

RomTiN 2019

14 June 2019, Leiden University Centre for Linguistics, Lipsius, 0.02

- 13:00-13:10 Welcome
- 13:10-13:40 Daan van Soeren (Columbia School Linguistic Society, New York City)
The communicative role of lexical stress in Columbia School Phonology
- 13:40-14:10 Marine Pedehour (Université d'Avignon/Radboud Universiteit)
French, English and something new: Trilingualism in Manitoba
- 14:10-14:40 David Bremmers, Laurie Hoeben and Isabel Vis (Universiteit Utrecht)
Imperfect perfects?
- 14:40-15:00 Coffee/tea
- 15:00-15:30 Brechje van Osch (UvA)
Language-internal and language-external factors affecting vulnerability in heritage speakers
- 15:30-16:00 Joyce van Zwet (Universiteit Leiden)
The multilingual brain: an experimental study
- 16:00-17:00 **Key-note lecture**
Kim Groothuis (Cambridge University/ Universiteit Leiden)
Reflexes of Finiteness in Romance

Abstracts

The communicative role of lexical stress in Columbia School Phonology

Daniël Pieter van Soeren, MA (Columbia School Linguistic Society, New York City)

This research studies the distribution of phonemes within Spanish CVCVCV words and English and Dutch CVCVC words from a Columbia School perspective (Diver 1979; Tobin 1997), and focuses on lexical stress as a relevant factor in the distribution of apical and visible phonemes. We argue that word recognition is key in the explanation of the results; in the pronunciation of a word, every phoneme eliminates a number of word candidates, making the identification of the word progressively easier. At the beginning of the word, where the word is least predictable, there is a higher burden on distinctiveness, which results in a favouring of other kinds of phonemes than at the end of the word.

Studies on word recognition in Spanish, English and Dutch (e.g. Cutler 2005; Soto-Faraco, Sebastián-Gallés & Cutler 2001; Van Donselaar, Koster & Cutler 2005) suggest that in addition to segmental information, the position of stress eliminates word candidates too (e.g. a word-initial stressed syllable /'ru:/ could result in *rumour*, but eliminates *routine* as a candidate). In Spanish, English and Dutch discourse, the majority of words begin with a stressed syllable. Consequently, an unstressed initial syllable eliminates more word candidates, which affects the distribution of the aforementioned phonemes.

References

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- Van Donselaar, W., Koster, M. and Cutler, A. (2005). Exploring the role of lexical stress in lexical recognition. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology* 58A(2), pp. 251-273. doi:10.1080/02724980343000927

French, English and something new: Trilingualism in Manitoba

Marine Pedehour (Université d'Avignon/Radboud Universiteit)

Keywords: Language contact; Mixed codes; Heritage languages; Majority & minority languages; Manitoba

The Official Languages Act of 1969 redefined Canada as a bilingual nation, with French and English enjoying equal status at governmental level. The situation in everyday life is, however, more dynamic and also more complex. In this talk we will focus on an intriguing case of emergent language contact in the province of Manitoba. This variety, which we will call “Manitobiche” mixes French and English in ways that go beyond code-switching, phonetic interference or “franglais”. This mixing affects all linguistic levels: phonetics/phonology, vocabulary and morphology, but also syntax and pragmatics. The following example, from the Manitoban play Bob Burns/Robert Brûlé, illustrates lexical borrowing, beside structural (i.e. more advanced) mixing: “I’d like to bien parler one des deux official langues instead d’avoir le ‘Syndrome Jean Crétin syndrome’; speak les deux langues official langues langues comme si y z’étaient des langues secondes” (Prescott, 2009).

In this presentation, we will present data from Manitobiche, focusing in particular on minority theatre. By describing the linguistic characteristics of the contact variety (in the light of Auer’s (1999) typology of language contact) and by exploring the sociolinguistic dynamics of the contact variety we aim to illustrate yet another intriguing aspect of the French language in Canada.

References

- Auer, Peter. 1999. From codeswitching via language mixing to fused lects: Toward a dynamic typology of bilingual speech. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 3 (4):309332.
- Prescott, M. (2009). « Bob Burns/Robert Brûlé », In: Gaboury-Diallo, L. (ed), *Sillons: Hommage à Gabrielle Roy*. Saint-Boniface: Éditions du Blé.

Imperfect perfects?

David Bremmers, Laurie Hoeben en Isabel Vis (Universiteit Utrecht)
(Cursus Variatie in Betekenis, Bert Le Bruyn, UU)

In this paper we report on the results of an experiment probing the mastery of the passé composé (PC) /imparfait (IMP) distinction by Dutch advanced learners of French (N=15). The experiment consisted of two parts:

Part 1: an individual translation from Dutch to French

Part 2: a pairwise discussion of the individual translations with the aim to improve on the individual translations.

The results of part 1 partly confirm the results reported by Tavenier (2018), *viz.* that Dutch advanced learners have problems choosing the right past tense. This is clear from a comparison between Figures 1 and 2. The results however also slightly differ in that Tavenier's data indicated that the main problem for Dutch learners of French was choosing the right tense in PC contexts whereas our data indicate that there are also a few learners who have problems choosing the right tense in IMP contexts.

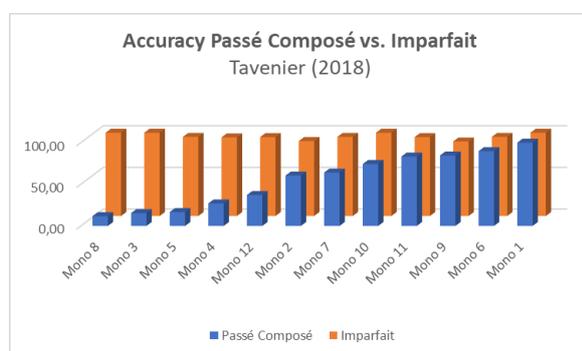


Figure 1: Accuracy Passé Composé vs. Imparfait in Tavenier (2018)

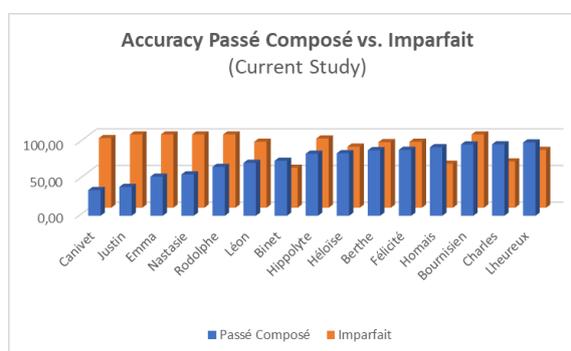
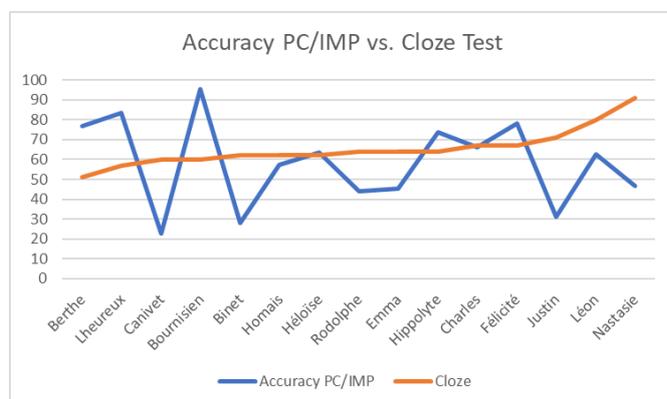


Figure 2: Accuracy Passé Composé vs. Imparfait in the current study

The current study extends Tavenier (2018) in two important ways. The first is that it includes an independent measure of general proficiency (the cloze test from Tremblay (2011)). When comparing this measure to the accuracy of PC/IMP we find that these measures are not related in a straightforward way (Figure 3). The second way we extend Tavenier (2018) is with the discussions in the second part of our experiment. They allow us to get a better idea of what drove participants to make a certain choice in their individual translations. During the talk we elaborate on the methodology and our qualitative analysis of the transcript data.



References

- Tavenier, L. Lex. 2018. The Aspect Hypothesis Revisited. *LingUU* 2(1): 17–29.
Tremblay, A. (2011). Proficiency assessment standards in second language acquisition research: “Clozing” the gap. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 33(3), 339–372.

Language-internal and language-external factors affecting vulnerability in heritage speakers

Brechje van Osch (UvA)

This talk will be about heritage speakers of Spanish. While most of the previous research on heritage Spanish has been carried out in the context of the US (e.g. Montrul, 2015; Silva-Corvalán, 1994), this study examines heritage Spanish both in the US and in the Netherlands. I will present data from an acceptability judgment task and an elicited production task which were used to test heritage speakers' knowledge of the subjunctive and subject verb word order in Spanish. What these two phenomena have in common is that they lie at the crossroads of multiple interfaces, such as the internal interface between syntax and semantics and the external interface between syntax and discourse-pragmatics. The findings provide evidence for increased vulnerability at the interfaces, in line with the Interface Hypothesis (e.g. Sorace, 2000). I will moreover touch upon the role of factors that are external to the heritage language, such as the socio-linguistic characteristics of the heritage community and the host country, and cross-linguistic influence from the majority language.

The multilingual brain: an experimental study

Joyce van Zwet (Universiteit Leiden)

There are a lot of theories on the way the multilingual brain is shaped and on how multilingual language processing functions. In this research project, we discuss three models of lexical processing (the BIA+ model, the revised hierarchical model, and the independent model). We try to decide which of the models represents language processing at its best with an experiment. In the experiment, we tested Dutch students of the French language with different levels of proficiency: 10 students with high language proficiency and 10 students with low language proficiency. We based the proficiency levels on the LexTALE test. The students participated in a semantic priming experiment in which the prime was offered in French and the image was to be named in Dutch. We expected to find a faster reaction time for students with high language proficiency and no influence of semantic priming for the low proficiency group, as follows the revised hierarchical model. This model explains this difference between groups by the links between lexical and conceptual representations in the two languages: these aren't developed yet for low proficient speaker and thus we shouldn't find an effect of semantic priming. However, our results support the independent model, in which there are no connections between language processing systems of different language in the brain. These results might be caused by restrictions in the experiment.