

Facilitation and delay in bilingual lexical access

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False friends are words that are phonologically and/or graphically the same or very similar in two different languages, but their meanings are completely different. For example, the English word *gift* and the German word *Gift* (English: *poison*) are phonologically and orthographically very similar, but semantically completely different. In contrast, true friends are words that overlap in their form, sound, and meaning in two different languages. For example, the English word *garden* and the German word *Garten* (English: *garden*) are true friends. We consider words that are neither false friends nor true friends to be unrelated, for example, the English word *tired* and the German word *müde* (English: *tired*). False friends are prone to cause competition in lexical access in bilinguals. For example, studies suggest that native German speakers who hear the English word *gift* would also activate the German word *Gift*, even if German is irrelevant to the task at hand. However, most previous studies have compared false friends only with unrelated words, not also with true friends. In this study, we therefore explored whether false friends delay lexical access or whether true friends facilitate lexical access in bilinguals or both. Participants were all native German speakers and advanced learners of the English language. Forty-eight participants completed a task, where they had to verify or falsify English-German and German-English translations. For example, participants saw the English word *gift* with a German 'translation' *Gift* and had to say if the translation was correct. We analysed the results using two different statistical analyses, one focusing on whether or not responses were correct and the other on participants' response times. The correctness results show that participants made significantly more errors for false friends than for unrelated words and more errors for unrelated words than for true friends. Furthermore, participants made significantly more errors when the translation was correct than when it was not correct. The response time results show that participants were significantly slower for false friends than for unrelated words and true friends, which yielded similar response times. In addition, participants were significantly faster when the translation was correct compared to when it was not correct. This confirms earlier results that false friends delay lexical access, such that the false friend interferes with accessing the correct translation in bilinguals. We also find some evidence that true friends additionally facilitate lexical access compared to unrelated words since participants made more errors for unrelated words than for true friends. Finally, our results suggest a speed-accuracy trade-off: Participants responded faster but with more errors when the translation was correct compared to when the translation was not correct. We discuss these results with respect to bilingual lexical access and language mode.

Teaching false friends successfully to second language learners of English

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False friends are words that are similar or identical in their form and pronunciation in two languages, but entirely different in their meanings. For example, the English word *actual* means *real*, but the similar German word *aktuel* means *current*. In contrast, true friends are words that have similar or the same form, pronunciation, and meaning in two languages, for example the English word *experiment* and the German word *Experiment*. We consider words that are neither false friends nor true friends in two languages to be unrelated words, such as the English word *nice* and its German translation *schön*. False friends are particularly difficult to learn in a second language. In this pre-test post-test study, we therefore explored how effective two modern and two traditional teaching methods are in teaching students false friends. Thirty-one native German students of English participated in the study. They completed a pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test on their knowledge of false friends, true friends and unrelated words. Each test asked students to translate words from English into German and to provide synonyms for English words in a multiple choice test. We collected data in two classrooms. In each classroom, participants first completed the pre-test, then took part in a teaching intervention, where they learned each test word either through one of two modern or one of two traditional teaching methods, and finally completed the post-test. Three weeks later they completed the delayed post-test. The results from the pre-test and two post-tests confirm that false friends are more difficult for students than true friends and unrelated words. Participants made errors particularly frequently when translating false friends from English into German across all three tests. The teaching intervention showed a significant learning effect for false friends, but we found no evidence that modern teaching methods were more effective compared to traditional teaching methods. On the contrary, the traditional teaching methods showed numerically better results than the modern teaching methods. We discuss the results with respect to instructed second language acquisition.

Sackgassenentwicklungen im simultanen bilingualen Spracherwerb der kroatischen und deutschen Pluralbildung

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Sackgassenentwicklungen (blind alley developments = BADs) sind frühkindliche kurzfristige radikale Selbstorganisationen, welche im Widerspruch zum elterlichen und familiären Input stehen und daher bald aufgegeben werden. Schwache BADs bauen auf dem Input auf, aber falsch; starke BADs entsprechen überhaupt nicht dem Input. Im Mittelpunkt des Vortrags steht ein bisher noch nie vor uns beobachtetes Phänomenn des simultanen bilingualen Spracherwerbs (in unserem Fall von Wiener Kindern), in welchem sich die Strukturen beider Sprachen überlagern und sich der deutsche Pluralerwerb weitgehend nach kroatischen Mustern und Bedingungen entwickelt und der kroatische nach deutschen. Diese Überlagerung ist nicht nur eine schwache BAD, sondern kann auch nach der aus der Quantenphysik an die Linguistik adaptierten Konzeption der Superposition beschrieben werden.

MAIN as an Assessment Tool for the Language Proficiency in Russian Heritage Speakers and L2 Learners

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Background: Various researchers have repeatedly pointed out the problem of differentiation of heritage and non-heritage learners¹. They highlighted that heritage speakers (HSs) and second language learners (L2ers) need to be offered different curricula in order to make their language learning process efficient. Moreover, one of the distinctive aspects of the heritage languages (HLs) is the variability in language skills of HSs². Some HSs show native-like LP, whereas some of them show fluency in oral speech, but have no literacy skills. Others can understand the language, but their productive skills are limited³. This diversity makes the HL assessment and the placement of HSs in the classroom quite challenging. Thus, the first step towards separating HSs and L2ers into different groups in the university and using different curricula should be a correct and multifaceted assessment of LP. At the moment, there is no tool for LP assessment, which would take into account the features of the HL and the differences in the acquisition of the HL and L2.

Method: The Russian version of the Multilingual Assessment Instrument for Narratives (MAIN)⁴, the abridged version of Bilingual LEAP Questionnaire (LEAP-Q)⁵ and the Multiple choice test (MCT)⁶ are used in the present study. The project collects data from 40 Russian-speaking young adults aged 18-30 from two target groups: (1) 20 Russian-German bilinguals with L1 Russian who were born in or moved to Germany at the age of no more than 4 years, and (2) 20 German native speakers that are currently learning Russian as a FL on the high levels of LP. All the participants first fill in the online version of LEAP-Q and MCT. Next, they have a short oral interview (oral production), write two narratives based on the pictures stimuli (written production) and answer questions about those pictures (comprehension) orally. The production and comprehension data are transcribed, analyzed and scored according to the procedures of the MAIN. Lexical and morphosyntactic abilities shown in oral and written production as well as complexity of the stories are assessed according to the additional scale for MAIN procedure⁷. Comprehension skills are compared by means of the correct answers for goal, internal state terms and reasoning items of comprehension questions.

¹ e.g. Campbell & Rosenthal 2000; Kagan and Dillon, 2001; Kagan, 2005; among others

² e.g. Vorobyeva & Bel, 2021

³ Benmamoun et al., 2013; Montrul, 2005

⁴ Gagarina et. al, 2012, 2015, 2019

⁵ Marian et al., 2007

⁶ Luchkina et.al, 2021

⁷ Krasnoshchekova & Kashleva, 2019

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„Ich bin schon ein richtiges Schulkind, du noch nicht!“

Geschwisterkommunikation im kindlichen Spracherwerb

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In der Spracherwerbsforschung war die Rolle jeglicher nicht-elterlicher Interaktionspartner*innen des sprachlernenden Kindes lange ein Randthema. In jüngerer Zeit rückt jedoch auch der Einfluss von Geschwistern und Gleichaltrigen („Peers“) in den Blick der Spracherwerbsforschung.

In der überwiegenden Zahl der Longitudinalstudien, in denen das Verhältnis zwischen der Sprachproduktion des Kindes und der an das Kind gerichteten Sprache untersucht wird, werden als sprachlicher Input üblicherweise die Äußerungen der Mutter herangezogen. Dabei wurde immer wieder darauf hingewiesen (u.a. Mannle, Barton & Tomasello 1992; Hoff 2006; Havron et al. 2019), dass die Interaktion zwischen Vätern und ihren Kindern, sowie die zwischen Geschwistern, andere Eigenschaften aufweist, als die zwischen Müttern und ihren Kindern und deshalb auch in Untersuchungen zum Input miteinbezogen werden muss.

In Bezug auf den Einfluss von Geschwistern auf die kindliche Entwicklung gibt es durchaus widersprüchliche Ergebnisse. Generell werden kognitive Vorteile für Erstgeborene angenommen (u.a. Tomasello & Mannle 1985; Dai & Heckmann 2013), in Bezug auf den Spracherwerb wurden ebenfalls Hinweise auf Vorteile für Erstgeborene bei der lexikalischen und grammatischen Entwicklung gefunden. Dies gilt allerdings, bei genauerer Betrachtung, nur für die *frühe* Entwicklungsphase bis ca. drei Jahre (u.a. Hoff-Ginsberg 1998; Havron et al. 2019). Für die *spätere* lexikalische Entwicklung deuten die Ergebnisse einer experimentellen Untersuchung zum Erwerb komplexer Verben (Mattes 2019) auf einen Vorteil für Kinder mit älteren Geschwistern hin. Dies könnte im Zusammenhang mit Ergebnissen von Untersuchungen wie jene von Tomasello & Mannle (1985) oder Hoff-Ginsberg (1998) stehen, die gezeigt haben, dass Zweit- und Spätergeborene durch die Interaktion mit ihren Geschwistern vor allem in ihren pragmatischen und kommunikativen Fähigkeiten gefördert werden.

Vor diesem Hintergrund werden die Ergebnisse einer Fallstudie vorgestellt und diskutiert, in der sprachliche Strukturen in der Interaktion zwischen zwei Schwestern aus einem longitudinalen Spontansprachkorpus (Mattes 2015-2018) analysiert werden. Verglichen werden die Daten der monolingual aufwachsenden Kinder in einem Alter von 3 und 6 Jahren mit den Daten zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt im Alter von 6 und 9 Jahren. Der Fokus liegt sowohl auf der Beschaffenheit und der Veränderung des sprachlichen Inputs, sowie auf spezifischen Kommunikationsstrategien zwischen älterem und jüngerem Geschwisterkind.

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I bin Star Wars – Code-mixing patterns in German-English bilingual language acquisition

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Code-mixing, i.e. the use of more than one language in a single utterance, is one of the most salient features of multilingual language use. Code-mixing patterns in early childhood are a particularly interesting object of study as they allow for gauging the “building blocks” that play a role in children’s acquisition of their languages. In this paper, we present first results of a DFG-funded project investigating early code-mixing in German-English bilingual children from a usage-based perspective.

According to usage-based approaches to language acquisition (e.g. Tomasello 2003), children acquire language in a piecemeal fashion in an item-based way based on the input they receive, drawing on domain-general cognitive mechanisms such as pattern detection and intention reading (Tomasello & Lieven 2008, Ambridge & Lieven 2011). Patterns/multi-word units play a particularly important role in this process (Arnon & Christiansen 2017), as they provide a starting point for abstracting away constructions at various levels of complexity and schematicity, especially so-called frame-and-slot patterns like [*I want X*].

Previous studies on monolingual language acquisition have established a variety of data-driven empirical methods for detecting patterns in child language data in a bottom-up way (e.g. Dąbrowska & Lieven 2005, Hartmann et al. 2021, McCauley & Christiansen 2019). We will present a case study in which we use these methods to analyze longitudinal data from two German-English bilingual children to assess variability in code-mixing, addressing the following research questions:

- RQ1. Can we detect differences in the way the two children use code-mixing, regarding a) the frequency of code-mixed utterances, b) the way in which the languages are mixed?
- RQ2. If yes, can we relate these differences to differences in the linguistic input the children receive?

Addressing RQ1, we use traceback (Dąbrowska & Lieven 2005, Hartmann et al. 2021) and chunk-based learning (McCauley & Christiansen 2019) to analyze the results with regard to individual differences in the resulting patterns, showing that there are both interesting commonalities as well as considerable differences between the two children. To address RQ2, we check whether the patterns found in the data has precedents in the children’s linguistic input. In addition, we correlate the language proportions in the child-directed speech data to the language combinations in the code-mixing patterns. In a further step, we take a closer look

at one of the two children, “Fion”, whose linguistic input shifts from predominantly German to predominantly English during the period of investigation.

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Successive bilinguals' language learning trajectories under the influence of changing balance of input

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While L2 German is tested mostly in bilingual language development, rare L1 Turkish tests reveal crucial facts about bilingual child language development. Analysis of spontaneous speech data at 24 homes in Vienna where Turkish was spoken first to children and German was mainly learned outside the homes, show that the choice of family language policy has a detectable effect on a child's L2 German learning speed.

Between the first (3,5 years) and the second time data point (4,5 years), the children, from homes with lower educational attainment, show a slower growth in their L2 compared to their peers from homes where at least one parent has a higher educational background. The higher parental competences in the L2 German the higher the probability that the language skills are passed on to the children. Further analysis clearly detects an advantage in L2 learning for those children whose parents have attained their degree in the country where the child is going to attend the school. A parent with a higher degree attained in the academic language German provides an input that leads to a higher vocabulary growth curve in the L2 German in the very early years of a child. Divergent outcomes suggest that differences in the amount of the language input influence the level of skills in that language. Data shows that the rate of growth in bilingual language development is not stable in both languages when under the influence of changes in balance of input.

This is why testing both languages is essential for a full picture of the language competences of a successive bilingual child in a time of transition from day care at home to an institutional day care center. Finally, growing up with two languages does not affect per se the size of vocabulary but may contribute to the changing balance of proficiency in the two languages.

Multilingual repertoire development in institutional education: insights from two diverse settings

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In an increasingly diverse world shaped by globalization, migration flows, and technological advancements, an increasing recognition of multilingualism primarily favours high prestige languages and the middle and upper social class and the conceptualisation and valorisation of language(s). While institutional sectors perceive language as clearly defined and limited entities, such demarcations fail to align with the inherently versatile and fluid linguistic repertoires of multilingual speakers. Fluid linguistic repertoires, that can be understood as a storage for linguistic resources speakers can context-sensitively draw upon, are often not valued (Blommaert & Rampton 2011).

This talk is concerned with how speakers' backgrounds and multilingual repertoires shape their language development when attending institutional education with a strong monolingual habitus, drawing from the LILIEMA project in Senegal (Weidl 2022; Weidl et al. 2022) and the Udele project in Vienna, Austria (Yildiz, Erling & Weidl forthcoming; Weidl & Erling forthcoming). Both projects employ ethnographically grounded multimethod approaches, informed by translanguaging (Li Wei 2023), including field notes, observations, interviews, material development, targeted interventions and public outreach.

In Senegal most people grow up multilingually and first encounter standardized French upon entering school, subsequently being exclusively instructed in French, creating a myriad of problems. Within LILIEMA, we therefore developed a language independent multilingual and multilateral education program, tailored to the needs of highly multilingual and diverse speakers. My current role in Udele is significantly influenced by findings and experiences in Senegal. Udele investigates opportunity gaps in English language education within highly diverse urban middle schools with a large student body from transnational or migration backgrounds, growing up with languages other than, or in addition to, German. Much like multilingual students in Senegal, multilingual students in Austria (with low socioeconomic status) face similar challenges when entering a predominantly monolingual education.

I will address the importance of recognizing multilingualism in the educational sector and show examples of how the use of multilingualism can assist learners in gaining easier access to, and develop in, the official language of education and additional languages of school. The talk will conclude with some results from both projects and an outlook for future activities in Austria.

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Syntaktische Strukturen in gesprochener und geschriebener fortgeschrittener L2 Deutsch – Annäherungen an zielsprachliche Normvorstellungen

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In diesem Beitrag werden erste Ergebnisse eines Dissertationsprojekts vorgestellt. Gilt der Syntaxerwerb im Bereich Deutsch als Fremd- und Zweitsprache als gut und breit erforschtes Gebiet (siehe u.a. Clahsen et al. 1983; Diehl et al. 2000 und Folgestudien), so gibt es doch Lücken in der Erforschung der fortgeschrittenen Lerner Sprache Deutsch. Ziele der vorliegenden Studie sind, individuelle Unterschiede und allgemeine Tendenzen im fortgeschrittenen Syntaxerwerb aufzuzeigen und eventuelle Zusammenhänge zu erkennen (zwischen Sprachkompetenz und Medialität sowie Faktoren zur Aufgabenstellung bzw. Aufmerksamkeitssteuerung, sprachinternen Faktoren und Voraussetzungen der Lernenden).

Es wurde ein Korpus zur weitgehend spontan produzierten gesprochenen und geschriebenen Sprache junger Erwachsener (Proband*innen mit Deutsch als L1 und L2) angelegt. Ausgewählte – in Bezug auf die deutsche Syntax als herausfordernd geltende – syntaktische Strukturen wurden mithilfe eines Grammatikalitätsurteilstests isoliert elizitiert. Informationen zu den einzelnen Proband*innen wurden erhoben sowie ausgewählte Testungen zu allgemein kognitiven Fähigkeiten durchgeführt. Durch die Verzahnung von qualitativen und quantitativen Ansätzen (*Mixed-Methods-Design*) können individuelle Entwicklung und allgemeine Tendenzen aufgezeigt werden.

Anhand einer verbasierten Analyse wird die zielsprachliche Umsetzung der Verbstellung untersucht und in mithilfe einer erweiterten Kategorienbildung (Grammatik der gesprochenen Sprache), basierend auf vorangegangenen Studien (siehe oben), kategorisiert. Sprachliche Variation von syntaktischen Strukturen nimmt in der Auswertung neben den Faktoren Medialität und Aufgabenkomplexität eine bestimmende Rolle ein. Generell erfolgt die Analyse der Sprachdaten deskriptiv (weitgehend im Hinblick auf *complexity*, *accuracy* und *fluency*), Erwerbskriterien im engeren Sinn wurden nicht definiert.

In den bisher ausgewerteten Daten von Proband*innen mit L2 Deutsch können allgemeine Tendenzen (im Mittel sind Strukturen mit VE und XVS in medialer Mündlichkeit eher als in medialer Schriftlichkeit von nicht-zielsprachlichen Wendungen betroffen), aber auch individuelle Unterschiede festgestellt werden. Ausgehend von ersten Ergebnissen wird diskutiert, inwiefern sich fortgeschrittene Lernende (welchen) zielsprachlichen Normen annähern (Bezugsnorm aus Vergleichskorpus: Proband*innen mit L1 Deutsch) und welche Implikationen sich dadurch ergeben.

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