the workplace) and informal (the domestic context) features are present. Working as an au pair is an established practice, however little is known about what characterises the daily au pair's routine, especially the moments of interactions with the host-parents, and how this influences her L2 interactional competence. This presentation is based on a qualitative case study from a corpus of three hours of audio-recorded interactions between a German-speaking au pair girl learning French in Switzerland and her host-family. Drawing on Conversation Analysis, I focus on a specific practice that is regularly found in my conversational corpus: when, in the course of an interrupted storytelling activity, the au pair girl links back her discourse to a previous conversational topic. The analysis shows excerpts from different points in time in order to document changes over time in the ways the au pair accomplishes a topical backlinking.

The state of research so far has shown the features of backlinking in L1 conversations (Schegloff, 1996; Local, 2004; De Stefani & Horlacher, 2008), however L2 conversations still remain underexplored (but see König, 2014). Through a qualitative case study, the present contribution highlights the characteristics of backlinking in French L2 talk-in-interaction (linguistic, structural and organizational features). Subsequently, it will enlarge its scope by reflecting on how microanalyses are usable for the domain of language sciences and what these sciences can do with the results of qualitative micro-analytical works. I argue that language sciences can include more bottom up research processes and outputs in university courses (f. ex. for future language teachers). Moreover, they should improve their relationship to the professional world with all the stakeholders (such as, in my case, au pairs, host-families and agencies). In fact, analysts can use their research for spreading information about, for instance, the development of interactional competence in an L2 starting from a circumscribed, well defined action. Herewith, I position my analysis within a larger ongoing discussion about the applicability of fine-grained analysis outputs (cf. Antaki, 2011; Alatriste, in press) and argue that research findings concerning conversational data are suitable for several practical considerations for the work of different professional categories.

A Conversation Analysis of Private Speech by EFL Learners in Tasks with High Level of Difficulty

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Keywords: Private Speech, Conversation Analysis, Comprehensible Input, Problem Solving, Adjacency Pair

Abstract:

Private speech (PS) is one of a few areas within second language acquisition that attracts great attention from both social psychologists (see John-Steiner 1985 1992, John-Steiner & Mahn 1996, Wertsch 1988) and applied linguists (see Lantolf 2000, Lantolf & Appel 1994) which are all inspired by the original work of Vygotsky (1931/1997). Among areas within the Vygotskian framework, PS is particularly of interest to applied linguists because it shows not only how second language speakers make new language features comprehensible, and process and internalize them, but also how they do this, mentally, by themselves.

Since Krashen's influential work on input in 1982, many SLA researchers have focused on the ways in which new language features are made comprehensible, the role of co-participants, and the possible connection between comprehension and acquisition when L2 learners either work in pair-work or group-work activities (Pica 1985, Long 1985, Ellis 1990, Varonis & Gass 1985). While these social activities provide communicative contexts in which L2 learners interact with co-participants and solve language-related problems resulting in language learning, less is known about the possibility of PS in providing comprehensible input. This study explores the connection between PS and comprehensible input and the process through which EFL students go during PS. Of particular interest is how the students talk themselves during PS, through a conversation analytic (CA) lens.

Since 1990, CA has become a research tool which allows researchers to study classroom interaction, due to the belief that social interaction provides the main source of input. However, little attention has been paid to PS, another possible source of input, from a CA perspective. As PS involves sounds that one verbalizes and which are therefore observable, there are data CA-motivated researchers can analyze to show how PS leads to language learning. This study, inspired by a CA perspective, explores 1) the verbal and 2) interactional features of PS by ten EFL learners during two sessions of two-hour grammar and reading comprehension tasks with a high level of complexity.

The EFL students' PS is recorded and then transcribed, while the focus is on 3) the pattern and 4) the direction of PS. An analysis of the data shows that a) several features of spoken language such as repetition, paraphrasing, incomplete syntactic structures, are found, b) keywords that are believed by the EFL students to provide or lead to the answer are verbalized, c) an adjacency-pair during PS is not always complete (meaning that one of the two parts is sometimes missing), but it is accompanied by the features presented in a), d) PS are used by EFL learners mainly to disagree and negotiate with themselves more than to agree with themselves, e) EFL learners use PS for refreshing memory, finding themselves alternative solutions and answers, and putting problems/questions together with solutions/answers, f) PS found in this study is similar to a narrative, and g) PS helps EFL students solve language-related problems. Further studies are needed to show the connection between PS, long-term memory, and SLA.

Acquiring vernacular forms in a naturalistic setting: Investigating innovative quotatives in German learner English

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Keywords: acquisition of vernacular forms, systemic and social constraints, naturalistic setting, learner English

Abstract:

Much is known about the intra and extralinguistic reality of the quotative system in native speaker grammars (Canada: Tagliamonte and D'Arcy 2007, Australia: Winter 2002, UK: Haddican et al. 2012), and in L2 or indigenised forms of English (Singapore, Hong Kong: D'Arcy 2013, India: Davydova 2015). But we know very little about the ways in which the rapid the incursion of be like (1c.), which has altered the quotative landscape in the English-speaking world, is acquired and used by EFL learners.

1) a. I thought, 'Oh, my goodness!

b. If you say, 'Okay, I speak Italian'

c. She's like, 'You say like so often. Have you been to America?'

Quotation features in educational materials for foreign language learning and they are one of the skills specified in the English language learning curriculum. As Sankoff et al. (1997) note, however, the use of vernacular discourse pragmatic features, such as discourse markers and innovative forms of quotation, is the "hallmark of the fluent speaker" who is fully integrated into the local speech community (consider also Collentine 2004). Our research suggests that innovative, non-standard forms such as be like are acquired in non-educational settings and via exposure to English in naturalistic settings (see Mougeon, Rehner and Nasdasdi 2004).

This study aims to investigate the ways in which the quotative innovation is conditioned within the very local Learner English ecology of forms and constraints. We propose to explore the main language-internal and sociolinguistic mechanisms underlying the variable realisation of quotation in a cohort of German learners of English. The data consists of about 800 instances of quotation produced by 45 speakers, all of which are currently completing their bachelors' and masters' degrees at the University of Mannheim.

We address the following research questions,

(i) Have the German learners of English acquired the quotative variants that are typical for younger native speakers of English? If yes, which system-specific and social factors are shaping the mechanism of variation and is it consistent with what has been reported for native English?

(ii) Does the amount / degree of exposure to native speaker Englishes in a naturalistic setting have any effect on the production of innovative be like?

This study is concerned with the acquisition of the sociolinguistic variation believed to be "a central part of competence for the native speaker" (Regan 2004: 336). Research on indigenised Englishes has shown extensive "transformation under transfer" (Meyerhoff 2009), where semantic-pragmatic constraints, i.e. quote content, do not get replicated by the non-native speakers (Davydova 2015). Our data suggests that German learners with an extensive record of face-to-face communications with native speakers are adept at picking up on the grammar that governs the quotative system and the innovative be like more specifically. Overall, the study contributes to the discussion of what is possible in the second-language acquisition of the variable grammar (Schleef et al. 2011), while exploring sociolinguistic and cognitive mechanisms that shape the formation of non-native Englishes worldwide.

Acquisition des langues et variations sociolinguistiques : comment les apprenants du français langue étrangère se représentent-ils le style ?

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Abstract:

L'un des aspects travaillés dans le domaine de la variation stylistique porte sur les facteurs qui influent sur le choix des variantes sociolinguistiques par les locuteurs. Ces aspects explorent aussi comment les locuteurs perçoivent le sens social (« relâché », « jeune », « méridional ») des variations sociolinguistiques au sein de leur communauté. En langue seconde, des chercheurs comme Van Compernolle (2013), Regan (1995, 1996, 1997), Regan & Dewaele (2012), Howard (2004), Mougeon et al. (2002) et Paternostro (2014) se sont tournés vers la production des apprenants pour mieux comprendre le processus d'acquisition de la variation stylistique. Ils ont constaté que les allophones utilisent généralement un style beaucoup plus formel que les natifs. Les raisons de cet écart sont expliquées, par exemple, par l'input formel en classe de langue étrangère (Mougeon et al., 2002) ou par les contraintes syntaxiques de la langue cible (Howard, 2004).

Toutefois, ces recherches centrées sur la production ne montrent pas la façon dont les apprenants perçoivent le style en langue cible, ni la façon dont ils construisent des représentations cognitives de ce style. En utilisant le phénomène de restauration stylistique, déjà attesté chez les natifs par Buson et al. (2014), nous voulons montrer que des apprenants sinophones et anglophones possèdent des schémas cognitifs qui classent les variantes formelles et non formelles dans deux catégories différentes. Nous avons proposé le protocole expérimental de Buson et al. (2014) à 67 étudiants sinophones et anglophones (niveaux B1 à C2 au CECRL) en séjour universitaire à Grenoble. Les apprenants écoutaient individuellement des énoncés formels et informels enregistrés par une locutrice native. Ces énoncés étaient soit composés de traits stylistiquement homogènes (une phrase au lexique formel contenant un trait formel comme le ne de négation) soit de traits non homogènes (une phrase au lexique formel contenant un trait non formel comme la suppression du ne de négation).

Lorsqu'on demande à ces apprenants de répéter des énoncés stylistiquement non homogènes, ils ont tendance à rendre le style homogène en restaurant les traits cohérents avec le reste de l'énoncé (répéter l'énoncé au lexique formel en restituant la négation ne). Comme chez les natifs, ce phénomène de restauration stylistique suggère que des schémas stylistiques cohérents sont disponibles chez des allophones. Le degré individuel de restauration des apprenants n'est pas statistiquement lié à la proportion de partenaires français dans leur réseau social en France, contrairement à nos attentes. Toutefois, il existe un lien entre ce degré de restauration et le temps d'étude dans la langue cible ou la durée des séjours en France. Ainsi, les apprenants les plus exposés au français semblent avoir construit des schémas cognitifs du style plus homogènes, semblables à ceux des natifs

La discussion portera sur la part respective de l'enseignement et du réseau social amical dans la construction des schémas stylistiques.

Apprendre l'italien L2 à Naples : l'expression des relations temporelles chez les apprenants ghanéens et polonais.

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Abstract:

Cette étude porte sur l'expression de la temporalité dans des récits fictifs oraux produits par des apprenants ghanéens et polonais de l'italien L2 à Naples, où l'italien standard cohabite avec les variétés régionales et le dialecte. Nous focaliserons notre attention sur les formes verbales au passé, étant donné que les apprenants à Naples sont exposés à trois inputs productifs de la part des autochtones: l'Imparfait, le Passé Composé et le Passé Simple, ce dernier représentant une forme verbale qui a quasiment disparu dans le Nord de l'Italie.

Nous essaierons de relever si les productions des apprenants sont contraintes par leurs L1s (Slobin,1996) quand ils doivent exprimer les relations temporelles en italien ou s'ils arrivent à reproduire le même système langagier que les italophones. Evidemment nous tenons compte de la distance typologique existant entre la L1 et la L2 et du lecte d'apprenant atteint par l'apprenant (Klein & Perdue, 1992).

Les données ont été recueillies par le biais de deux supports: une histoire à images sans texte Frog, where are you? (Mayer,1969) et un dessin animé muet Reksio (Marzałek,1967). Les données des apprenants ont été comparées avec celles des natifs italophones, qui ont accompli les mêmes tâches.

Nos données relèvent que les formes du passé employées par les immigrés sont les même utilisées par les natifs, et donc le Passé Simple est employé avec le Passé Composé et l'Imparfait, mais pas selon les mêmes principes discursifs que les natifs, d'où la perte de contrôle sur la concordance des temps verbaux. Du moins en partie, ce résultat pourrait dépendre du transfer de la L1, qui semble contraindre les choix linguistiques des locuteurs, vu que comme le démontrent Giuliano et al. (sous presse) d'autres apprenants avec une L1 autre que le polonais et le twi n'emploient pas du tout le passé simple en italien L2. En effet, le twi et le polonais sont deux langues pourvues d'un système verbal fortement aspectuel (Sropvá,1999;Koten,2000). L'emploi du Passé Simple, notamment, pourrait dépendre non seulement de l'input en L2 mais être aussi le reflet du système langagier de leur L1

On affirme, donc, que les apprenants ghanéens et polonais, tout en ayant deux langues typologiquement différentes, arrivent à reproduire les trois formes du passé de l'input en L2 sans pour cela se débarrasser des moules linguistiques de leur L1.

Giuliano, P.,Anastasio,S.,Russo,R.(sous presse) «Récits biographiques et récits fictifs en italien L2: une analyse des formes verbales au passé». Actes du XXVIIe Congrès International de Linguistique et de Philologie Romane. Section 12: Acquisition et apprentissage des langues, psycholinguistique. (Nancy, 15-20 juillet 2013), Nancy, ATILF.

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Ne-deletion in near-native French: Aspects of L2 sociolinguistic competence

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Keywords: sociolinguistic competence, French, ne, deletion, near, native

Abstract:

This presentation investigates how near-native speakers (NSSs) of French realize sentential negation, a well-known sociolinguistic variable. Prescriptively, sentential negation in French is accomplished via both the preverbal particle ne and a postverbal negative adverb (most frequently pas), as in (1). In spoken registers, however, preverbal ne is often deleted, as in (2). As Ashby (2001), Gadet (1997), Coveney (2002) and others show, rates of ne-deletion are modulated by a complex interplay of socio-stylistic and formal linguistic factors.

 (1) Il *ne* vient *pas*.

"He is not coming."

(2) Il vient *pas*.

"He is not coming."

Because sentential negation varies by register, second language (L2) learners must acquire ne-deletion to render their casual speech stylistically felicitous. Numerous studies have revealed the difficulty of this endeavor. Regan (1996) found that time spent abroad led L2 learners to (felicitously) increase their rates of ne-deletion in casual speech but also (infelicitously) in formal contexts. Sax (2003) also found that exposure to authentic French led to higher L2 rates of ne-deletion. However, compared to native norms, L2 learners still under-used ne-deletion even after several years in France, a pattern mirrored in Sanell's (2007) 'advanced high' speakers. Howard (2012) is notable for focusing on individual variation, reporting rates of ne-deletion from 39% to 93% across comparable participants. More generally, much research on L2 sociolinguistic competence (Canale & Swain 1980) confirms that L2 speakers - even at very high levels of L2 proficiency- tend to be overly formal (Mougeon et al. 2004), a stylistic infelicity that van Compernolle (2015) labels non-native pragmatic conservatism.

The data for this presentation are drawn from a 8.5-hour corpus of 10 informal dyadic conversations between NNSs and native speakers (NSs) of French (of France). In each case, the NNS and NS were close acquaintances and closely matched for age, level of education, and social class, which allows for comparisons of NNS ne-deletion with an ecologically valid NS norm. The data contain 1953 tokens of negation (934 from the NNSs, 1019 from the NSs).

Initial coding and analysis reveal that, at the group level, the NNSs' rate of ne-deletion (79.0%) is significantly lower than that of their NS peers (88.6%), $\chi 2 = 32.76$, p < .05, consistent with prior studies. However, as in Howard (2012), considerable individual variation arises. Importantly, in 5 of the 10 dyads, the NNS's rate of ne-deletion is statistically indistinguishable from that of the NS. These results are of interest because, although they demonstrate the persistence of non-native pragmatic conservatism at extremely advanced L2 levels, they also show that some NNSs (here, 5 of 10) conform fully to native stylistic norms. The analysis and discussion will also address: (a) the extent to which NNS ne-deletion is influenced by factors known to modulate ne-delation in NS French (e.g., clause type, grammatical person, negative adverb, verb frequency); (b) manipulation of ne-deletion to temporarily shift register; (c) the issue of establishing an appropriate NS norm; and (d) the role of intensity of interaction.

Sentence final particles in English-speaking learners' L2 Chinese grammars

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Abstract:

Ma and ne are two well-known Chinese sentence final particles (SFPs) in terms of their sentence-typing functions. But the use of SFP ma in a rhetorical question and ne as a follow-up question marker (as shown in 1a and 1b) are not well studied. More interestingly, the actual attitude of the speaker is right the opposite of the surface meaning of the ma sentence. And in an out-of-the-blue context, the use of SFP ne is not appropriate (Constant, 2011). And all these constrains are due to the features attached to ma and ne. However, English doesn't have any of these SFPs, but it has some of these features (same features on rhetorical yes-no questions). But the feature attached to SFP ne cannot be found in English as it is not a requisite for wh-questions.

1. a. Zhè shì yí gè dà rén yīnggāi zuòde ma?

This is one CL big people should done DE MA

Is this what an adult should do?

True meaning: 'This is not what an adult should do'.

b.Wǒ xǐhuān chī zhōngguócài, nǐ xǐhuān chī shénme ne? I like eat Chinese dish, you like eat what NE

 'I like to eat Chinese dishes, what about you?'

This present study explores the acquisition of Chinese SFP rhetorical ma and SFP ne with three research questions: i) Can features attached to ma and ne be acquired by English-speaking L2 learners? ii) How learners fulfil the reassembly tasks? iii) Is there any developmental acquisition among learner groups?

An empirical study is now in progress. Four L2 groups (beginner's, intermediate, advanced and near-native) and one Chinese native control group will participate in this research. The instruments include an acceptability judgment test, a comprehension test and a sentence ranking test. I anticipate that features attached to SFP ma, namely those are also present in learners' L1, will be acquired ultimately; however, those cannot be found in their L1 will not be acquired. For the reassembly tasks, learners will initially map ma and ne as the yes-no and wh-question respectively, and then with positive evidence they will identify the problems thus trigger the mapping of ma as the rhetorical yes-no question marker. Some developmental acquisition will be identified in this process. For the non-acquisition of feature attached to ne, it may probably due to the lack of both positive and negative evidence. To conclude, this study will contribute to Lardiere (2009) 'Feature Reassembly Hypothesis' and also fulfil the gap by arguing that those features are not exist in L1 but required in L2 may be quite difficult for L2 learners. At the same time, this study will enhance our understanding of the functions of SFP ma and ne.

Constant, N. (2011). On the independence of Mandarin aspectual and contrastive sentence-final ne. Proceedings of the 23rd North American Conference on Chinese Linguistics (NACCL-23).

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L1 transfer overridden by linguistic complexity in L2 acquisition: Evidence from L2 Chinese daodi...wh-questions

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Abstract:

While recognizing L1 transfer as a common phenomenon in L2 acquisition, an increasing number of L2 researchers have found evidence that L1 transfer is not inevitable. Yuan (2001) argues that L1 transfer is a relative, rather than absolute, phenomenon in L2 acquisition, but he does not specify in what way L1 transfer can be relativized. This paper is an attempt to fill in the gap by providing evidence from an empirical study of attitude-bearing wh-questions in English speakers' L2 Chinese. Following the analyses in Jakubowicz (2005, 2011) and Prévost et al. (2014), we will demonstrate that L1 transfer is relative to computational complexity and that computational complexity can override L1 transfer. Although English and Chinese wh-questions are different in that the wh-word in the former moves to the sentence initial position while that in the latter stays in situ, the two languages share some characteristics in their attitude-bearing wh-questions. In the literature, Chinese daodi...wh-questions are considered approximate counterparts of English wh-questions with phrases such as what the hell, who on earth. Like the hell in wh-the-hell questions in English, daodi in Chinese daodi...wh-questions can co-exist with a wh-adjunct such as weishenme "why", the instrumental/manner zenme "how", as well as a wh-nominal, such as shenme "what", shei "who". However, daodi cannot co-exist with the causal wh-word zenme "how come" in Chinese wh-questions. The unacceptability of this type of daodi...wh-questions is argued to be due to the fact that the wh-question bears two attitude features in it, an attitude feature of impatience borne by daodi and another attitude feature of counter-expectation carried by the causal wh-word zenme "how come". This is similar to the unacceptability of how-come-the-hell question in English. Similar to the wh-the-hell-question in English, the wh-question in Chinese can accommodate daodi in it as long as the wh-word does not carry an attitude feature with it. Ninety-five English speakers and 18 native speakers of Chinese as controls participated in an acceptability judgment test. Neither positive L1 transfer nor negative L1 transfer is found in our study. That is, wh-movement in English wh-questions is not transferred into English speakers' L2 Chinese wh-questions, and the similarities between English and Chinese have very limited facilitating functions in English speakers' handling of Chinese attitude-bearing wh-questions. Based on Jakubowicz's (2005, 2011) formulation, we argue that less complex wh-questions are those Chinese ones with the wh-phrase in situ, and more complex ones are those English wh-questions which display overt wh-fronting (and subject-verb inversion). Although English speakers' L2 Chinese grammars are sensitive to attitude features, they are indeterminate in judging the Chinese wh-question with two attitudes in it. We argue that the bigger the number of possible attitude features embedded in the question, the more complex the computation is required and therefore, it is less likely for the L2 learner to make determinate judgment. In this sense, the possibility of L1 transfer in L2 acquisition is relative to and can be overridden by the linguistic complexity involved in the target language structure.

The Effects of Visual Input Enhancement on the Learning of Two Chinese Homophonous Structural Particles

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Keywords: visual input enhancement Chinese grammar features

Abstract:

Input enhancement is argued to be a promising endeavor to direct language learners' otherwise elusive attention to a form in question, and thus to facilitate its acquisition (Schmidt, 1993, 2001). In light of the potential pedagogical benefits of input enhancement, research on input enhancement has burgeoned in the past two decades. However, in the extant literature, a discrepancy in the results regarding the effect of input enhancement has appeared (Lee & Huang, 2008). The inconsistent results could in part be attributed to a divergence in methodological features and in part to the probability that the effect of input enhancement is susceptible to a number of mediating factors (Lee & Huang, 2008). The abundance of input enhancement research notwithstanding, it is still not clear as to how, or to what extent, the factors mediate the its effects. Accordingly, more research on input enhancement is needed. The present study pursued this line of research by means of an investigation into the effect of visual input enhancement vis-à-vis target structures.

The current study employed a pretest-posttest-delayed posttest design to investigate the effect of visual input enhancement on the learning of two Chinese homophonous structural particles 的 and 得. The study involved 59 participants (19 male, 40 female; aged between 17 and 47) who were learning Chinese as a second language. The students were divided into three groups—an enhanced input group (N= 21), an unenhanced input group (N = 21), and a comparison group (N = 17). Ten target-feature-embedded written texts were created and used for 10 treatment sessions spread through 10 days. The enhanced and unenhanced input groups received the same texts, with one exception. The target features of the texts given to the enhanced input group were supplemented via the combined use of circling and underlining. The comparison group did not receive treatment. Two tests were used as the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest to assess the learners' knowledge of the target features. A mixed-design repeated-measure ANOVA was performed to explore the effects of the treatment. Results showed that both enhanced and unenhanced input facilitated learning of the target features. However, the enhanced group outperformed the unenhanced group. In terms of the effects of input treatment on the learning of the two homophonous Chinese structural particles, enhanced input facilitated learning of 得, but not 的.

Unenhanced input did not have a differential impact on the learning of the two target features.

Interfaces multiples et acquisition des constructions ditransitives en chinois

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Keywords: constructions ditransitives, processus d'acquisition, interface sémantico, syntaxique, structure informationnelle, poids des constituants

Abstract:

Les constructions ditransitives en chinois se caractérisent formellement par la structure à double objet et les structures avec la préposition Gei, et sémantiquement par un événement de possession causée. Si tous les verbes « ditransitifs » ne peuvent pas entrer librement dans ces constructions, c'est parce qu'ils sont sujets à des contraintes sémantiques lexicales (Zhu 1979, Liu 2006, entre autres). Dans l'usage des constructions ditransitives, le choix de la construction est sujet à l'accessibilité informationnelle et au poids des constituants qui représentent le récipient et le thème (Yao & Liu 2010, Yu 2013).

Notre travail vise à examiner le processus d'acquisition des constructions ditransitives en chinois par des apprenants francophones. D'un côté, est-ce que les apprenants sont sensibles à l'interface des structures syntaxiques et des contraintes sémantiques lexicales ? De l'autre côté, est-ce qu'ils peuvent acquérir les contraintes informationnelles et du poids des constituants ?

Pour répondre à la première question, une expérience incluant deux tâches a été lancée : une tâche de jugement d'acceptabilité pour examiner auprès des apprenants la conscience des restrictions des classes de verbe dans différentes constructions ainsi que la généralisation des paires forme-sens, et une tâche de traduction pour examiner la préférence des constructions dans la production des apprenants.

Pour répondre à la deuxième question, une expérience de production semi-guidée a été réalisée : les apprenants ont été invités à formuler des phrases contenant une construction ditransitive selon les contextes et les (groupes de) mots donnés. Ils ont été censés choisir des (groupes de) mots et les mettre en bon ordre selon le contexte. Dans les contextes, l'accessibilité informationnelle du récipient et du thème est contrôlée. La longueur des syntagmes représentant le récipient et le thème est également manipulée.

Une quarantaine d'apprenants francophones du chinois dans des établissements universitaires ont participé à la première expérience. Et une trentaine d'entre eux ont aussi participé à la deuxième expérience. Les résultats préliminaires des expériences montrent que les apprenants francophones du chinois acquièrent d'abord les formes syntaxiques de différentes constructions et au fur et à mesure raffinent les contraintes sémantiques. D'ailleurs, il existe un écart entre l'acquisition de l'interface sémantico-syntaxique et l'acquisition de l'interface poids-informationnel.

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Spanish Heritage speakers and L2 Spanish learners: do writing skills differ after a semester of tailor-made courses?

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Keywords: CAF, L2 writing, Heritage Language, L2 Spanish

Abstract:

Recently, there has been great interest in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature in identifying the differences between second language (L2) learners and heritage language (HL) learners. Among other conclusions, most researchers agree that L2 learners outperform HL learners when examining writing abilities (Montrul, 2010, 2012; Hedgcock, & Lefkowitz, 2011; Potowski, 2014).

An awareness of these different pedagogical needs (Carreira, 2004; Montrul & Perpiñán 2011; Potowski, 2002) has led to a growing number of post-secondary institutions in the United States to the creationof courses designed for heritage language learners, especially for Spanish heritage language learners, since it is the largest population of heritage language in the USA. The effects on instruction on writing skills are still an empirical question. Furthermore, this study also concerns whether HL learners still remain at a disadvantage when compared to their L2 counterparts' writing skills after completing a similar course designed for each population's needs. To date, no study has provided an answer to this question.

The present study sought to shed some light into this issue. We sampled twelve HL learners and twelve L2 Spanish learners enrolled in tailor-made courses specifically designed to meet HL and L2 needs. All groups completed two time-controlled written production tasks, one during the first weeks of the semester and the other at the end of the semester. Their written proficiency was assessed by measuring the complexity, accuracy and fluency and lexis (CAF, Norris & Ortega 2009) of the texts they produced.

Preliminary results suggest that HS writing performance as measured by CAF is not significantly different from their L2 counterparts after taking a HS course, slightly outperforming L2 learners at the end of the semester. Findings, suggesting that tailor-made instruction is beneficial for leveling these two groups of learners, are discussed in light of their pedagogical implications for the L2/HL classroom, and could also help instructors and language program directors develop curricular designs better adapted to the learners' diverse needs.

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The Impact of Imposing Processing Strategies on L2 Learners' Study of Phrases

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Abstract:

Lexical phrases (e.g., collocations and idioms) have in recent years attracted a fair amount of interest in the field of language pedagogy. SLA studies have shown phrasal lexis to benefit second (or foreign) language learners in various ways: it facilitates fluent real-time language processing, both receptive (Conklin & Schmitt, 2008) and productive (Wood, 2010), and it helps learners to produce 'idiomatic' language instead of unconventional word strings which may hinder smooth communication (Millar, 2010). However, in the absence of massive amounts of exposure to the target language, learners tend to be very slow at developing phrasal competence (Laufer & Waldman, 2011) and initiatives to accelerate this learning process would be very welcome. Unfortunately, there is still a shortage of empirical studies of instructional methods and techniques. The present study focuses on the deliberate memorization of L2 phrases and tests the effectiveness of two proposals for how to help learners' accurately recall the lexical composition of L2 phrases. EFL learners (N = 65) studied a list of 32 figurative verb + noun-phrase expressions (e.g., turn the tide) glossed in L1. In one condition they were only instructed to study the list. In a second they were additionally instructed to identify phrases whose verb is non-congruent with the L1 translation. In a third the instruction was to identify phrases that alliterate. Both additional instructions intended to promote learners' engagement with the composition of the expressions. The 32 phrases included equal numbers of congruent and alliterative ones. It was hypothesized that the extra instructions would cause learners to pay extra notice to the choice of verbs in the phrases and would result in better recall. Comparisons of pre- to post-test gains showed that prompting learners to compare the target collocations with their L1 did not appear to be helpful in comparison with a condition where learners were left to their own mnemonic devices. On the other hand, prompting learners to look for alliteration did appear to be conducive to form retention. These results suggest that the merits of channelling learners' engagement during deliberate study may depend on the type of channelling and that not all efforts to manipulate learners' processing during a memorization task necessarily bring about better outcomes than if the learners use their own, habitual mnemonic strategies.

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Shaping learners' talk: A case in favour of tandem-teaching in CLIL

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Abstract:

In this interpretive study[1] we draw on sociocultural approaches to teaching-and-learning of foreign languages (FL) which emphasise (classroom) interaction as key in the learning process. Within this framework we apply the construct of Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC), defined as 'teachers' and learners' ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning' (Walsh 2011:130), to the analysis of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) classrooms. One key feature of CIC is teachers' ability to shape learners' contributions and assist them towards the production of better articulated L2 utterances, thereby helping learners to go beyond themselves.

Shaping learners' talk in a content-driven CLIL environment may be particularly problematic due to the dual-focused nature of the learning goals inherent to this pedagogical approach. Recent studies have shown that content-teachers systematically deploy an array of multimodal resources and Socratic questioning to ensure students' comprehension of target concepts. Likewise, they tend to respond to students' contributions with evaluative and occasional corrective feedback mainly focused on the use of subject-specific terminology and pronunciation. However, they rarely aim at eliciting progressively more linguistically elaborated contributions (Dalton Puffer, 2007; Escobar & Evnitskaya, 2014; Escobar Urmeneta & Walsh, forthcoming; Llinares & Lyster, 2014).

This study aims at further exploring how 'shaping' learners' talk occurs in CLIL classrooms by examining a lesson in which a content (music) teacher and an FL (English) teacher work in tandem to teach a class of twenty-eight students (age 14) who learn music in English as an L3. To this end, multimodal conversation analysis (e.g. Mondada, 2007) was used to identify the on-line decisions taken by both teachers in order to coordinate their actions aimed at accomplishing the two-fold pedagogical goal: developing the students' understanding of music-related concepts, and their linguistic and communicative resources in the L3. The naturally occurring conversational data come from a bilingual Catalan-Spanish secondary school in Metropolitan Barcelona which participates in a university-school partnership and runs an English-medium CLIL programme, in which one period per week of tandem-teaching has been established in most CLIL subjects.

The analysis reveals that the content-teacher mainly devotes his turns-at-talk to elicit content-relevant contributions through which the students display and develop their understanding of the concepts under discussion. More specifically, conversational tokens evidence that the content-teacher is entirely satisfied once the learners have provided minimal one-word contributions, usually confined to the target terminology. The study also describes the 'complementary' role that the FL specialist plays in the lesson: she manages to position language complexity in the agenda and in doing so affords the learners opportunities to generate more sophisticated wordings in the target language.

These outcomes suggest that tandem-teaching may play a relevant role in CLIL programmes in compulsory education, if both learners' communicative and interactional competences are to be achieved. The study also has pedagogical implications for CLIL teacher-education, as tandem-teaching is far from being a preferred practice, at least, in Spanish schools.

Task-repetition in EFL child oral interaction

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Abstract:

Tasks have been widely used in second language acquisition research as relevant tools to explore language learning opportunities available to second/foreign language (L2/FL) learners (García Mayo, 2007; Samuda and Bygate, 2008). Some of that research has focused on the effects of task repetition on learners' oral production and has shown the benefits of this task implementation variable for subsequent L2 learning (Bygate, 2001; Kim Tracy-Ventura, 2013 – but see Kim, 2013 for a different view), Research on task-repetition has mainly focused on adult and adolescent populations but research with young learners is scarce, and more so in EFL settings (Pinter 2007; Shintani, 2012, 2014) where exposure to the target language is limited to the classroom. Children in EFL contexts are a relevant group to consider as most European countries have mandated an early exposure to the foreign language and teachers should be informed about valuable pedagogical tools. Two recent students (Bret Blasco, 2014; Sample and Michel, 2014) have focused on the impact of task repetition on young learners' oral complexity, accuracy and fluency (CAF). They have reported a significant increase of fluency through task repetition but mixed findings regarding complexity and accuracy, which were probably due to the small sample of participants.

Our study analyses the effects of task repetition on the oral production of child EFL learners in Spain. Specifically it focuses on the potential effects task-repetition might have on CAF. The participants (n=120) were 27 dyads in 3rd grade (8-9 years old) and 33 in 4th grade (9-10 years old) and had a beginner proficiency level as established by official tests for their age range. They had been exposed to English since they were 4 and received 5 hours of class per week. At Time 1 (T1) all the children completed a spot-the-difference (STD) task in pairs. At Time 2 (T2) task repetition and task familiarity were controlled for: 11 dyads in 3rd grade and 10 dyads in 4th grade completed exactly the same task (task repetition condition: same procedure, same content); 5 dyads in 3rd grade and 11 dyads 4th grade took a STD task with a different content (procedural repetition: same procedure, different content); the control group, 11 dyads in the 3rd year and 12 dyads in the 4th year completed a guessing game task. All the oral interactions were transcribed verbatim using CHILDES and each utterance was codified for CAF.

Our findings only showed significant differences between T1 and T2 regarding increased fluency in the 3rd year procedural repetition group (z = -2.803, p = .005) at T2. There is a mixed picture concerning trade-off effects between complexity and fluency. However, other positive aspects of task repetition can be reported such as increased confidence and cooperation between the members of the pairs. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be presented together with implications for foreign language pedagogy and lines for further research.

To what extent does structured and practiced input neutralize L1 and L2 effects on an L3 at the initial stages of acquisition?

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Abstract:

Over the years, cross-linguistic influence (CLI) has repeatedly been shown to play an important role in L2 acquisition (Odlin 1989; Ringbom 2007). Recent research into the role of additional background languages in L3 acquisition also reveals strong CLI effects (Cenoz, Hufeisen & Jessner 2001). The relative importance of the L1 versus the L2 in CLI is not yet decisive, however, especially with respect to the early stages, which are believed to be particularly susceptible to CLI (De Angelis 2007). An additional factor that has received little attention is the effect of the target language (TL) input on the relative importance of background languages in the acquisition of a new language.

The present study investigates the influence of background languages and linguistic input on learners' productions during a route direction task following intensive instructional input. The data for the study were collected during a language course for absolute beginners. Native speakers of French (n=17) and German (n=20), with English as an L2, studied Polish for two weeks (14 hours total). As of the third lesson, the teacher began to use constructions of static space (e.g. Sabina mieszka w Londynie "Sabina lives in London"). During the fourth and fifth lessons, the teacher introduced several verbs of motion (e.g. iść "to go", skręcać "to turn"), other expressions of static space (e.g. Gdzie znajduje się? "Where is [it] located?", and basic spatial expressions with prepositions (e.g. na "on", na prawo "on the right", na lewo "on the left"). On the sixth day (after approximately 7.5 hours of instruction), the instructor introduced new constructions to talk about dynamic space (e.g. iść prosto "Go straight"). These verb-preposition and verb-adverb structures were regularly reviewed and practiced in subsequent lessons in preparation for a production task in which participants were asked to give directions to a naïve interviewer.

Giving directions in Polish requires the use of inflectional morphology. In the input, nouns following spatial prepositions mark one of two cases, accusative or genitive, and nouns following verbs of motion show instrumental case. Three cases are therefore mobilized by this task.

Given that German attests more inflectional morphology than French or English, one hypothesis is that the learners with German L1 will produce more variable inflections on their nouns and verbs. However, given the consistent nature of the input, a second hypothesis is that the input will override potential L1 and L2 effects.

In order to identify what aspects of the learner productions revealed L1, L2 and/or input effects, learners' productions on the route direction task were compared to the Polish input, as well as to productions of control group participants comprising native speakers of French, German and English. Preliminary results show a robust effect of the input with some traces of L1 and L2 influence on Polish L3. Discussion will include a qualitative analysis for investigating learners' productions at the initial stages relative to the input received.

An Effect of Particle Placement on Comprehension of wh-Questions in L1 German-L2 English

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Abstract:

This paper explores effects of surface similarity between L1 and L2 structures on potential syntactic transfer in L2 comprehension. A picture-choice task tests for effects of particle placement on the comprehension of wh-questions in L1 German-L2 English.

There is partial overlap between constituent orders in English and German simple tense wh-questions with particle verbs. In English subject questions, the particle may appear adjacent to the verb (continuous order), or after the object NP (discontinuous order) with no effect on thematic interpretation, as in (1). The verb second and verb-final properties of German mean that separable prefixes must appear clause-finally, see (2).

(1) Who picks (up) John (up)?

(2) Wer holt (*ab) Hans (ab)?

The discontinuous order in English is linearly identical to constituent order in German main clause wh-questions with prefix verbs. However, because interpretation in German is conditioned by case and agreement morphology, this order may be either a subject question or an object question (3 and 4).

(3) Wer holt Hans ab?

who-nom pick-3ps Hans prt

'Who picks Hans up?'

(4) Wen holt Hans ab?

Who-acc pick-3ps Hans prt

'Who(m) does Hans pick up?'

If German-speaking learners of English apply an L1 parse to L2 input, they can accommodate subject questions in the discontinuous order, but they may misinterpret these as object questions. By contrast, subject questions in the continuous order and object questions with do-support are not amendable to a German parse and thus should not show effects of cross-linguistic influence.

These predictions were tested on the basis of a picture-choice task administered to 17 upper-intermediate L1 German learners of L2 English, and 10 native English-speaking controls. Participants were presented with questions in the context of two pictures. A target picture depicted a subject interpretation of a subject question or an object interpretation of an object question; distractor pictures depicted an object interpretation of a subject question, and vice-versa. Participants provided responses to a total of 32 questions, 16 with particle verbs and 16 fillers. Of the 16 particle-verb questions, 8 were object questions and 8 were subject. Half of the subject questions were in the continuous order and half in the discontinuous order.

The results showed no significant difference in target response rates between learners and natives for object questions (95.5% vs. 99%). By contrast, learners provided fewer target responses to subject questions overall (learners 91% vs. natives 99%). Critically, however, this difference in target response rates was conditioned by particle placement in subject questions. Learners provided significantly lower rates of target responses to subject questions in the discontinuous order vs. the continuous order (86.7 vs. 95.6%).

These results suggest that learners at higher proficiency may still be influenced by properties of the L1 during L2 comprehension. Where English clauses are linearly compatible with a German parse, learners are more likely to provide non-target interpretations in line with those permitted in German. Similar effects are not identifiable for clauses which do not share a surface word order pattern with German.

L1 Transfer and feature assembly of L2 Korean case

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Keywords: L1 transfer, crosslinguistic influence, Korean case, case particles, syntax

Abstract:

This study investigates the role of the L1 in the acquisition of L2 Korean case particles by learners with English, Chinese and Japanese L1. Lardiere's (2009) proposal of feature (re)assembly argues that checking and realizing features requires a complex procedure involving not only uninterpretable grammatical features but also interpretable ones. She notes that L1s and L2s with similar features might cause success or failure in L2A, if similar L1 features require reassembly in L2. Sabourin et al. (2006) discuss two types of transfer, namely surface (similar overt morphology) and deep (same abstract features such as the structural case shared by these four languages).

In L2 Korean, especially in terms of case particles, Japanese, English and Chinese have different degrees of transfer. All three languages are nominative/accusative case languages, but Japanese has similar morphological exponents (suffixes) to Korean. English overt case is only realized in pronoun NPs (not bound morphemes). Chinese is even more morphologically impoverished in terms of overt case. Hence a transfer from Japanese to Korean can be considered a surface transfer while a transfer from English or Chinese to Korean would be considered a deep transfer. Furthermore, Japanese and Korean have similar topic/nominative distinction while the distinctive notion of topic and nominative is new in English and Chinese.

The current study investigated the role of L1 in acquisition of Korean case particles by administering oral and written tasks to intermediate learners of Korean: 21 Japanese, 27 English and 22 Chinese speakers, totalling 70 participants in all. Learners of all three L1s used case particles more correctly in the written data (Japanese 93.7%, English 87.8%, Chinese 86.5% respectively) than in the spoken data (84.2%, 76.2%, 62.1% respectively).

Japanese speakers were more accurate in both the written and spoken tasks. Learners' oral production clearly indicates the discrepancies as based on their L1s. While English and Chinese learners performed well in the written task (English 87.85% and Chinese 86.5%), their oral data was significantly different (English 76.2% and Chinese 62.1%). This may be due to the fact that although English and Chinese do not have morphemes for case particles equivalent to Korean or Japanese, the distinct forms for the subject and object pronouns in English facilitate the outperformance of English learners. Both theoretical proposals—feature reassembly and transfer (deep and surface)—are supported by this data.

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Sabourin , L. , Stowe , L. A. , & de Haan , G. J .2006. Transfer effects in learning a second language grammatical gender system . Second Language Research, 22, 1 – 29 .

Rôle des langues sources, l'arabe libanais (L1) et l'anglais L2, sur l'acquisition de la détermination nominale en français L2 et L3

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Keywords: Acquisition L3, référenciation, discours narratif, syntagme nominal, influence inter, langues

Abstract:

Notre étude porte sur l'introduction des entités dans un discours narratif en français, L2 & L3. Deux groupes d'élèves (82 sujets) scolarisés au Liban et âgés de 10, 13 et 16 ans relatent un récit de film (Watorek, 2004a) en français L2 (première langue étrangère après le libanais L1) et en français L3 (deuxième langue étrangère après l'anglais L2).

Afin de déterminer le rôle des langues sources dans leurs productions, des francophones, anglophones et libanophones adultes natifs ont été également soumis à la même tâche verbale.

Notre recherche compare d'une part, les séquences acquisitionnelles qui se dégagent des récits oraux des apprenants de différents niveaux de compétence en L2 et L3, français, et d'autre part, elle analyse l'influence de la langue maternelle le libanais (L1) sur l'acquisition du français (L2/L3) et l'impact de l'anglais (L2) sur l'acquisition du français (L3) (Trévisiol, 2012).

Cette étude permet aussi de démontrer les spécificités des langues étudiées et la variation de leurs procédés linguistiques. De plus, elle contribue grandement à la connaissance du libanais, langue typologiquement éloignée des deux langues indo-européennes (Kellerman, 1983).

Le cadre d'analyse retenu est celui de l'approche fonctionnaliste (Perdue, 2002). Nous nous appuyons sur le modèle de la quaestio (Klein et von Stutterheim, 1991) pour examiner la complexification du syntagme nominal et du schéma phrastique dans lequel il s'insère.

L'influence des langues sources se joue à des niveaux différents.

En français L2, l'impact du libanais apparaît typiquement au niveau discursif et morpho-syntaxique : les apprenants introduisent un des deux protagonistes étudiés dans l'arrière-plan par une structure existentielle au passé.

En français L3, les apprenants empruntent du lexique aux langues sources (L1 & L2). Ce phénomène persiste et il est dû à plusieurs facteurs tels l'intensité de l'enseignement, l'input et la motivation.

Au niveau de la structure interne du SN, les protagonistes sont introduits par des formes idiosyncrasiques à 10 et 13 ans et plus particulièrement par un N sans déterminant comme en L1, le libanais. La structure du SN est aussi marquée par une influence de l'anglais L2 où les apprenants font précéder le nom français par un déterminant anglais. Ils perçoivent donc la ressemblance entre le système de la détermination français et anglais.

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Perceiving L2 speech: A gating experiment with French and Tunisian listeners of different ability

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Keywords: Gating paradigm, spoken word recognition, online lexical segmentation, L2 listening, Tunisian and French learners

Abstract:

In paradigms focusing on isolated words, spoken-word recognition involves the simultaneous activation of potential word candidates which compete with each other for final correct recognition (McQueen et al., 1994). In continuous speech, speech reductions existing at word boundaries may complicate the word recognition process – but, of course, contextual information (both linguistic and pragmatic) may help resolve competition of this type. Lexical processing is more difficult in L2 than in L1 because L2 listeners often lack phonetic, lexical, syntactic and prosodic knowledge in the target language. In this study, we investigate the on-line lexical segmentation processes that French and Tunisian listeners to L2 English engage in as discourse is progressively revealed. Our goal is to shed further light on L2 spoken-word recognition in context and to understand L2 listening difficulties through a comparison of the working hypotheses formulated by skilled and unskilled listeners during an on-line task. We used a variant of the gating paradigm (Grosjean, 1980) – run in E-prime – in which subjects were instructed to listen to and transcribe an English sentence presented in increments of progressively greater duration. After each gate, they had to indicate how confident they were about their guess using a four-point scale (1 = very sure; 4 = very unsure). In our talk, we will focus on one of the spoken stimuli, the sentence "And this amazing athlete has just broken another world record", which includes some interesting examples of common reductions and phonetic features in English, such as elision and assimilation. Twenty-one French and Tunisian learners of English completed the task, eleven of whom were identified – through results on a standardized English listening test administered to 226 participants in a larger study – as proficient L2 listeners (the top eleven scores), the other ten as listeners-in-difficulty (the lowest listening scores). Our preliminary results indicate that there is an important difference in the manner in which proficient and less-proficient L2 listeners handle connected speech. Less-proficient listeners delay recognition of words as they wait for lexical and syntactic evidence to appear in the gates. In addition to quantitative evidence of differences between the two proficiency groups, we will examine individual performance data, and strategies possibly deriving from the learners' first language or culture.

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McQueen, J.M., Norris, D., Cutler, A., 1994. Competition in spoken word recognition: spotting words in other words. Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition 20, 621-638.

Nominal morphology in initial Polish L2: the effect of the L1 and input exposure

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Abstract:

The processing and acquisition of morpho-syntax in the early stages of L2 development have received growing interest in recent SLA research, some sensitivity to form having been found from the very beginning of the acquisitional process (Rast 2008). This partly contrasts with the traditional view that initial learners tend to privilege meaning over form (VanPatten 2004) and to rely on lexical rather than grammatical information (Bardovi-Harlig 1992); if present at all, morphological variation is not believed to have any functional value (Klein & Perdue 1997). Within this debate, our work aims at a deeper understanding of the processing of Polish nominal morphology in the earliest stages of acquisition, with a focus on the role of the L1 and of specific input properties.

The study is part of the VILLA project (Dimroth et al. 2013), which investigates the initial phases of the acquisition of Polish under fully controlled input conditions. Learners with five different L1s took part in a 14-hour Polish course taught by a native speaker, whose speech was planned, recorded and transcribed. This methodology makes it possible to correlate the development of the learner variety with input properties such as the frequency and context of occurrence of any linguistic element.

In order to find out when and where initial learners first establish an opposition between nominative (NOM) and accusative (ACC) NPs, two tasks were administered to groups of adult German (N= 20), Dutch(N=20), French (N=17) and Italian (N=17) L1 speakers.

A Comprehension test examines how learners interpret argument roles (AGENT vs. PATIENT) in the presence of case marking. In a repetition test, learners were asked to repeat short transitive sentences in Polish as accurately as possible. In both tests, target sentences vary in constituent order (SO vs. OS). The tasks were taken after identical exposure to the input, so that they are fully comparable. Each was administered twice, namely after 9 hours (T1) and 13:30 hours (T2) of exposure to the input.

By correlating the results of the two tests, we can draw an overall picture of the learners' morphosyntactic competence in comprehension and repetition (Saturno, Latos & Watorek 2015).

The results highlight several tendencies common to all groups, such as higher scores in comprehension than repetition, a preference for NOM as an invariable word-form, and minimal scores in the repetition of OS targets, most probably due to perceptual factors (Saturno 2015). Accuracy scores for all groups improve from T1 to T2, suggesting a beneficial effect of further, albeit limited exposure to the input. Cross-linguistically, a significant effect of the L1 was found, French learners performing significantly worse than the other groups. It is hypothesised that such differences may be linked to the L1 phonology, and specifically to stress position. Crucially, French differs from all other L1s in having fixed stress; in addition, its pattern (stressed final syllable) is not compatible with that of Polish (stressed penultimate syllable), which may hamper word segmentation and hence the retrieval of morphological information.

Does audiovisual contextualization of L2 idioms enhance students' comprehension and retention?

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Keywords: Idiom context audiovisual

Abstract:

The positive effect of a supportive written context on comprehension and retention when faced with a previously unknown idiomatic expression is today an indisputable fact, especially if relevant clues are given in close proximity of the item in question (Nation 2001). Research has also shown that giving learners a chance of visualizing the meaning of an idiom by offering them its source domain and/or by elaborating etymologically, i.e. providing a mental picture in addition to the spoken/written form (referred to as dual coding), seems to enhance comprehension and retention even further, especially if the idiom is of a more transparent kind (Boers, Demecheleer & Eyckmans 2004). For example, by explaining that walk the plank has a maritime origin and a canary in a coal mine comes from the time when canaries were kept in cages to warn miners if gas was leaking out at which point the canaries succumbed immediately, learners' comprehension and retention have been shown to increase.

The present study aims to investigate whether contextualization of an audiovisual kind could help increase comprehension and retention of not only comparatively transparent items, such as wear one's heart on one's sleeve, but of more opaque ones too, e.g. mum's the word. 40 Swedish first-term university students studying English as part of their education to become middle-school teachers participated in the investigation, which tested 24 idioms, all of which were ascertained to be previously unknown to the informants. While half of the learners were subjected to a test in which they were asked to watch scenes from various TV programmes, each scene including one idiomatic expression in a supportive context, the remaining 20 students, as a point of reference, were only offered written contexts, though equally supportive. Immediately after these sessions, both groups were given the same idioms in a decontextualized form (but in a different order) and asked to give their meaning. After five weeks, finally, the students were subjected to yet another decontextualized comprehension test (the same items but again in a different order). In both post-tests, the informants were also asked to evaluate their comprehension and retention.

Since research has shown that mastery of idioms in one's L1 correlates to a great extent with a person's ability to comprehend idioms in an L2 (Karlsson 2012), all the informants were also asked to take a test focusing on idioms (of varying transparency, but with approximately the same total frequency as the L2 idioms) in their L1. The result on this test is thus seen to indicate each student's potential for understanding and memorizing various idiomatic expressions from a more general perspective.

Preliminary results clearly show that audiovisual contextualization indeed has a positive effect on learners' retention of not only transparent items but also of those that are quite diffuse in character. In addition, preliminary results also show that those learners' who were able to recall most meanings were those who had a propensity for idiom comprehension in their L1.

Exploring perceived comprehensibility and actual comprehension in English as a lingua franca

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Keywords: accentedness: comprehensibility: English proficiency: Japanese EFL learners

Abstract:

The importance of teaching and learning English as a lingua franca has been recognized by many scholars and educators in ELT (e.g., Canagarajah, 1999). English language teaching practices need to keep pace, particularly in such Expanding Circle countries as Japan, where a model of instruction is primarily American English, and where linguistically homogenous students have few opportunities to encounter diverse English. Individual educators around the world, on the other hand, are beginning to raise students' awareness of English varieties, offer models of what different varieties sound like, and show how lexical or syntactic patterning vary (Jenkins, 2006; Murata & Jenkins, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2011). Yet, how to teach English in order to ensure comprehensibility among interlocutors from different L1 backgrounds is yet to be explored.

There are two concepts that are closely related to understanding accented English: i.e., intelligibility and comprehensibility. While these two terms are sometimes used interchangeably, Smith and Nelson (1985) defined intelligibility as word/utterance recognition and comprehensibility as the understanding of word/utterance meaning. Derwing and Munro (1995) further defined comprehensibility as a listener's perception of how difficult it is to understand an utterance and the difficulty is measured using a Likert scale. The present study specifically focuses on comprehensibility of diverse English at the perceptual level as operationalized by Derwing and Munro, as well as actual comprehension assessed through a traditional style listening test.

The study explores the relationships among perceived accentedness, perceived comprehensibility, and general English proficiency, all of which are closely related to listening to ELF. The research questions are (1) whether perceived comprehensibility is a good indicator of actual comprehension, (2) whether both higher and lower proficiency students perceive similar accentedness degrees toward the same utterances, and (3) whether perceived accentedness affects actual comprehension at every proficiency level. The participants are 100 Japanese EFL students from varying proficiency levels. They were asked to take a listening comprehension test recorded in several Outer Circle English accents, and evaluate comprehensibility and accentedness of the speakers while responding to given statements by a seven-point rating scale. The findings of this study will answer an important pedagogical question as to which proficiency level better suits for introducing multiple English accents, while contributing to wide discussions of comprehensibility in world varieties of English.

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L2 acquisition of grammatical meaning and the language classroom

Heather Marsden[1], Neal Snape[2], Noriaki Yusa[3], Mari Umeda[4], John Wiltshire[5], Kook-Hee Gil[6], Melinda Whong[7], Elena Shimanskaya[8], Roumyana Slabakova[9], Makiko Hirakawa[10], Marie Endo[11], Mayumi Shubuya[12], Ros Mitchell[13]

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Keywords: L2 acquisition, meaning, semantics, language teaching, linguistic approaches

Abstract:

Grammatical meaning, which involves a range of linguistic domains including discourse, semantics, syntax, and prosody, is currently an important focus in theory-driven research into second/foreign language (L2) acquisition. Findings include evidence that the ease or difficulty of acquisition of a given property of the target language may depend on the linguistic domains involved in that property. For example, phenomena that involve the interface between syntax and discourse, (such as when to use and when to omit subjects in Spanish) are often acquired only by the most advanced learners, if at all, whereas phenomena involving the integration of syntax and semantics are more readily acquirable, though not unproblematic (e.g., Serratrice et al 2009; Slabakova 2008; Sorace 2005; Sorace & Filiaci 2006; a.o.). It is only recently that attempts have been made to begin to articulate such findings beyond the field of generative linguistics (e.g., Whong, Gil & Marsden 2013), and their potential benefits in terms of approaches to the language classroom have not yet been widely explored. Likewise, insights from the language classroom are rarely incorporated into linguistic research, even though the language classroom provides input that shapes classroom learners' knowledge of meaning in their L2.

This colloquium brings together research where advances have been made — despite the prevailing trend — in bridging the gap between formal linguistic L2 acquisition research and the practice of language teaching. The colloquium addresses the following question:

How can theoretical SLA findings on meaning be exploited in the language classroom?

Four papers are included, and each addresses this question by focusing on a different grammatical meaning phenomenon in L2 acquisition. Paper 1 is an intervention study that investigates the effect of providing instruction and practice on the grammatical meanings of articles in L2 English; Paper 2 compares textbook instruction on the English quantifier any with L2 English learners' behaviour on any, and argues for a role for instruction about semantic negation in textbooks; Paper 3 investigates object pronoun clitics in L2 French, and proposes that French teachers of English-speaking learners could benefit from understanding that their difficulty lies in a semantic mismatch between the French clitics and English pronouns; Paper 4 looks at L2 acquisition of the linear order of adjectives in English, which follows from a meaning-based hierarchy of adjective types. It compares L2 English learners who received explicit instruction about adjective order with learners who went on an English study abroad programme but did not receive instruction on adjective order, to find out whether instruction or immersion facilitates lasting development in this domain. Each paper is allotted 20 minutes within the colloquium with an additional 5 minutes for questions. The remaining 20 minutes are divided into a 5 minute introduction to the colloquium, and a 15-minute discussion, led by an invited discussant.

Do SLA findings on meaning translate to the L2 classroom? The case of articles

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Abstract:

Over the last decade there has been extensive interest in the second language (L2) acquisition of English articles, in particular, definiteness and specificity (Ionin, Ko & Wexler, 2004) and genericity (Snape, 2013). These SLA findings on meaning are only just starting to be exploited in language classroom research. Snape and Yusa (2013) included upper-intermediate groups for a small-scale study where half of the learners received instruction in definiteness, specificity and genericity and the other half did not, after completing pre-tests in the form of a forced choice elicitation task and an acceptability judgment task. The results showed that despite little improvement in generics there was some progress by the instructed group on -definite, +specific uses of *a*:

1. -definite, +specific (correct article is *a*)
   In an airport, in a crowd of people who are meeting arriving passengers
   Man: Excuse me, do you work here?
   Security guard: Yes.
   Man: In that case, perhaps you could help me. I am trying to find (a, the, -)
   red-haired girl; *I think that she flew in on Flight 239.*

The authors suggest too little instruction time, participants' proficiency level and language of instruction may have contributed to limited understanding of the concepts definiteness, specificity and genericity.

The current study aims at addressing the imbalance between SLA findings and instruction. We recruited upper-intermediate and advanced adult Japanese learners of English. We enlisted 21 learners for the instruction group and 16 learners for the control (non-instruction) group. Unlike Snape and Yusa (2013), we only used acceptability judgment tasks for pre- and post-tests. Participants were asked to rate the acceptability of generic sentences and ±definite and ±specific sentences on a scale of 1-4 in relation to a context. Instruction began for the instruction group the day after the pre-test. The instruction group received 9 weeks of instruction in article use and choice. Each week participants received a 60-minute class conducted in Japanese, with handouts and exercises in English. Post-test 1 was given out to all participants after 3 weeks of instruction on generics; post-test 2 was administered again to all participants at the end of the instruction period; post-test 3 was delayed and given to all participants at the start of a new semester to see whether participants had retained any of the instruction they received. The pre-test results show that the instruction and control groups performed similarly in all conditions. The three post-tests show that the instruction group had improved in their article ratings for ±definite and ±specific and generic sentences in comparison with the control group. We believe our results demonstrate that linguistically-oriented explanations with activities work for complex areas like article semantics when given to highly proficient L2 learners over a prolonged period of time. Furthermore, we found that for language teachers, the theoretical SLA research findings need to be made simple enough for teachers and students to grasp and likewise in SLA research the tasks need to be carefully designed so learners are not forced into choices that they may not typically make.

The meaning of negation in classroom instruction

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Abstract:

This paper investigates the relationship between what English language textbooks teach in relation to a specific linguistic phenomenon, and what language learners know. The phenomenon selected for investigation is the distribution of the quantifier *any*, which is considerably more complex than textbooks (perhaps quite reasonably) show. Typically, textbooks indicate that *any* should be used in questions and in negated sentences (e.g. (1a), (2a)). However, formal linguistic analysis shows that it is *negative meaning*, and not just negation in the form of the morpheme not, that plays a key role in licensing *any*. This is illustrated in (3a), (4a), where there is no overt negator, but the words *deny* and *hardly* are semantically negative and therefore license *any*, in contrast to (3b) and (4b) where the verb or adverb are not semantically negative and *any* is not grammatical.

1. a. Do you want any cake? / Does anyone want any cake? (Questions)

   b. *Jenny wants any cake. (Cf. Jenny wants some cake.) (Affirmative Declaratives)

2. a. Jenny doesn't want any cake. (*Not+any*)

   b. *Anyone doesn't want (a/the/any) cake. (*Any+not*)

3. a. Jenny denies that she ate any cake. (Negative Factives)

   b. * Jenny thinks that she ate any cake. (Non-negative Factives)

4. a. Jenny hardly ate any cake. (Negative adverbs)

   b. *Jenny probably ate any cake. (Non-negative adverbs)

An acceptability judgement task containing four tokens each of the structures in (1a– 4b) was conducted with Najdi-Arabic-speaking learners of English who were enrolled on English programmes at a university in Saudi Arabia, and who had not lived in an English- speaking country for any significant amount of time. Examination of teaching materials confirmed that these learners had had exposure to the generalization about using any in questions and with negation. Results from 20 advanced, 28 high intermediate and 24 low intermediate participants show that all three groups have the highest accuracy in judging those sentence types that are included in teaching materials, (1a) and (2a). The advanced learners (but not the other two groups) also attain high accuracy in rejecting (1b) and in statistically significant differentiation between the grammatical (3a, 4a) and ungrammatical (3b, 4b). Taken together, this suggests that, while the instruction on any in questions seems facilitative, instruction on negation may lead learners to overgeneralize, leading to acceptance of (2b) (which persists even in advanced learners) and rejection of (3a, 4a).

Formal linguistic accounts of the distribution of *any* (e.g., Chierchia 2013, Giannakidou 2008) appeal to the notion of negation as a semantic concept rather than just an overt marker *not*, and argue that *any* must be under the scope of a trigger of semantic negation. Not is a trigger, but so are *deny, hardly*, and other semantically negative words. We propose that teaching materials could draw on this insight and introduce negation as a wider concept, incorporating negative meaning in addition to the grammatical function of *not*. This could facilitate earlier acquisition of the distribution of *any*, without even necessarily devoting more teaching time specifically to *any* itself.

What English speakers should be taught in order to re-assemble French object pronominal clitics

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Abstract:

It is now well established that different populations of language learners experience difficulties with French pronominal clitics (Jakubowicz et al. 1998, Grüter 2005, Herschensohn 2004). Explanations have focused on syntactic and phonological deficiencies; however, L2 acquisitional difficulties may also lie in the mismatch of morphosyntactic and semantic features of the L1 and L2 pronominal systems. Taking into account such feature differences, this presentation builds on a new study investigating how L1-L2 feature mismatches affect the acquisition of French 3 rd person object clitics by native speakers of English.

Theoretical predictions

English pronouns encode [**human**] (him/her vs. it) and **biological gender** (him vs her), whereas French accusative clitics (le/la) only encode **grammatical gender**. The Feature Reassembly Hypothesis (FRH, Lardiere 2009) predicts that L2 learners will initially struggle to disassociate biological gender from the [±human] feature.

Tasks

Both online and offline measures were used. A picture selection task manipulating gender and [±human] features tested comprehension of le/la. Participants (L2 learners (N=86) and NSs controls (N=43)) were asked to help the character Nicolas choose a correct referent for a clitic. Test sentences were preceded by a context and followed by three pictures of potential referents and a distractor. An online self-paced reading task (moving window, non-cumulative) was designed to test sensitivity to gender violations. Participants read a short context where two potential referents (human or inanimate) were introduced, but only one was discourse-prominent. Test sentences as in (1) contained a clitic whose gender either matched or did not match the discourse- prominent referent.

1. When Margot was little, her favorite toys were a **train (m)** and a **car (f)**. But later she understood that the **train (m)** was more amusing.

Voilà pourquoi	Margot	**le** (congruous) / **la** (incongruous)	dessine	avec admiration
That's why	Margot	it		draws	with admiration

Results

In the **picture selection task**, the intermediate and beginner learners made more gender errors when the referents were inanimate than when they were animate, suggesting that they initially map the la/le clitics to human referents, the equivalents of him/her, and only later extend grammatical gender to inanimate referents.

In the **self-paced reading task**, native speakers were significantly faster when clitics matched the discourse-prominent object than when they didn't. The advanced group were also sensitive to the mismatch, but only with human objects. The findings of the two tasks taken together suggest that even when they recognize clitic grammatical gender offline, even the most advanced L2 learners still process grammatical gender in a non-native way.

Implications for teaching

Our findings confirmed the FRH prediction that the initial reassembly of [±human] feature presents a substantial hurdle to learners. In order to extend the le/la attribution to inanimate nouns, and to uncouple the grammatical gender from the [±human] feature, they have to be systematically exposed to sentences and contexts in which le/la refer to things, not people. We also recommend explicit grammatical discussion in French textbooks, in the belief that some adult learners may find explicit grammar explanations beneficial. In any event, teachers should be aware of this acquisition hurdle.

Explicit Instruction in L2 English Adjective Ordering to L1 Japanese Speakers

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Abstract:

This paper investigates whether prenominal adjective ordering in English can be acquired by Japanese speakers as a result of explicit instruction in classroom in Japan vs. natural exposure in the US, and whether the effect, if any, can be maintained. It has been claimed that English observes direct modification for prenominal adjectives, which exhibit rigid ordering, whereas Japanese observes indirect modification so that adjective ordering is free (Sproat and Shih 1991). Laenzlinger (2005) proposes the hierarchical order of adjectives in (1). Adjectives included in QUANTIF to MEASURE are referred to as Non-Absolute (NA) and those in NON-SCALAR PHYSICAL PROPERTY as Absolute (A).

1. **NA** [QUANTIF ordinal > cardinal] > [SPEAK-ORIENT subjective comment > evidential] > [SCALAR PHYSICAL PROPERTY size > length > height > speed > depth > width] > [MEASURE weight > temperature > wetness > age] >**A** [NON-SCALAR PHYSICAL PROPERTY shape > color > nationality/ origin > material]

(Laenzlinger, 2005, p. 650, (14))

Previous studies suggest NA adjectives require more complicated calculation than A adjectives, as meaning of NA adjectives is often relative (e.g., a big ant vs. a big dog) (O'Grady 2005, Sharpe et al. 1998). Therefore, we predict that NA adjectives are more difficult to acquire than A adjectives.

The present study examines the effectiveness and endurance of explicit instruction on the one hand and extended exposure to English in a natural setting on the other. We administered the same task to two groups of Japanese learners: Instructed (n=13), Natural Exposure (n=13) as well as native English speakers (n=13). Our task was a judgment task with audio and visual stimuli. Participants listened and chose one of the two adjective combinations as an appropriate description of the picture given. The instructed group attended teaching sessions on adjective ordering (three hours in total) between Tests 1 and 2, and took Test 3 three months after the instruction. Teaching included instruction on semantic properties of A vs. NA adjectives and exercises requiring learners to describe objects with multiple adjectives. We stressed that A adjectives are closer to the head noun than NA adjectives. The Natural Exposure group participated in a study-abroad program in the US for 5 weeks between Tests 1 and 2, attending intensive English classes while home-staying at English- speaking families.

Our results showed the effectiveness of explicit instruction for the instructed group. The instructed group made bigger improvements from Test-1 to Test-2 than the Natural Exposure group on all test types except NA-NA, and the improvements were largely sustained at Test-3. On NA-NA, accuracy increased in both groups but the increase only showed a marginal trend toward statistical significance (p<0.1) (NA-NA: Instructed [Test-1: 65%, Test-2: 81%, Test-3: 79%], Natural Exposure [Test-1: 56%, Test-2: 75%, Test-3: tba <testing scheduled early March 2015>]). Individual analyses on those who made correct responses consistently further confirmed the overall results. We suggest that targeted classroom instruction can facilitate faster development in the area of adjective ordering than natural exposure, but that natural exposure also has an effect to a certain extent.

New approaches to cross-linguistic influence

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Abstract:

The papers in the proposed colloquium all consider questions crucial to a better understanding of cross-linguistic influence or transfer in bilinguals and L2 learners. There is still a great deal of confusion around the notions of transfer, interference, cross-linguistic influence and convergence. It is unclear to what extent these terms refer to phenomena that can be empirically distinguished from each other, and if so, which methods are most appropriate for investigating the different phenomena. The three papers focus on important issues:how the notion of transfer came into linguistic research, how statistical learning may or may not involve the native language, and how cognitive systems may or may not interact when categories in two languages are not fully congruent. Considering as it does the origins of the term transfer (and related topics), the first paper looks closely at the historiography of SLA, and it challenges several assumptions in conventional SLA historiography (e.g. the often-repeated claim that the notion of transfer has its origins in behaviourist psychology). The role of statistical learning in SLA, which is the broad theme of the second paper, must be considered not only in terms of how frequent a language structure is but also in terms of how frequent a corresponding structure in the native language or some other source language is as well; even so, the results of the second paper do not show a strong influence of frequency of motion verbs in L1 Chinese on the use of motion verbs in L2 English. The third presentation offers evidence of L1-L2 conceptual transfer, reverse transfer and the effect of linguistic relativity. It shows modifications in the cognitive systems of learners, which demonstrates the interaction between two languages (French and Spanish) that encode grammatical gender and a language (English) with natural gender marking. The colloquium brings together historical, corpus-linguistics and experimental (neuro-scientific) approaches to transfer. The general aim of this colloquium is to explore these approaches to cross-linguistic influence and stimulate discussion around them.

Was there really ever a Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis?

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Abstract:

Although the term *Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH)* is widely used among researchers in historical accounts of the growth of SLA as a field, the term itself is both nebulous and misleading. When the term is invoked, typical claims about the history of the idea of cross-linguistic influence (a.k.a. language transfer) include the following: 1) It was Robert Lado who formulated the CAH; 2) the notion of language transfer has its origins in behaviorist psychology; 3) Uriel Weinreich introduced the term transfer into linguistic research. Not every researcher makes each of these claims, but each is easily found in historical discussions, even though none of them is true. It is, however, accurate to say that the term CAH had a fairly clear meaning when it was formulated by Ronald Wardhaugh in a 1970 article in *TESOL Quarterly*. Even so, subsequent researchers have appropriated the term for their own purposes (often ignoring Wardhaugh's formulation), and different researchers have quite different understandings of what CAH is supposed to mean.

My paper will offer several examples of the varying characterizations and claims about the so-called CAH found in both recent and earlier discussions; the examples will be followed by a brief history of the notion of transfer since the nineteenth century. Among the facts to be discussed are these:

- The use of the term *transfer* probably arose as translations of German terms, *hinübertragen* and *ubertragen*, the former going back at least to the 1830's and the latter to the 1880's.

- The earliest known uses of *transfer* to denote cross-linguistic influence did not come from behaviorist psychology but rather from two American linguists in the 1880's, William Dwight Whitney and Aaron Marshall Elliott, both of whom had studied in Germany.

- The use of *transfer* by Edward Sapir in the 1920's indicates continuity between the 1880's and the 1950's, the decade that saw the publication of Weinreich's *Languages in Contact* and Lado's *Linguistics across Cultures. Cultures*.

- Lado was heavily influenced by Weinreich, who himself was influenced by a lengthy study of transfer published in 1884 looking at influences from L1 Slavic languages on L2 varieties of German and L2 Italian. The author of the study, Hugo Schuchardt, is arguably the first SLA researcher to investigate L1 → L2 transfer in depth.

- The term *Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis* came into widespread use only after the 1970 article by Wardhaugh. In that sense, the term is anachronistic when it is ascribed to Lado or his mentor Charles Fries.

The final part of the paper will offer some brief cautions about risks incurred when the term CAH is employed in teaching postgraduate students.

Can Classroom Learners use Statistical Learning ? A new perspective on motion event construal in a second language

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Abstract:

In this paper we argue that L2 learners make use of statistical learning to restructure their second language grammars in the domain of motion. Statistical learning is a specific type of incidental learning whereby learners exploit statistical cues in the input (Boyd & Goldberg, 2011; Goldberg, 2006; Saffran, Newport, Aslin, Tunick and Barrueco 1997). Although it has been known for some time that L2 learners are sensitive to the frequency with which words are used in the L2 (Schmitt & Dunham 1999), statistical learning has hardly been investigated in studies of the ways in which L2 learners acquire the target-like expression of motion (but see Treffers-Daller & Calude, in press). The current study aims to find out to what extent classroom learners are able to adjust the frequency with which they use motion verbs to the frequencies with which they are used by native speakers of the L2. We assume that L2 learners start using motion verbs with the same frequency as in their L1 (covert transfer, Mougeon, Nadasdi & Rehner, 2005), but adjust these frequencies in the course of L2 learning to the frequencies in the L2 input. In other words, the frequencies in the L1 and the L2 act as push and pull factors in the acquisition of motion event construal in a L2.

The learner data come from a corpus of stories told by 30 Chinese learners of L2 English with intermediate English proficiency and 30 Chinese learners with high English proficiency. Information about the frequency of motion verbs in the students' L1 and L2 was obtained from the CELEX database (English), and from a large online database of Chinese (ZhTenTen11), which was accessed through Sketchengine interface, as well as from native speakers of either language who told the same stories. For both learner groups very similar Poisson regression models emerged which showed that the students' use of motion verbs was more strongly aligned with the L2 target than with the L1 source, but it also showed that the advanced learners were not significantly better at approaching the L2 target than the intermediate learners. We interpret these findings to mean that statistical learning of motion verbs did indeed take place, and that there was little evidence for covert transfer from the L1. We discuss implications for theories of statistical learning in L2 acquisition.

Linguistic relativity and Bilingualism. Behavioural and neural evidence from the domain of grammatical gender

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Abstract:

The linguistic relativity hypothesis states that speakers of different languages think differently in categorical perception tasks involving colours, objects, events, etc. (Lucy, 1997; Wolff & Holmes, 2010). If so, which language do bilinguals draw upon when categorizing stimuli? Here we explore this question in the domain of grammatical gender. Recent studies demonstrate that a language's grammatical gender system can influence object categorization, as indexed by the voice attribution task where participants are asked to assign a male or female voice to pictured objects (Sera et al., 1994; Kurinski & Sera, 2011). In one study using a longitudinal design we demonstrate that voice attribution patterns in English learners of French L2 were influenced by French grammatical gender, and this influence was most apparent as proficiency in the L2 increased, and for stimuli that participants had been cumulatively exposed to in previous experimental sessions. Importantly, these results reveal that the previously established shift in voice attribution patterns may be underpinned by repeated exposure to previously seen stimuli, suggesting a likely role for statistical learning in accounting for linguistic relativity effects in L2 learners.

In a second study, we presented Spanish-English bilinguals and native speakers of English with triplets of pictures in an all-in-English language experimental context while measuring event-related brain potentials (ERPs). Participants were asked to indicate by means of a button press whether the third picture of a triplet belonged to the same or different semantic category as the first two. Unbeknownst to the participants, the grammatical gender of the third picture name in Spanish was the same as that of the preceding two pictures in half of the trials, and different from the preceding two pictures in the other half of the trials. Behavioural results showed that semantic categorisation in bilinguals was almost identical to that of English monolinguals, suggesting that bilinguals have a shared representation for these objects. No measurable effect of gender (in)consistency in bilinguals was found. However, ERPs revealed not only the expected semantic priming effect in both groups, but also a different brainwave pattern, modulated by gender inconsistency in Spanish-English bilinguals, exclusively. These results provide neural evidence for spontaneous and unconscious access to grammatical gender in participants functioning in a context requiring no access to such information. Taken together, results from both studies present evidence for L1-to-L2 conceptual transfer, but also reverse transfer from the L2 to the L1, providing support for linguistic relativity effects in the grammatical domain.

The effect of assessment for learning techniques on young learners' acquisition of vocabulary knowledge

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Keywords: lexical acquisition, vocabulary strength, assessment for learning, AfL, young learners, lexical competence

Abstract:

Researching the development of English language proficiency with young learners (YLs) has gained currency as a younger age of learning English as a second language has been introduced in a range of countries around the world (Enever, 2011; Eurydice, 2005). Though there is a substantial body of research literature on the acquisition of vocabulary (Broady, 2008; Schmitt, 2008), these studies reveal a paucity of research in which the development of YLs' lexical competence has been investigated. While the use of assessment for learning (AfL) is reported to have profound effects on learning outcomes in mainstream education (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Wiliam et al., 2004) there is little research investigating the impact AfL would have on the development of vocabulary in a second language among YLs.

A recent mixed-methods study in the Netherlands aimed at filling this gap. The quantitative study used a quasi-experimental design to examine the effects of AfL on learners' acquisition of L2 vocabulary knowledge. The 97 participants were Dutch native speakers in four matched classes in the first form of secondary education. (Two classes formed the experimental group, the other two classes the control group). The strength of the learners' vocabulary knowledge was tested, before and after the intervention. Adapted from Laufer et al. (2004), the test was designed for YLs with lexical items from their curriculum. The AfL techniques used in the experimental group created opportunities for learners to engage with lexical items in different (meaningful) ways (cf. Broady, 2008) promoting "depth of processing" (cf. Craik & Lockhart, 1972). Learner diaries and the teacher's reflective journal comprised the qualitative data.

Preliminary results of the study clearly suggest that young learners are able to use AfL techniques and that it benefits their development of vocabulary knowledge. Learners in the intervention group had higher scores for their tests of vocabulary strength, and results from the qualitative study indicate that learners believed that the use of AfL promoted the "depth of processing" of the vocabulary. These findings have significant implications for classroom teachers and for teacher training programmes.

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Eurydice. (2005). Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe. Brussels: European Commission.

Laufer, B., Elder, C., Hill, K., & Congdon, P. (2004). Size and strength: do we need both to measure vocabulary knowledge? Language Testing, 21(2), 202-226.

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The development and validation of a practical test of word recognition for English learners

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Keywords: Word recognition, English learners, testing, dimensions of lexical skill

Abstract:

Word recognition is a critical skill in fluent reading (e.g. Hulstijn, 2001). Native speakers of English can recognize single words in about one tenth of a second. Learners are somewhat slower, but this difference is difficult to measure without sensitive equipment. This presentation will provide a brief overview of a new testing tool of high-frequency words that we claim has a useful role to play in L2 vocabulary research with EFL learners. In our approach, words are hidden in nonsense letter strings, and this slows recognition speed to a level that personal computers can easily measure. Learners are assessed on the basis of native speakers' reaction time norms. We will describe the development and validation of this tool and the measurement principles that underlie it. Secondly, we will describe an experiment using the test to investigate learners at different levels of proficiency who were engaged in a full-time English programme, with an explicit vocabulary learning component. The treatment group made significant gains in word recognition scores, whereas a control group which was not involved in the word-learning activity showed no gain in scores. That is, our test appears able to reflect changes in groups, based on proficiency and learning-activity differences.

Specifically, the test reflects changes in lexical accessibility, which are weakly linked to general proficiency. The Advanced group made the biggest gain followed in turn by the Intermediate and the Basic group.

Further, the evidence for the effect of vocabulary learning on word-recognition ability is not clear. A weak correlation was seen between the reported gains in vocabulary size on the on-line system over nine months and gains in Q_Lex scores (r=0.25).

These results do not support the idea that increasingly large vocabulary size leads to better accessibility on the high-frequency vocabulary items. In particular, this result does not match the claims of Laufer and Nation (2001) that a larger vocabulary leads to greater accessibility. However, these results do match the finding by Miralpeix and Meara (2014) that there is no consistent relationship between vocabulary size and accessibility skill. They also claim the relationship is not random, and that also appears to be reflected in our data. The result lends some support to the idea that accessibility might be an independent dimension of vocabulary knowledge.

Finally, we will introduce our new online version of this test, and invite attendees to consider exploring it in their own research as a means of gathering further validation of the format.

Hulstijn, J.H. (2001). Intentional and incidental second language vocabulary learning: a reappraisal

of elaboration, rehearsal and automaticity. In: P. Robinson (Ed.), Cognition and Second Language Instruction. 258-286. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Laufer, B. & Nation. P. (2001). Passive vocabulary size and speed of meaning recognition:

Are they related? EUROSLA Yearbook 1(2001), 7-28. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Miralpeix,I. & Meara, P.M. (2014). Knowledge of the Written Word. In: J. Milton & T. Fitzpatrick

(Eds.), Dimensions of Vocabulary Knowledge. 30-44. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

The effect of erroneous guesses on contextual word learning in English as a second language

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Keywords: vocabulary, contextual word learning, errors

Abstract:

It is common practice for language teachers to encourage their students to actively guess the meanings of unknown words from context during reading. This approach is less time consuming than looking up words in a dictionary and less disruptive to the flow of reading. However both native and second/foreign language (L2) readers may guess word meanings incorrectly. How damaging are these incorrect inferences in vocabulary learning? In studies conducted with memory impaired (Clare & Jones, 2008; Middleton & Schwartz, 2012) and normal native-speaker participants, children and adults, results are inconsistent (Bridger & Mecklinger, 2014; Kornell, Hays, & Bjork, 2009; Warmington & Hitch, 2013; Warmington, Hitch, & Gathercole, 2013), with both errorless and errorful approaches found to be more beneficial in different studies, depending on the nature of the tasks, choice of materials, learning conditions and measures of learning. Few studies have investigated the effect of errorless learning in the L2 context, but Trenkic & Warmington (2014) found an advantage for errorless over errorful/effortful word learning, regardless of whether the participants' guesses were correct or incorrect. The present study adds to the knowledge in this area by examining the effect of correct vs. incorrect guessing of novel L2 (English) word meanings from context by adult higher-intermediate and advanced Chinese-English bilinguals.

The study participants learned 48 novel English vocabulary items, actively guessing their meanings from context and recording their guesses. The participants encountered each novel vocabulary item in three different supportive sentence contexts. The first encounter with the critical item (accompanied by an audio recording) served as a familiarisation phase, and students were not required to record their guesses. During the second and third contextual encounters, participants had to write down an inferred meaning of the critical item. At the end of the learning cycle, participant had a chance to see the critical words with their definitions and to verify their guesses. A word dictation task (testing the knowledge of form) and a meaning generation task (testing the ability to retrieve meaning from form) were used as immediate measures of learning. A speeded lexical decision task was used as a delayed test of word knowledge, on the following day. The three measures tested whether errors in inferring word meanings from context modulated different facets of word knowledge – knowledge of spelling, form-meaning mapping, and fluency and accuracy of access to word knowledge. The data were analysed using mixed effects modeling, with participants and items treated as crossed-random effects. The experimental data analysis is supplemented with students' views on learning L2 words through contextual guessing.

The discussion will focus on the effect of guess correctness on the learning outcome, i.e., whether incorrectly guessing the meaning of a novel L2 word inhibits its learning, and whether this effect is larger when incorrect guessing occurs on an earlier or a later encounter with the novel word. The results of this study are discussed in relation to the Lexical Quality Framework (Perfetti & Hart, 2002; Perfetti, 2007). Arguments for and against errorless learning are considered.

Flow in the Foreign Language Classroom

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Abstract:

The present study investigates inter-individual variation in the frequency of flow experiences in the Foreign Language Classroom. A total of 1740 current FL learners from around the world provided feedback via an on-line questionnaire (1287 females, 449 males, mean age: 24). Flow is the mental state of operation when people perform an activity in which they are so fully immersed and involved, with such focus and enjoyment, that they forget everything around them. When members of a group reach a state of flow they experience spontaneous joy and it strengthens bonds with other group members. It is described as the ultimate experience in harnessing the emotions in the service of performing and learning (Csikszentmihalyi 1990). The questionnaire contained 4 items asking participants what percentage of classroom time they were in a state of positive flow (losing sense of time, being absorbed, fulfilled and happy) and 4 items reflecting negative flow (being distracted, frustrated, paralysed, unengaged). A final open question asked about experiences of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE) and flow in the FL classroom.

Statistical analyses revealed that FLE had a small but significant effect on positive flow, but no effect on negative flow. Surprisingly, foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) boosted positive flow episodes at low levels of FLE, but hindered positive flow at intermediate and advanced levels of FLE. In other words, FL learners who did not enjoy FL classes got "in the zone" thanks to FLCA, but FLCA was a drag for those who enjoyed their FL learning. Both FLE and FLCA had a small but significant effect on negative flow. A higher degree of multilingualism, high FL mastery, high relative standing in the group, higher education level, older age group, females and North and South American participants scored higher on percentage of time in positive flow. The same variables were inversely linked to percentage of time in negative flow. Statistical patterns are complemented by participants' observations of flow states in the FL classroom. The findings are interpreted in the light of the recent developments in Positive Psychology and Second Language Acquisition (Gregersen, Mercer & MacIntyre to appear, Gregersen & MacIntyre 2014).

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience. Harper & Row.

Gregersen, T., & MacIntyre, P.D. (2014). Capitalizing on Individual Differences: From Premise to Practice. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Gregersen, T., S. Mercer & P. MacIntyre (to appear). (eds.) Positive psychology in SLA. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Willingness to Communicate as the Predictor of Observed L2 Use in the Classroom

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Abstract:

Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in an L2, which is widely believed to facilitate the acquisition of the target language, has recently been extensively investigated (Gallagher, 2013; MacIntyre, Burns, & Jessome, 2011; Cao, 2011). WTC is assumed to generate a driving force within learners to look for opportunities for communication in the target language; therefore, higher WTC is generally associated with higher L2 use (MacIntyre et al, 1998), though it has not been empirically tested. In Dörnyei and Kormo's (2000) study, authors found no significant correlations between L2 oral performance and either L1 WTC or any social variables among 46 Hungarian students. Although having drawn much positive attention, it is currently unclear whether self-reported L2 WTC is a significant predictor of actual classroom L2 communication. This presentation reports on an attempt to fill this gap by investigating to what degree learners' self-reported L2 WTC predicts actual L2 use in the classroom.

A group of 372 Japanese university EFL learners majoring in science and liberal arts subjects participated in the study. Students' oral performance data were collected three times during the group discussions in one academic semester. The number of words each student produced during each discussion was counted. Based on the results of previous WTC studies (MacIntyre et al., 1998; Yashima et al., 2004) and Dörnyei's (2005; 2009) Motivational Self System, a hypothesized structural model was constructed integrating four variables; motivation, ideal L2 self, self-reported L2 WTC, and observed L2 use, and tested with structural equation modeling.

The results suggested that self-reported L2 WTC predicted actual L2 use (β = .68), suggesting that overall, students' willingness to communicate was manifested in actual L2 communication with their peers in the classroom. Communicative tasks are effective in enhancing communicative skills, only if learners actively engage in interactional tasks and produce a certain amount of L2 output, ideally, in proportion to their WTC. In this sense, the result of this study that self-reported L2 WTC predicted actual L2 use in the classroom is of significance. Pedagogical implications of the research findings and implications for language sciences will be discussed.

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition. New York, NY: Routledge.

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), Motivation, language identity and the L2 self (pp. 9-42). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.

Dörnyei, Z., & Kormos, J. (2000). The role of individual and social variables in oral task performance. Language Teaching Research, 4, 275-300.

Gallagher, C. (2013). Willingness to Communicate and Cross-cultural Adaptation: L2 Communication and Acculturative Stress as Transaction. Applied Linguistics, 34 (1), 53-73.

MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A. (1998). Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation. The Modern Language Journal, 82, 545-562.

Exploring "framing" as a feature of Task Based Language Teaching

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Keywords: task based language teaching, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, role play

Abstract:

An important strand of research in the field of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) has aimed to better understand the variables of task-design which render different tasks more or less effective in facilitating L2 acquisition (e.g., Pica et al.1993). The current study aimed to investigate an as-yet little-studied dimension of information exchange, the phenomenon of framing, and its effect on negotiation for meaning (NfM). "Framing" derives from Goffman's (1974) notion of activity frames, the idea that any stretch of human activity is organized by certain rules and principles to which people "fit their actions" (including, crucially, their language). In conversation, the metacommunicative process by which individuals signal what they are doing by speaking is called "framing".

In the current study, eight pairs of students, simultaneously involved in two different role plays, were recorded during a regularly scheduled "English Through Conflict Resolution" class in an American university's intensive English summer program. Four pairs performed the first role-play, as mediators to a conflict, while the other four pairs performed the second role play, as parties in the same conflict. It was hypothesized that the parties would demonstrate a higher level of engagement with more instances of NfM (measured by counting instances of confirmation and comprehension checks, and clarification requests), than the mediators, due to the more invested nature of their role in the dispute. Analyses of transcripts showed that no differences obtain when using traditional measures of NfM. However, a closer textual analysis revealed that framing one's contributions as adversarial (parties) or collaborative (mediators) had a marked impact on 1. the amount and quality of assistance learners provided each other in conversation, with mediators providing more co-constructions, other-corrections and continuers (Foster & Ohta, 2005), and 2. the type of questions produced, with parties asking substantially more content questions, maintaining a highly argumentative dialogue.

L2 Selves, Attitude and Intercultural Contact among Learners of English and Swedish in Finland

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Keywords: L2 Selves, Intercultural Contact, Finland

Abstract:

In recent studies into motivation to learn a second language (L2 motivation), it is proved that intercultural contact with different cultures play critical roles as the factors of L2 motivation. For example, Dörnyei and Csizér (2005) explained intercultural contact as both a means and an end in L2 studies. A longitudinal study in Hungary by Dörnyei et al. (2006) examined the relationships between L2 motivation and intercultural contact with English and other regionally important languages. The comparative study, which targeted those learning English and German as foreign languages in Hungary, observed that the differences in the motivation of the language learners was caused by their levels of intercultural contact and emphasized the importance of such contact (Csizér & Kormos, 2008). This study focuses on how intercultural contact affects learners' L2 selves, since the L2 Motivational Self System including Ideal and Ought-to L2 Self (Dörnyei, 2005, 2009a) accounts for the cultural identity in the socio-dynamic perspective of L2 motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009; Ryan, 2006). As of research sites, Finland is one of the countries that have two official languages as a result of the control under Sweden. Therefore, Swedish continues to be one of the official languages of Finland. However, in the age of globalisation in Europe, the global language, English gained power in Finland and most of the population learn English in compulsory education. Therefore, the main research questions of this study are 1) to investigate the differences of the relationships between L2 selves and intercultural contact depending on target language; and 2) to explore the factors promoting attitudes toward English and Swedish language learning in Finland. This study analyses the result of a questionnaire survey concerning L2 selves, attitudes toward learning English and Swedish, as well as the frequency of having intercultural contacts related to those target languages. Items concerning the frequency of the intercultural contact are based on the result of a preliminary qualitative sampling. In the preliminary sampling, 13 Finnish university students were asked to write about their experiences on intercultural contacts in daily life. Keywords were picked up from the collected written data, and items were then finalised into a form of questionnaire sheet and distributed to 32 Finnish university students in the form of an online survey. Responses to the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively with correlation technique, multiple comparison, and multi-regression analysis. As a result of analyses, the scores of motivational scales and intercultural contact scales, as well as the relationships among those variables differ between English and Swedish with statistical significance and moderate to large effect size. Also, regression analysis showed two different models predicting attitudes toward learning English and Swedish.

Csizér, K., & Kormos, J. (2008). The relationship of intercultural contact and language learning motivation among Hungarian students of English and German. Journal of Multilingual and multicultural Development 29 (1), 30-48. doi:10.2167/jmmd557.0

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How do individual differences mediate learners' receptivity to direct and indirect written corrective feedback?

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Keywords: corrective feedback, individual differences, writing, accuracy

Abstract:

Written corrective feedback (CF) has received much attention over the last decades, in both the fields of (L2) writing and SLA research (e.g., Bitchener & Ferris, 2012). Two of the topics that have been explored quite extensively are the value of error correction for written accuracy development and the relative effectiveness of different CF types (e.g., Van Beuningen, De Jong, & Kuiken, 2012). Most of such CF studies, however, only focused on group results and ignored the fact that some learners benefit more from (a specific type of) written CF than others. A logical next step would be to investigate how learners' receptivity to (different types of) CF is mediated by individual characteristics, such as aptitude or motivation for language learning (e.g., Kormos, 2012). To date, only few studies have dealt with this issue, and the studies that have, only explored the influence of one individual factor in isolation (e.g., Shintani & Ellis, 2015).

The current study tries to fill this gap by conjointly assessing the mediating role of 1) language analytical ability (i.e., a cognitive factor), 2) explicit grammar knowledge (i.e., a knowledge factor), and 3) self-efficacy beliefs, attitudes towards CF, and motivational intensity (i.e., affective factors) in learners' receptivity to two written CF types, that is direct and indirect, unfocused CF. In direct CF, a teacher provides learners with both an indication of their errors and the corresponding correct linguistic forms. In indirect CF, on the other hand, errors are indicated, but it is left to the learner himself to correct them. Unfocused or comprehensive (as opposed to focused or selective) CF involves correction of all errors in learners' writing.

Participants in this classroom-based quasi-experiment were 150 B1-level, (young) adult learners of Dutch, from 10 different classes in 5 multi-ethnic vocational schools. They performed a pre-test writing task (week 1), a revision task (week 2), and a post-test writing task (week 3). Within each class, learners were randomly assigned to one of two groups; the first group received direct, unfocused CF, and the other group obtained indirect, unfocused CF. Error rates were calculated for the writing and revision tasks to measure learners' accuracy development. Moreover, participants were administered tests and questionnaires that tap into the aforementioned individual factors. We performed regression analyses to evaluate the mediating effect these factors have on the accuracy of learners' revised and new writing. This presentation focuses on the findings of the study and discusses the implications it has for teaching practice.

Bitchener, J., & Ferris, D. (2012). Written corrective feedback in second language acquisition and writing. New York: Routledge.

Kormos, J. (2012). The role of individual differences in L2 writing. Journal of Second Language Writing, 21(4), 390-403.

Shintani, N., & Ellis, R. (2015). Does language analytical ability mediate the effect of written feedback on grammatical accuracy in second language writing? System 49, 110-119.

Van Beuningen, C.G., De Jong, N.H., & Kuiken, F. (2012). Evidence on the effectiveness of comprehensive error correction in second language writing. Language Learning 62(1), 1-42.

The role of gender in language learning motivation

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Abstract:

The role of gender in language learning motivation has not been extensively researched, despite the fact that there seem to exist deeply rooted stereotypes suggesting that languages are considered a feminine domain (Norton & Pavlenko, 2004). The few studies from applied linguistics that examined gender reported that indeed female students are more motivated to learn English than their male peers (Bacon & Finneman, 1992; Bartram, 2006; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Ryan, 2009). Sunderland (2004; in Carr & Pauwels, 2005) commented that lack in interest in language learning displayed by boys appears to be widely accepted as 'how it is' and few attempts have been made to critically analyse it (p. 21). Indeed, this appears to be the case in motivational research as the previously quoted studies offered little in the way of explanation of the reported gender differences.

In this study, a mixed-methods approach has been employed in order to examine the role of gender in language learning motivation and proficiency. 599 Polish learners of English aged 15-16 completed a motivational questionnaire, which included scales of the ideal L2 self, self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, instrumental orientation, international orientation, self-efficacy beliefs and English self-concept. Out of 599 participants filling in the motivational questionnaire, 398 completed the Quick Oxford Placement Test. Moreover, 20 students participated in semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data was analysed using factor analysis, MANOVA, t-tests, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), and Wald tests, while the interviews were transcribed and coded.

The results of MANOVA confirmed that there was a significant difference between males and females in terms of their overall motivation (Pillai's trace = .102, F = 7.44, p < .001) and the effect size was moderate (partial eta squared = .102). Furthermore, three significant differences were detected on individual scales, namely ideal L2 self, self-regulation and international orientation. In all cases, female participants scored higher than their male peers. The effect sizes were small. The result of the t-test showed that there was a small significant difference between the scores on the proficiency test according to gender, with female participants scoring higher than their male peers. The SEM models of language learning motivation fitted separately for male and female learners were also found to be significantly different (χ^2 = 592 on 191 df (p < .001)). In particular, the Wald test revealed that the weight of the link between L2 self and intrinsic motivation was significantly stronger in the case of male than female students. The interviewees provided a number of potential reasons behind the higher motivation of female as compared to male learners. Among them were gender differences in employment, perceived maturity, preferred learning styles and perceived difficulty of language studies.

The syntax-semantics interface in SLA: Clause linking in L2 French and English

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Keywords: clause linking, syntactic complexity, crosslinguistic analysis, French, English

Abstract:

This contribution considers the development of clause linking in both French and English as second languages. While clause linking and other indicators of syntactic complexity have been studied extensively, both from a descriptive and from an acquisitional perspective (Diessel & Tomasello 2001, Giacalone Ramat 1999, Benazzo 2004), most studies so far do not offer a unified, theoretically motivated view of clause linking mechanisms as a whole or of their relative distribution in language use. The present contribution proposes a detailed analysis of a wide range of inter- and intraclausal linkage types, focusing not only on the syntactic but equally on the semantic side of clause combination. It states, in particular, that the acquisition of relations between clauses and predicates depends on the relative complexity of the elements combined.

This study classifies clause links according to the framework of Role and Reference Grammar (RRG; Van Valin & LaPolla 1997, Van Valin 2005), a unified theory of language claiming to be universally applicable and emphasizing the interaction of syntax and semantics, which finds itself represented in the case of clausal complexity in the form of a number of hypotheses tested here. In the first place, inter- and intraclausal relations are expected to be of equal syntactic and semantic strength (according to the Interclausal Relations Hierarchy, Van Valin 2005). Where one type of semantic connection can be encoded in different syntactic ways, the first combination to be acquired should be the one where semantic and syntactic strength are more or less equal. At an intra-clausal level (regarding the combination of predicates and their arguments within a single clause), the first junctures to be acquired should be semantically 'strong', whereas the first junctures to arise at the interclausal level (combining multiple clauses into a sentence) should be semantically 'weaker' in nature.

These hypotheses are tested on French and English L2 data, more precisely semi-spontaneous oral retellings (frog stories, Mayer 1969) produced by Belgian adolescents from 11 to 18 years of age, all speakers of Dutch as a native language. Their narratives are compared to those of equally adolescent native speakers of both languages.

Initial results suggest that the proposed match in terms of semantic and syntactic strength is confirmed by the data at hand, and that those linkage types characterized by a syntax-semantics mismatch are indeed acquired at a later stage. The more specific hypotheses regarding the intra- and the interclausal level equally appear to be confirmed, though the range of linkage types used by the learners is not always wide enough to allow for definitive conclusions.

La sur-utilisation : une stratégie d'acquisition d'une L2

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Keywords: acquisition L2, français, suédois, verbes de localisation, verbes de placement

Abstract:

Afin d'encoder la localisation statique et dynamique, l'apprenant francophone du suédois L2 doit acquérir la sémantique complexe des verbes de position (stå « être debout », ligga « être couché », sitta « être assis » pour la localisation statique ; ställa « mettre debout », lägga « coucher », sätta « asseoir » pour la localisation dynamique), ainsi que la répartition discursive des informations spatiales, différente de celle du français. En effet, le français et le suédois appartiennent à deux typologies différentes, à savoir langue à cadrage verbal pour le français et langue à satellite pour le suédois (Talmy, 2000). Nos résultats (Hellerstedt, 2013) montrent que les apprenants L2 utilisent les verbes de position de façon croissante avec un usage proche de celui de la langue cible par les apprenants avancés. A partir de l'ordre d'acquisition établi dans notre étude (ibid.), les apprenants L2 (de niveaux intermédiaire et avancé) développent plusieurs stratégies afin de résoudre les problèmes qui surgissent lors de la communication. Parmi ces stratégies, l'une consiste en la sur-utilisation de l'un des verbes requis pour encoder la situation spatiale. En effet, ces apprenants choisissent généralement d'employer ceux encodant l'horizontalité (à savoir ligga/lägga), dans le but, semble-t-il, de les utiliser comme des verbes de localisation et de placement généraux au début de l'acquisition. Or, cette sur-utilisation est souvent réalisée au détriment d'un autre verbe, surtout le verbe exprimant quant à lui la verticalité (à savoir stå/ställa). En outre, ces mêmes apprenants L2 sous-utilisent de façon générale les verbes de position statique en faveur d'un verbe existentiel, voire d'une ellipse. Notre communication sera l'occasion de discuter les raisons derrière ces stratégies.

Hellerstedt, M. 2013. L'utilisation et l'acquisition des verbes de position en suédois L1 et L2. Thèse de doctorat. Université de Paris Sorbonne.

Talmy, L. 2000. Toward a cognitive semantics. Cambridge, MA : MIT Press.

Multifunctionality of the English deverbal nominal suffix -er: a usage-based perspective on SLA

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Keywords: usage, based models, multifunctionality, suffix, er, English, Croatian

Abstract:

The English nominal suffix -er is known to denote a variety of entities and to cover diverse semantic roles such as agents, instruments, patients, causes, locations, time. In this paper we will not deal with the sources of this multifunctionality but will use deverbal -er nouns to test certain predictions of usage-based models of (second) language (acquisition). We assume that a user's language comprises an inventory of symbolic constructions that emerge from exposure to usage events and differ in the degree of entrenchment and schematicity. We also welcome SLA's recognition that L2 grammar too is emergent, sensitive to input frequencies and that its learning involves categorization, schema extraction and entrenchment, only here in the face of competition from L1.

This study aims to identify patterns in the acquisition of the English deverbal suffix -er by advanced Croatian EFL learners that could be explained as effects of entrenchment and type/token frequencies of L2 schemas/forms. Two factors interfere with the learning of -er: L1 influence - none of the Croatian primarily agentive deverbal suffixes are as multifunctional as -er; and L2 influence - different type frequencies of the different -er schemas (agent and instrument schemas are more frequent than locative, cause or patient schemas). Unfortunately, L1 influence is difficult to disentangle from L2 influence; since Croatian breaks away from English roughly where English simmers down to less entrenched schemas (locative, cause, patient meanings are absent from the Croatian suffixal counterparts), we shall refrain from attributing any effects in our learner data to L1 influence (alone). Nevertheless, we performed two experiments to test the following hypothesis and its entailments:

 Different type frequencies of different -er schemas in L2 affect EFL learners' performance in reception and production tasks. This entails that:

a) subjects more readily interpret/produce agent and instrument -er nouns, even if the nouns have lower token frequencies;

b) subjects err in the direction of agents or instruments; for lack of a better-suited (more entrenched) categorising schema, they resort to the more entrenched agent/instrument schemas to categorise unknown instances;

c) subjects readily recognize and produce the more entrenched instances of the less entrenched schemas, but fare worse with their less entrenched instances. This suggests independent storage of high-frequency instances and weak entrenchment of the locative, cause or patient schema.

The experiments were conducted in two groups of Croatian advanced EFL learners (B2-C1). Target -er nouns for test items were selected from deverbal -er nouns obtained from the Corpus of Contemporary American English and then piloted. In the first experiment subjects were asked to define and translate a series of deverbal -er nouns of different semantic types and distractor words. In the second experiment subjects were instructed to provide an English word for an English definition (the targets being deverbal -er nouns). In this paper we present the results of our experiments and discuss their implications for the hypothesis stated above.

How to contrast and maintain information in Spanish and Italian, as L1s and L2s

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Keywords: contrast information, polarity, discourse cohesion, discourse analysis

Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the way informants change or contrast information in the Topic Entity and Topic Time domains (Klein 2008) in Italian and Spanish, as L1s and L2s. In the narrative task proposed, informants also have to maintain predicative information, since a process claimed to hold for some Topic Entities and Topic Times is actually maintained from previous discourse.

The data have been elicited using the video clip The Finite Story (Dimroth 2006) and are divided in four groups: Spanish L1, Italian L1, Spanish L2 of Italian learners, Italian L2 of Spanish learners.

Dimroth et al. (2010) have analysed Finite Story narrations of German, Dutch, French and Italian adult native speakers, identifying the type of items signalling which parts of the information are maintained and which parts have been changed or contrasted. The anaphoric linking devices range from additive particles to polarity or temporal contrasting markings and to prosodic devices. The same authors suggest that: when a polarity contrast is present, Dutch and German mark this polarity contrast much more frequently than Romance languages, which prefer to mark the contrast on the topic component (entity or time).

Benazzo & Andorno (2010) extended the debate to Italian and French as L2s. Giuliano (2012) tested Dimroth et al.'s hypothesis on English, both as L1 and L2 (all the author used The Finite Story task), suggesting that English native speakers select cohesive means much closer to those preferred by Romance than Germanic speakers. All the authors explored crosslinguistic interferences.

Now, our purpose in the present paper is to furtherly extend the debate to Spanish, as L1 and L2, and to Spanish of Italian learners. We shall demonstrate that Spanish is in many ways closer to Germanic than to Romance languages since its native speakers tend to often highlight the polarity contrast, despite the absence in their L1 of specifically grammaticalised means for this purpose; they also tend to transfer this type of contrast in Italian L2, whereas the polarity contrast is absent in the Spanish L2 of Italian speakers.

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Incidental language learning from the learners' viewpoint

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Abstract:

Incidental language learning has been conceptualized as learning of grammar taking place unintentionally, while learners are focused on meaning of the exchanged messages with their interlocutors and not paying attention to grammatical features – which are nevertheless being acquired (Paradis, 2009; Robinson, 1996). Although incidental learning is sometimes equated with implicit learning, some researchers insist on making a clear distinction between the terms implicit and incidental (e.g. Hulstijn, 2003) reasoning that implicit is be an attribute to the property (for example, implicit knowledge, or implicit memory) which cannot be directly observed, whereas incidental refers to a manner of acquiring knowledge, for example the way of learning something while attention is focused on something else.

This paper reports on a study that provided evidence of incidental learning of French past tense forms the passé composé and the imparfait, in three high school classrooms in New Zealand. The learners (n=52) of French FL, age 16, worked on three communicative tasks that involved narrating a story based on a series of pictures. The learners also received implicit corrective feedback, either in the form of recasts or as clarification requests. Having completed the tasks, the learners were asked to answer the questions about their perception of the type of work involved in these three tasks. A randomly selected group of six participants were also required to provide their responses using a stimulated recall protocol after the delayed post-test. Overall, the students' answers suggest that they were not aware they were learning grammar. However, the results of a repeated measures ANOVA and ANCOVA show that the level of accuracy in using both the passé composé and the imparfait in both written and oral production significantly increased from pre-test to post-test. The paper explores the students' perceptions of learning that took place in the classroom and discusses the results of the study in terms of focus-on-form, learner awareness and incidental learning of L2 grammatical forms.

Individual differences in analytic ability and working memory were also measured to see what role the cognitive ID factors played in this type of learning. It is assumed that in incidental learning, while processing for meaning and holding semantic representations of the input in working memory, learners must simultaneously assign grammatical structure to these semantic representations, thus in such situations the role of working memory might be more important than the role of analytic ability.

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Le développement de l'espagnol L2 chez des enfants de basque L1

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Keywords: Narration orale, développement langagier, autonomie narrative, difficultés lexicales, temps verbaux

Abstract:

Notre présentation vise à analyser quelques aspects du développement de l'espagnol L2 entre 5 et 11 ans chez des enfants de basque L1 provenant du Pays Basque espagnol.

Au Pays Basque, l'espagnol étant L1 pour la plupart de la population, beaucoup d'effort a été fait pour la revitalisation du basque à travers des programmes d'immersion scolaire. Grâce à ces programmes, la perte de locuteurs du basque à été freinée et les jeunes sont en processus de devenir des locuteurs de basque L2. Les dernières enquêtes sociolinguistiques montrent les progrès faits dans ce domaine (Gouvernement Basque 2013).

Néanmoins, il existe des zones au Pays Basque où la transmission intergénérationnelle du basque n'a pas été interrompue et où l'espagnol se considère L2 pour les enfants. Tel est le cas pour les 24 sujets de la présente recherche, provenant d'un environnement bascophone: la connaissance du basque atteint le 85% de la population, même si la présence sociale de l'espagnol n'est pas négligeable (Eustat, 2011, Soziolinguistika Klusterra, 2012). Ces enfants de familles bascophones, scolarisés en basque, bénéficient d'un enseignement de l'espagnol en tant que matière scolaire à partir de l'école primaire. Les études référents à l'acquisition de l'espagnol L2 chez des sujets bilingues basque-espagnol n'étant pas abondantes, des analyses sur des aspects spécifiques peuvent contribuer à une majeure connaissance de leur développement langagier.

L'activité proposée consiste à restituer oralement un conte, sur la base d'un modèle produit préalablement par un adulte. La même activité se déroule à l'âge de 5, 8 et 11 ans. Les données d'un groupe d'enfants d'espagnol L1 qui réalise la même activité aux mêmes âges servent de contraste.

En première lieu, nous analysons la capacité de produire, de manière autonome, des contes avec les éléments thématiques principaux. Nous montrerons un progrès clair, avec des résultats semblables à ceux de L1 espagnol.

Deuxièmement, nous étudions les difficultés lexicales ou « lexical gaps » (De Houwer, 2009), ainsi que les incorporations des items lexicaux de la L1: des calques, des emprunts, des alternances codiques, définis comme des marques transcodiques dans le parler bilingue (de Pietro, 1988). Nous monterons une claire diminution de ces phénomènes de 5 à 8 ans et surtout de 8 à 11 ans.

Finalement la production des formes verbales temporelles complexes sera analysée. L'inexistence des formes verbales comme le plus-que-parfait en basque semble produire des difficultés qui persistent encore à 11 ans chez les enfants d'espagnol L2.

Nos résultats semblent indiquer que l'usage social de l'espagnol permet son apprentissage, malgré sa présence limitée en famille et à l'école. À l'exception de certains aspects spécifiques, les enfants d'espagnol L2 de la présente recherche développent cette langue de manière semblable aux enfants d'espagnol L1.

Pour conclure, nous proposerons une réflexion autour des concepts de L1 et L2 en tenant compte des situations sociolinguistiques précises et sur les approches scolaires dérivées de ces concepts (Ortega et al., 2015).

Rhoticity in Language Attrition: The case of American English-German Bilinguals

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Keywords: phonological attrition, cross, language phonological influence, rhoticity, adult bilingualism

Abstract:

The acquisition of additional languages may influence mature L1 systems, a phenomenon known as language attrition. Although attrition research has largely focused on the L2 influence on the L1 lexicon and syntax (Schmid 2002), additional languages arguably also affect L1 phonology (e.g. Flege 1987, Mennen 2004), even leading to perceived foreign-accentedness in the L1 (e.g. De Leeuw et al. 2010). Nevertheless, the attrition of L1 sound systems remains understudied. Furthermore, little is known about how phonological attrition may mirror timeless laws of sound change and developmental hierarchies in phonological change due to language contact.

Rhotic sounds are known to be subject to great variation. For example, English shows variable degrees of rhoticity (full, semi- and non-rhoticity), both synchronically and diachronically. Particularly, semi-rhotic varieties with variable realizations of /r/ give reason to hypothesize that the development and loss of the postvocalic /r/ in L1 attrition may be subject to universal constraints. Ulbrich and Ordin (2014) showed that a postvocalic /r/ in the L2 can trigger the introduction of postvocalic /r/ in a non-rhotic L1. This effect, however, was only visible in certain contexts, and factors such as frequency, stress, and syllable structure were not tested. Furthermore, the directionality of sound attrition remains unknown: Can L2 non-rhoticity exert an influence on L1 rhoticity? Since rhotic sounds typologically show considerable qualitative differences, we expect to find language attrition effects also in the variable phonetic realization of /r/ (in lieu of its complete loss).

In this study, we extend these implications and test further factors. We investigate a) whether the lack of postvocalic /r/ in the L2 can trigger the loss of rhoticity in the L1, b) which environments favor the deletion of postvocalic /r/, and c) how the L2 affects the phonetic realization of the rhotic. In our experiments, which are currently underway, 12 American English – German late bilinguals residing in Germany (LOR=10 years) perform a variety of speech elicitation tasks in both their L1 and L2. While many American English varieties are rhotic, German varieties are largely non-rhotic. The test items are mono-morphemic words, varying in the number of syllables, with the coda-/r/ occurring either after a stressed or unstressed vowel. We further control for other phonological variables such as syllable complexity and consonantal contact (homomorphemic vs heteromorphemic contexts).

Based on observations on postvocalic /r/ in synchronic and diachronic varieties of English, we hypothesize that /r/ is more likely to undergo reduction in the unstressed condition than in the stressed condition. In stressed syllables, postvocalic /r/s preceding other consonants should be more likely to show signs of loss than those in simplex codas. Finally, the salient rhotacized vowel (ɝ) in American English should be more resistant to rhotic attrition effects than other /r/-colored vowels. Due to insufficient statistical power at this stage of our studies, we refrain from making any generalizations about our results. We will offer both qualitative and quantitative analyses of our language attrition data, informed by theoretical, typological and diachronic observations on the genesis and loss of rhoticity.

The development of gender in simultaneous and successive bilingual acquisition of French – Evidence for AOA and input effects

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Keywords: French, gender: age effects, input, simultaneous bilinguals, successive bilinguals

Abstract:

This study investigates the effects of Age of Onset of Acquisition (AOA) and the quality and quantity of input on the longitudinal development of gender in the acquisition of French by simultaneous (2L1) and successive bilingual children (cL2). There's an on-going debate regarding the main factors underlying linguistic development in bilingual children. Two independent variables, AOA and input, have been particularly emphasized and sometimes contrasted (Unsworth, 2013). Proponents of maturational accounts (e.g. Meisel, 2009) have argued that AOA is the main factor underlying language acquisition, but more recent research suggest that different aspects of language are more or less influenced by AOA and input respectively. Whereas lexical development seem to be particularly influenced by input properties (Thordardottir, 2011), the question is more open with respect to different grammatical features. One view is that quantity and quality of input is particularly important in the acquisition of "late", "harder" or "more opaque" grammatical structures (Gathercole, 2007; Unsworth, 2014), structures typically involving interface relationships of some kind (Sorace, 2005, Tsimpli, 2014). However, previous research has typically drawn on comparisons of different grammatical features in different languages which make controlled comparisons difficult.

Our contribution to the debate lies in the combined analysis of three different exponents of a single underlying linguistic construct in a single langue, namely French gender, an opaque feature according to Corbett (1991). The development of gender in the child's grammar involves different linguistic levels, including the abstract system level, the lexical level (attribution) and the syntactic level (concord).

 We studied the discovery of the abstract GENDER feature, gender assignment and gender concord in a longitudinal multiple case study including successive (cL2) Swedish-French bilingual children (n=4), simultaneous (2L1) Swedish-French bilingual children (n=4) and monolingual French children (n=4). Recordings containing a variety of tasks took place in the age span 3;5 to 10 years, but no child was followed for more than three years. Two of the L2 children have an AOA below 4 years and two of them have an AOA above 4 years (cf. Meisel, 2009). All children attend the same French-speaking school in Sweden. Input was measured for each bilingual child individually through the establishment of an input profile (see Ågren, Granfeldt & Thomas, 2014).

The findings show that the amount and quality of input correlate with the rate of acquisition of gender attribution, but most clearly in the 2L1 group. However, the discovery of the abstract GENDER features does not seem to be influenced by external input conditions. Group-level analyses of gender concord suggest that input is less important than AOA. In fact, only the cL2 group performed worst on concord than on attribution. The results are also discussed in relation to previous studies on the development of other morphosyntactic structures in the same children. We conclude that input is most important for the development of the lexical aspects of the opaque gender feature in French (attribution), in particular in the 2L1 group, but that AOA seem to play a role with respect to its syntactic aspects.

Electrophysiological correlates of processing Russian verbs by native and L2 speakers: the link between morphology and phonology

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Keywords: ERP, Russian, second language acquisition, morphology, verbs, phonology, sentence comprehension

Abstract:

Of particular interest in this study is the link between morphology and phonology. Using the method of event-related potentials (ERP), it compares the processing of three inflectional verbal forms in Russian (infinitive, future, and past-tense forms), which are distinguished on the basis of a phonological contrast in the same word position, e.g., ответить (atvjetitj ANSWERINF)—ответит (atvjetit ANSWERFUTURE)—ответил (atvjetil ANSWERPAST). The goal was to examine how early morpho-phonological predictions are built during speech comprehension and whether the ERP response is modulated by the phonetic proximity of the phonological contrasts distinguishing the morphological forms during auditory sentence comprehension by native (L1) and nonnative (L2) speakers of Russian.

Three triplets of 270 sentences included 90 critical, 90 control and 90 filler sentences. Critical sentences were divided into 30 morphologically congruent infinitive forms (V+ть, /tj/), 30 incongruent future-tense verbs (V+т, /t/), and 30 incongruent past-tense verbs (V+л, /l/) each, e.g.:

Личный помощник президента хочет ОТВЕТИТЬINF/ *ОТВЕТИТFUTURE/ *ОТВЕТИЛPAST на провокационный вопрос журналиста.

President's personal assistant wants to ANSWERINF/ *ANSWERFUTURE/ ANSWERPAST the journalist's provocative question.

Twenty-one L1 and 15 highly proficient L2 speakers of Russian participated in the study. The task was to listen to sentences and judge their goodness.

For the L1 group, ERP waveforms time-locked to target word offsets revealed an early positivity in the post-word 100-600 ms latency window followed by a pronounced late negativity in the 600-1300 ms window for both morphologically incongruent conditions (future and past-tense forms). The ERP effects were mostly pronounced in the centro-parietal area and no modulation of the brain response by the phonetic similarity was observed.

The L2 group showed a different pattern of results. While a similar to L1 group early positivity was elicited for the incongruent past-tense forms, no difference between congruent and incongruent future-tense forms was observed. This finding suggests that, while L2 listeners are sensitive to morphological violations during auditory sentence comprehension, their ERP response is modulated by phonetic distance.

Such modulation is due to the perceptual ambiguity between hard (/t/) and soft (/tj/) Russian consonants—the phonological contrast that is notoriously difficult for the English-speaking learners of Russian. In case of such low-level phonological problem, L2 listeners exhibit a morphological context bias effect and select the interpretation of the sentence that is most compatible with the morphological predictions at no cost for the parser; hence, no difference in the ERP response is observed.

ERP evidence of fast learning of a second language vocabulary: New labels and existing concepts

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Keywords: ERP, lexicon, vocabulary, computer interface, learning

Abstract:

What does it take to acquire a semantic network in a second language? The present ERP study shows extremely rapid instantiation of both learned words and related concepts, via computerized games. Participants served as their own control. Electrical activity of the brain, recorded at the scalp, was examined prior to exposure with the second language and 8 days later, following a 6 day training session (preceded and followed by orientation and consolidation, respectively). Participants learned 12 words per day (nouns and verbs), for a total of 72 words over 6 consecutive days. Results show rapid changes in cortical activity, associated with learning. Prior to exposure, no modulation of the N400 component was found as a function of the correct match vs. mismatch of audio presentation of words and their associated images. Post training, a large N400 effect was found for mismatch trials compared to correctly matched audio-visual trials. More importantly, images that were semantically related to learned words (eg. for the learned word "horse" the image of a saddle was presented), produced a reduction of the N400 compared to mismatched pairs (eg. the image of a building followed by the auditory presentation of the same learned word "horse"). Our results attest to the plasticity of adult learners' brains and provide evidence for rapid onset of a semantic network in a late learned language.

Collocational competence and spoken fluency in advanced L2 users' production of English

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Abstract:

Formulaic language has long been considered an important element of language proficiency in general and of fluency in particular (e.g. Pawley & Syder, 1983). A number of studies have also provided empirical evidence suggesting a positive link between formulaic language and spoken fluency (e.g. Wood, 2010). As a subset of formulaic language, collocations, i.e. two-three word combinations such as make a decision, major catastrophe, and afraid of, are also assumed to contribute positively to fluency. However, research seems to indicate that even advanced learners experience problems with producing consistently correct and appropriate collocations (e.g. Nesselhauf, 2005).

This situation leads to the following conundrum: if even advanced learners have problems producing native-like collocations, how can this be reconciled with their status as advanced learners, given that fluency is an important component of overall language proficiency? Despite the large body of research into formulaic language and spoken fluency, there seems to be a lack of empirical evidence showing how collocations might influence fluency. This paper is based on a project which addresses this issue by looking at the relationship between lecturers' overall language proficiency, collocational competence and fluency.

The project draws on data from 15 mini-lectures recorded for an oral proficiency test in English for lecturers at the University of Copenhagen. The lecturers, who came from three different university departments, were assessed on a 5-point holistic scale based on 5 dimensions, including fluency. Examiners' global and fluency scores from the test were analysed against collocational competence and fluency variables. Collocational competence was operationalised as the number of validated collocations and unacceptable collocational combinations used. Temporal fluency was measured by calculating speech rate, mean length of run and phonation-time ratio for each lecturer.

Preliminary findings showed no significant correlations between collocational competence, use of unacceptable collocational combinations, and overall proficiency score or fluency measures. However, further analysis of the texts revealed that possible relationships were hidden by major differences in the types of discourse used across the three different departments. These included variances in the relative proportions of general collocations to domain-specific collocations used by speakers from the different disciplines, as well as the degree of technicality of the domain-specific collocations.

This appears to have ramifications not only for what makes up collocational competence across different domains, but also for how examiners' perceptions of fluency vary across academic disciplines, according to the level of content comprehensibility.

The paper therefore discusses the need for taking domain-specific collocations into account when measuring and assessing both collocational competence and fluency.

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Pawley, A. & Syder, F. 1983. Two puzzles for linguistic theory: native-like selection and native-like fluency.

Wood, D. 2010. Formulaic language and second language speech fluency. Background, Evidence and Classroom Applications.

(Dis)fluency effects in the first and second language of long-term immersed bilinguals

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Keywords: fluency, attrition, bilingualism

Abstract:

The concepts of speech fluency and linguistic proficiency are so closely interconnected that highly proficient biliguals are commonly simply referred to as 'fluent speakers', and that (non-) native-like disfluency patterns are one of the most important predictors of proficiency ratings awarded to L2 speakers (e.g. Dewaele 1996). Fluency in both the L1 and the L2 of bilingual speakers has been a considerable focus of attention in recent years and has been shown to be a complex, multi-level and multi-dimensional construct (e.g. Segalowitz 2010).

This paper presents an investiation into fluency phenomena among a corpus of Oral History interviews with German-Jewish refugees. These interviews represent informal interactions which center on the speaker's biography and foster unmonitored, naturalistic speech in which hesitation markers are used most naturally. We investigate the phenomena of breakdown (silent pauses > 250ms), speed (speech rate) and repair in these interviews in both the L1 (German, n=76) and the L2 (English, n=102) of speakers who had left Germany in 1938 and 1939, aged between 7 and 17 years, and lived in English-speaking countries for upwards of 50 years.

Based on the information provided in these interviews, we assess the impact of extralinguistic and biographical factors, such as education and language use, on the development of the disfluency patterns in both languages. The results reveal a complex interaction of these predictors.

Bilingual decision making: Are L1 and L2 differences due to cognitive fluency or emotional distance?

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Abstract:

Recent research on decision making suggests that bilinguals make more rational decisions about logically identical problems if these are presented in the L2 rather than in the L1 (Costa, Foucart, Arnon, Aparici, & Apesteguia, 2014; Keysar, Hayakawa, & An, 2012). As this so called foreign language effect tends to be more pronounced in more emotional decision problems, the favored explanation for it is that the L2 provides greater emotional distance. This distance is attributed to different acquisition contexts that result in weaker links between the L2 and the emotion system. An alternative explanation is that L2 processing is less fluent and consumes more working memory capacity so that fewer resources are left for the decision making process. In monolingual contexts, decision biases have been shown to increase with working memory capacity (Corbin, McElroy, & Black, 2010). Yet, the interaction between L2 processing, working memory, emotionality and decision making has not been tested explicitly so far.

In this talk, we report on two experiments that addressed these interactions. We investigated to what extent the foreign language effect, which is supposed to reduce the well-known framing bias in decision making, can be attributed to emotionality and working memory. Both experiments used a 2 (frame: gain vs. loss) x 2 (language: L1 German vs. L2 English) between-group design. We controlled for working memory capacity (AOSPAN), emotionality (PANAS) and L2 proficiency with standardized tests. While the decision problem was easy to read in Exp. 1, Exp. 2 degraded the presentation visually so that reading the text required additional attention and effort. For analysis, the participants were matched on working memory.

Bivariate results from Exp. 1 (N = 114) indicate that the foreign language effect occurred: The decision bias was only significant in the L1. A multiple logistic regression analysis of the decision behavior shows, however, that working memory capacity was the only significant predictor. Language and emotionality did not make a significant contribution. Exp. 2 (N = 87) corroborated the findings from Exp. 1 because under high cognitive load the framing bias did not occur in the L2 nor in the L1. In other words, L1 decisions looked as unbiased as L2 decisions if the task was hard enough. We discuss implications for processing and emotionality based accounts that explain behavioral differences of bilinguals dependent on language choice.

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Interactions between native and non-native vowels in production: an articulatory feedback training study

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Abstract:

Native and non-native sounds are generally assumed to coexist and interact in a common inter-phonological space in bilinguals. Within this space, the production of non-native sounds is determined by their similarity to native categories: the closer an L2 sound is to a native one, the more likely it is that this native sound will be used to produce the L2 sound. Interestingly, the production of a native sound is also modified as a result of its proximity to non-native sounds. Similar L1 and L2 sounds have been shown to converge towards one intermediate category in bilinguals. Our study investigates the interactions between the production of native and non-native vowels during learning, i.e., before and after articulatory feedback training with non-native sounds.

Twenty monolingual native French speakers were trained to produce two novel vowels: Danish /o/ (perceptually similar to the French /o/) and Russian /ɨ/ (no similar French category, a 'dissimilar' sound). On each trial, participants repeated a target vowel and received immediate visual feedback in the form of a two-dimensional plot of F1/F2 space. In this display, participants saw a point representing the position of their own production together with that of the target vowel space. Each vowel was repeated 600 times across 3 training days. Production of Danish /o/ and Russian /ɨ/ and of the respective acoustically closest French /o/ and /ø/ vowels was assessed before and after training. The position of the vowels and their compactness (the inverse of variability) in the acoustic space were computed for each participant. The Mahalanobis distance was used to assess distances between the native and non-native vowel categories.

The compactness of the French vowels was related to the accuracy and compactness in the production of non-native vowels, before training. Training improved the production of non-native vowels on average by 19%, with no difference in improvement between vowels. After training, there was a global drift in the position of the French /ø/ vowel: it moved closer to the Russian /ɨ/. There was no change in the overall position of the French /o/ vowel relative to the Danish /o/. However, strong positive correlations in training-related changes in F1 and F2 between the two vowels, demonstrated that they moved in the same direction. There were no training-related changes in the compactness of the native vowels.

Our results show that (1) before training, individual differences in the degree of compactness of native categories is related to the production performance on non-native closest sounds; (2) one hour of articulatory training with non-native sounds changes the production of native sounds, with drift towards the non-native ones. To conclude, our results suggest that interactions in the production of L1 and L2 sounds previously shown in L2 proficient and bilingual speakers are already present in novice learners on the basis of very little L2 exposure.

How to Decide whether or not Two Vowels are Identical in L1 and L2? Criteria and Implications for Second Language Teaching.

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Abstract:

Teachers and researchers agree that learners have no difficulties in acquiring L2 vowels which are *identical* to those of L1, and therefore there is no need to teach them. Phonetic models, such as Flege's Speech Learning Model (SLM), establish an essential distinction between *similar* and *identical* sounds, unexploited by Lado's contrastive analysis: it is almost impossible for a late learner to acquire, in a native manner, *similar* sounds transcribed with the same API symbol, but of a different phonetic nature.

As this distinction has an implication for L2 teaching, our concern is how to decide whether or not two sounds which are transcribed with the same API symbol in L1 and L2 are *identical* or only *similar*? For doing so, the acoustic distance and perceptive similarity were calculated between French and Czech vowels.

Acoustic distance: The corpus includes 10 French oral vowels [i, e, ɛ, a, u, o, ɔ, y, ø, œ] and 10 Czech monophthong vowels [iː, ɪ, ɛ ː, ɛ, a ː, a, u ː, u, oː, o] that appear :

1. Between two short pauses ("in isolation") inserted in carrier sentences.

2. In logatoms CVCVCVC where C = /p, t, k/ inserted in carrier sentences.

The Czech corpus was read 4 times by 20 native Czechs from Bohemia (average age 27) and the French corpus was produced 4 times by 10 native non-southern French (average age 28.5).

Results: Comparing the mean formant values of French and Czech vowels produced in the same context showed that the vowels systematically differ in at least one of the compared formants (t-test, $p < 0.05$). Thus, there are no acoustically *identical* vowels between French and Czech.

Perceptual similarity: Perceptual similarity was studied through an interlingual assimilation test where 10 Czech monolingual listeners identified 10 French oral vowels in terms of 10 Czech monophtong vowels and they assigned a quality score to each percept (between 0 and 5; 5 = best score). The French vowels, used as stimuli, were recorded by 3 native French in isolation (12 repetitions) and by one native French in syllables pVp, tVt and kVk (4 repetitions per context).

Results: The result expressed by the value of fit index (= proportion of identification multiplied by the score) shows a strong perceptual similarity of French vowels [i], [ɛ], [a], [u], [o] with Czech timbers [iː], [ɛ/ɛː], [a/aː], [u/uː], [u/uː], respectively. This similarity, however, varies greatly depending on the context, and the fit index never exceeds 4.6 out of 5. Thus, this result doesn't confirm a perceptual *identity* between any French and Czech vowel.

Conclusion: The combined result shows that strictly *identical* vowels between French and Czech do not exist. In fact, the same vowels in L1 and L2 transcribed with the same phonetic symbol can be "highly similar" in isolation, but less similar or even dissimilar in a particular consonantal context and vice versa. These results point to the importance of inclusion, into the phonetic curriculum of second language teaching, of coarticulation patterns of all L2 vowels.

Influence of non-native prosodic timing patterns onto perceived accentedness of L2 speech

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Abstract:

In a number of previous studies it was found that timing patterns develop in the curse of second language acquisition. In particular, it has been detected that speech rhythm (defined as durational variability of certain speech constituents) and speech tempo (defined as syllables per second) change with proficiency growth in L2. Ordin, Polyanskaya and Ulbrich (2011), Ordin and Polyanskaya (2014), Ordin and Polyanskaya (under review) and Ordin, Polyanskaya and Wagner (2015) clearly demonstrated that L2 speech tempo and variability in duration of syllables, vowel sequences and consonantal clusters increase as L2 acquisition progresses. Advanced speakers deliver speech at a faster rate and exhibit more stress-timed patterns in L2 English compared to elementary and intermediate learners. This trend has been confirmed in L2 English produced both by L2 learners with syllable-timed native language (French) and with stress-timed native language (German). Comparison with rhythmic patterns of native English speakers showed that only advanced German learners of English delivered speech with the degree of stress-timing and at the rate characteristic of speech delivered by native English speakers. German learners at elementary and intermediate levels and French learners at all proficiency levels produced English utterances with more syllable-timed rhythm and at a slower speech rate. However, it is a known fact that not all deviations from the native patterns are perceptually relevant and contribute to the degree of perceived foreign accent in L2 speech. In our study, we wanted to concentrate on the contribution of non-native timing patterns into accentedness.

To estimate the relative contribution of speech tempo and speech rhythm into perceived foreign accent, we selected 15 English sentences, each produced by German and French learners at elementary, intermediate and advanced levels. Then we used a speech synthesis technique to create the versions of each sentence that differed only in rhythm, only in tempo, or only in speech and tempo: sounds and intonation patterns were taken from native English speakers. Rhythmic and tempo patterns in resynthesized stimuli imitated rhythm and tempo of German and French learners of English at different proficiency levels. Then we asked native English listeners to evaluate the accentedness in the original and resynthesized sentences on a 6-point scale. The results are presented in Figures 1-2.

We found that deviations from the native norms in both speech rate and speech rhythm are perceptually relevant and contribute to the degree of perceived foreign accent. The effect of speech rate and speech rhythm on accentedness depends on the native language of the learner. If native and target languages of the learner are rhythmically contrastive, then rhythm makes a bigger contribution into the degree of perceived foreign accent than tempo. If native and target languages of the learner are rhythmically similar, then tempo makes a bigger contribution into the degree of perceived foreign accent than rhythm, and the effect of rhythm on accent rating will be smaller compared to the effect of rhythm if the native and target languages are rhythmically contrastive.

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