
Capturing variability in thinking-for-speaking: A GAMM analysis of motion event encoding in multilingual English learners

Julia Edeleva & Tanja Angelovska

Universität Kassel

[uk107425, angelovska]@uni-kassel.de

This study examines how L_n English learners restructure their conceptualization of motion events, focusing on cross-linguistic differences in lexicalisation patterns. In Talmy's typology (2000), English is satellite-framed, encoding path in prepositions (e.g., *run into the room*), while other languages are verb-framed (e.g., *entrer dans la chambre*). Such contrasts influence learners' processing routines and may lead to transfer effects (Treffers-Daller & Tidball 2016) consistent with Thinking-for-Speaking hypothesis (Bylund & Athanasopoulos, 2015). From a Rethinking-for-Speaking perspective (Robinson & Ellis 2008), L1-based routines may limit what becomes intake in the L2.

The study tests whether structured input (VanPatten 2018) combined with spaced practice (Cepeda et al. 2006) can support learners' shift toward English-like motion encoding. Participants were 150 multilingual adolescents (ages 12–16) in German public schools who spoke German plus a migration language (e.g., Arabic, Russian). A digital pre-/post-test design included 20 animated motion-event clips where learners indicated preference for path vs. satellite-framed descriptions using a slider; response times were recorded. Training consisted of a processing-instruction tutorial with feedback, completed either in one session or spaced over three days. The post-test followed one week later. Analyses will use generalised additive mixed models (GAMMs) to trace non-linear change, model individual trajectories, and test interactions with multilingual background variables. This approach reveals not only whether restructuring occurs but how learners dynamically recalibrate their motion-event construal.

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