



16. Wuppertaler Linguistisches Kolloquium

International Workshop Languages in Contact:

Cross-linguistic influence on different grammatical domains in bilingual first language acquisition

27th, 28th and 29th May 2010
University of Wuppertal
(Campus Freudenberg)

www.lic.uni-wuppertal.de

In recent years there has been intense interest in examining hypotheses that may account for why in the process of acquiring two languages from birth (2L1) some areas of the grammar are more or less vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence. It has been proposed that influence may be induced by the mapping of universal principles onto language-specific principles, by ambiguity in the input, by an inclination to make the languages converge, by structural competition between the languages, by an unbalanced dominance of the two languages, by frequency factors, by differing conceptualizations, by structural "locality". The participants in the proposed colloquium examine the validity of the hypotheses offered to account for cross-linguistic influence, their commonalities and differences, with the aim of contributing to the development of a systematic account of the factors that promote this influence (e.g., grammatical domain, language dominance, language combination). To this end, the participants consider a wide range of studies dealing with cross-linguistic influence and present their own analyses of "vulnerable structures" in a representative sample of various combinations of typologically different languages, including Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish. The children studied have acquired their languages from birth and range in age from one year five months to five years. In order to be able to work out the limits of cross-linguistic influence, researchers with a focus on heritage speakers have been invited: In bilingual first language acquisition, some effects of cross-linguistic influence fade away once the children are growing older. Some effects, however, persist and are still observable in bilingual

adults. The question is what the determinants of the disappearance or persistence of effects of cross-linguistic influence are. With respect to the language combination, most researchers have studied a Romance language in combination with another language.

The proposed colloquium brings together researchers representing cutting-edge research on 2L1 and second language acquisition and cross-linguistic influence in eight countries (Argentina, Canada, Germany, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, UK, USA). In addition to language acquisition researchers, well-known linguists with a focus on theoretical linguistics have been asked to contribute their expertise to the grammatical domains to be studied, namely the distribution between SER and ESTAR, grammatical gender, null-subjects, finite verb placement. Based on their analyses of these grammatical aspects, they challenge one of the most influential proposals in the field: the view that cross-linguistic transfer occurs when there is structural overlap in the two languages and the structures are located at the interface between syntax and pragmatics. Some participants claim that structural overlap is not a necessary condition for cross-linguistic influence; others point out that it is not a sufficient condition either. On the other hand, there is agreement among the participants that multiple causes need to be considered in the explanation of language interaction. It is hoped that the colloquium discussion will clarify the role that these various causes may play in predicting cross-linguistic influence and that it will help disentangle the complexity of this question.

International Workshop: Languages in Contact

27th, 28th and 29th May 2010

University of Wuppertal (Guesthouse)

27th May

09:00- 09:15 Registration
09:15- 09:30 Welcome and opening remarks

Cross-linguistic influence: SER - ESTAR

09:30 - 10:30 Introductory talk:
Carmen Silva-Corvalán (University of Southern California):
Cross-linguistic influence in Spanish-English bilinguals: Are SER and ESTAR vulnerable?

10:30 - 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 - 12:00 Karen Zagona (University of Washington):
The SER / ESTAR alternation: syntactic and semantic factors

12:00 - 12:30 Laia Arnaus Gil (University of Wuppertal):
The acquisition of SER and ESTAR in German-Spanish children

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch

Cross-linguistic influence: SER -ESTAR and grammatical gender

13:30 - 14:30 Raquel Fernández Fuertes (University of Valladolid) & Juana M. Liceras (University of Ottawa):
Subjects and copulas: the directionality of transfer

14:30 - 15:00 Nadine Eichler (University of Wuppertal):
Gender assignment in switched DPs: German-Italian, German-French, German-Spanish, Italian-French children

15:00 - 15:30 Coffee break

15:30 - 16:30 Pascual Masullo (University of Bariloche, Argentina):
Variable vs. intrinsic features: gender and number in Spanish

16:30 - 17:30 Elena Nicoladis (University of Alberta):
Dominance doesn't always predict cross-linguistic transfer: evidence from French-English bilinguals

19:00 - Conference Dinner

28th May

09:00- 10:00 Introductory talk:
Aafke Hulk & Sharon Unsworth (University of Utrecht):
Cross-linguistic Influence revisited

10:00 - 10:30 Coffee break

Null- subjects in bilingual first language acquisition

10:30 - 11:30 Francesca Filiaci (University of Edinburgh):
A cross-linguistic comparison of anaphoric null and overt subjects in Italian and Spanish

11:30 - 12:30 Ludovica Serratrice (University of Manchester):
Bilingual children's interpretation of pronominal subjects in Italian: the role of language of the community and of language combination

12:30 - 13:30 Lunch

Null- subjects in bilingual first language acquisition and heritage speakers

13:30 - 14:30 Eugenia Casielles-Suárez (Wayne State University):
Vulnerable subjects in bilingual first language acquisition

14:30 - 15:00 Marisa Patuto (University of Wuppertal):
The acquisition of subjects in bilingual German-Italian and German-Spanish children

15:00 - 15:30 Coffee break

15:30 - 16:30 Tanja Kupisch (University of Hamburg):
Generic subjects in simultaneously bilingual adults (German/Italian)

16:30 - 17:30 Pedro Guijarro-Fuentes (University of Plymouth):
Language transmission in English-Spanish bilingual families in the UK

17:30 - 18:30 Patrick A. Bolger (University of Alberta):
Psycholinguistic approaches to language processing in heritage speakers

20:00 - Dinner

29th May

Cross-linguistic influence in bilingual children and individual variation: word order

09:00- 10:00 Petra Bernardini (University of Lund):
Transfer in the contact between French and Italian? Evidence from the acquisition of object clitics in L2 and 2L1

10:00 - 10:30 Valentina Repetto (University of Naples/ Wuppertal):
The interaction between word order and information structure in bilingual Italian- German acquisition: a case study

10:30 - 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 - 12:00 Rosemarie Tracy (University of Mannheim):
Cross-linguistic (mis-)alignment: empirical and theoretical challenges

12:00 - 13:00 Kay González (University of Illinois):
Light verbs in code-switching

13:00 - 13:30 Final discussion and farewell