

PALA 2025

23rd International Symposium of Processability
Approaches to Language Acquisition



18th – 19th September 2025

Universität Paderborn

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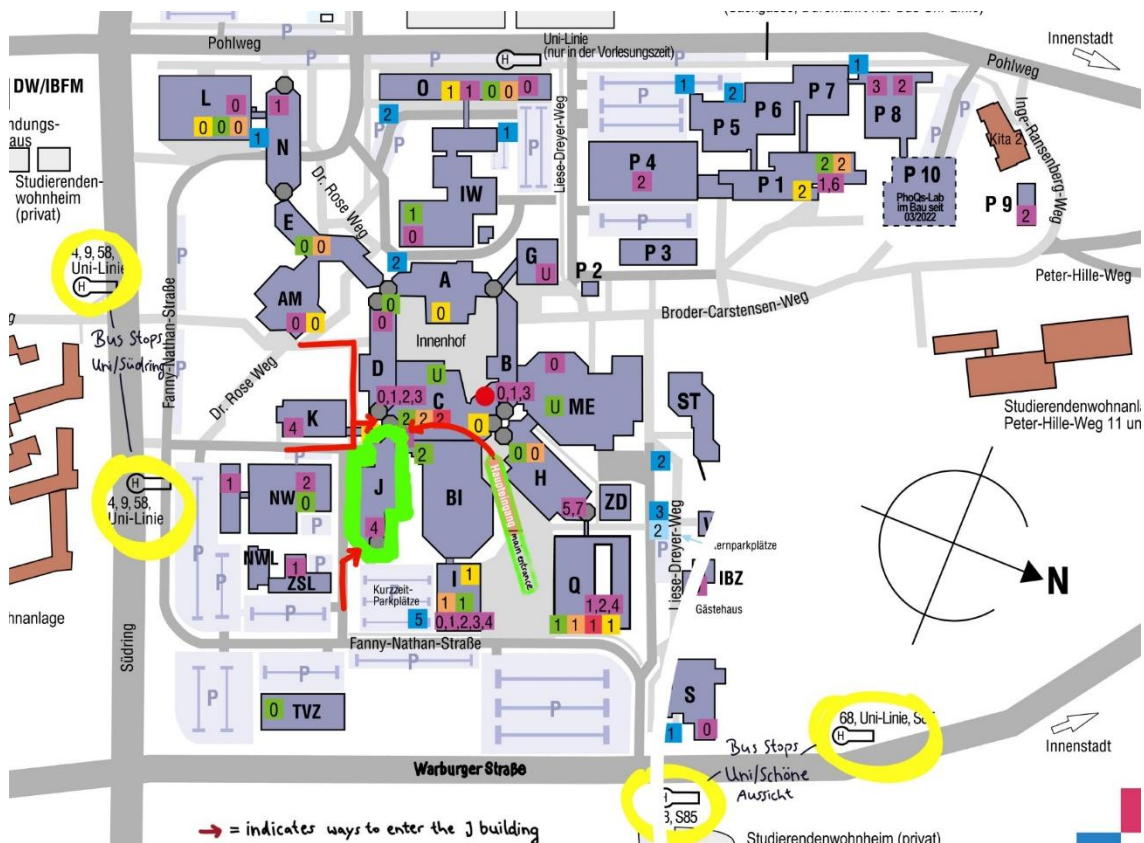
Conference Venue

Universität Paderborn

Warburger Straße 100, 33098 Paderborn, Germany

J Building, 4th floor

Rooms J4.219 and J4.319



23rd International Symposium of Processability Approaches to Language Acquisition

Time	Thursday, 18 September
08.15-09.15	Registration
09.15-09.30	Welcome and Opening
09.30-10.30	Keynote Anke Lenzing: Decoding the dynamics of L2 interaction – A processability lens on the acquisition of turn-taking skills
10.30-11.00	Coffee
	Individual Papers
11.00-11.10	Welcome (head of department)
11.10-12.40	<i>Developmentally Moderated Syntactic L1/L2 Transfer to English as an Lx</i> Katharina Egger
	<i>Beyond Clause Boundaries: Operationalizing the Acquisitional Path of Additive Particles in L2 Russian</i> Marco Biasio / Marco Magnani
	<i>Morphological Transfer in L1 Arabic – L2 French – L3 English Acquisition: Testing the Processability Theory Hierarchy (DIGITAL)</i> Khalid Elasri
12.40-13.40	Lunch
	Individual Papers
13.40-15.10	<i>Acquisitional sequences in textbooks for German as a foreign language: a case study</i> Federica Ricci Garotti
	<i>Entrenchment in SLA - the paradox of its dual roles</i> Anke Lenzing, Manfred Pienemann, Howard Nicholas, Frank Lanze
	<i>Emotional and Cognitive Engagement in Online and Offline Language Learning: A Processability Theory Perspective (DIGITAL)</i> Md. Zahidul Islam
15.10-15.50	Coffee
15.50-16.50	<i>Exploring Processability and Second Language Acquisition Dynamics: A Scoping Review of English Language Development in Children of International Students (DIGITAL)</i> Amelia Meidhiatiningsih
	<i>Do the cognitive constraints in language pedagogy apply to L2 English speaking and writing of high school students? Extended evidence from Indonesia (DIGITAL)</i> Rudi Suherman / Bronwen Dyson
19.00	Conference Dinner

23rd International Symposium of Processability Approaches to Language Acquisition

Time	Friday, 19 September
09.00-10.30	Individual Papers
	<i>Machine translation, ethics and second language acquisition: A study of adult migrants' English language use and perceptions</i> Bronwen Dyson
	<i>Acquiring grammar through input-based tasks. A quasi-experimental study with beginner learners of Italian in Austria</i> Anna Romano
	<i>A PT perspective on Norwegian and Swedish children with Developmental Language Disorder. A new way to analyse Sentence Repetition.</i> (DIGITAL) Gisela Håkansson / Nelli Kalnak
10.30-11.00	Coffee
11.00-11.30	<i>Is 'the teachability hypothesis' a pedagogy?</i> Howard Nicholas
11.30-12.30	Keynote Manfred Pienemann: Simulating language and learning in the context of PT
12.30-13.00	Closing

Keynote Speakers

Keynote 1



Decoding the dynamics of L2 interaction – A processability lens on the acquisition of turn-taking skills

Anke Lenzing, University of Innsbruck

In my talk, I focus on some of the key challenges L2 learners face in the acquisition of turn-taking. The bulk of human language use is conversational, and turn-taking is regarded as part of the “universal infrastructure for language” (Levinson, 2016). However, despite its ubiquitous occurrence in communication, turn-taking poses a huge cognitive challenge to interactants in a conversation. It forms part of an intricate system characterised by the rapid exchange of turns between interlocutors, aiming to minimise gaps and avoid overlaps (Sacks et al., 1974; Levinson & Torreira, 2016).

To achieve this fine-tuned coordination between listening and speaking, interlocutors need to prepare their turns in advance, which includes making predictions about the current speaker’s turn and aligning with their conversation partner (e.g., Garrod & Pickering, 2015, 2021).

How do L2 learners cope with this cognitive challenge, and which processes are involved in their acquisition of turn-taking skills?

Widening the scope of Processability Theory (e.g., Pienemann, 1998; Pienemann & Lenzing, 2025) to these cognitive aspects of L2 interaction, I discuss theoretical considerations regarding the question as to how the psycholinguistic constraints that learners face in L2 acquisition affect their ability to make predictions in communicative interaction. I then present empirical insights into the turn-taking abilities of L2 learners of English at different stages of acquisition. This includes timing in turn-taking, learners’ alignment behaviour, as well as the learners’ abilities to make predictions. The analyses are based on audio and video data, as well as mobile eye-tracking data obtained from L2 learners’ communicative interactions (e.g., Lenzing, 2024; Lenzing, Schmiderer & Egger, 2025; Lenzing & Schmiderer, submitted/accepted).

The results of the analyses shed light on some of the challenges involved in the acquisition of L2 turn-taking and point to relations between the L2 learners’ processing constraints and their turn-taking abilities.

Garrod, S., & Pickering, M. J. (2015). The use of content and timing to predict turn transitions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 751.

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Levinson, S. C., & Torreira, F. (2015). Timing in turn-taking and its implications for processing models of language. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, 731.

Sacks, H., Schegloff, E. A., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language*, 50(4), 696-735.

Lenzing, A. & Schmiderer, K. (submitted/accepted). Processing in the Receptive, Productive and Interactive Use of an L2. In: Wright, C., Peltonen, P., Piske, T. & Steinlen, A. (eds.), *Context Matters*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Lenzing, A. (2024). Timing turn-taking: the art of making predictions in L2 communicative interaction. Inaugural lecture, University of Innsbruck, 29.11.2024.

Lenzing, Schmiderer, Egger (2025). Investigating L2 multi-person interaction – what gaze shifts reveal about predictions in turn-taking. Paper to be presented at the EuroSLA conference, Tromsø, 25.-28.06. 2025.

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Keynote 2



Simulating language and learning in the context of PT

Manfred Pienemann, Paderborn University

PT was conceptualised as a formal and thus testable contribution to the debate about the learnability of (second) languages. Its key objective was and still is to add a set of constraints to language learnability theory that is based on an aspect of the human mind, more specifically on language processing.

Recently, the stunning performance of so-called (Large) Language Models (LLMs) gained a great deal of public attention, and some researchers appear to imply that computational language models are now fully capable of replicating the linguistic abilities of human speakers and learners of language through statistical learning.

To this long-term observer of the modern debate about language learnability it appears that with the above LLM-based position the pendulum swings back yet again to that end of the continuum in the learnability debate that was once occupied by S-R theory.

In this presentation, I advocate a position that balances statistical learning with human-specific constraints on language learning, thus embracing a limited role of computational language models in learnability theory. I will show that – despite their impressive performance – the role computational language models is limited, due **inter alia** to their lack of human capacities such as morality or reasoning that are based on the intentionality of the human mind.

I will look at two examples of the constructive role of SLA simulations in the context of PT-based SLA research. The first example is based on a collaborative research project conducted by Frank Lanze, Anke Lenzen, Howard Nicholas and myself. In this project, we simulate statistical L2 learning based on input and a set of constraining factors. Our software is designed to simulate the internal dynamics of the learning process as a dynamical system. This computational tool enables a comparison of natural learning data with simulated data – thus uncovering computational parameters that determine differential L2 dynamics. This computational tool permits us to test hypotheses such as the following: “L2 developmental and variational dynamics are fundamentally different”.

The second example (suggested by Frank Lanze) utilises a publicly available LLM as a research tool. I will show that the LLM “llama-3.2-3b-instruct” can be used on a personal computer to generate a program that can analyse a narrow range of ESL samples according to PT principles.

The above computational tools do have the capacity to promote the sophistication of SLA research. However, using or developing such tools does not imply that one needs to assume the now-popular position that LLMs are fully capable of replicating the linguistic abilities of human speakers and learners of language.

Abstracts

Day 1

Thursday, 18 September

Developmentally Moderated Syntactic L1/L2 Transfer to English as an Lx

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The presentation focuses on the theoretical foundations and empirical results regarding the first data collection of my PhD project, which examines the influence of German and Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian (BCMS) as an L1/L2 on the acquisition of English as an additional language (Lx) in Tyrol. Along with Turkish, BCMS is the most commonly spoken non-German language group in Austria (Statistik Austria, 2023) but is still rather underrepresented in language acquisition research.

In this longitudinal study, I collect spoken English language data (5th grade, age 10-12) of 18 German and 18 BCMS speakers through communicative activities in pairs. The study involves three data collection points over the course of one year aiming at capturing the language acquisition process and potential L1/L2 transfer development of the investigated 36 learners. The theoretical focus of this project draws upon Processability Theory (PT) (Pienemann, 1998; Pienemann et al., 2005) and the Developmentally Moderated Transfer Hypothesis (DMTH) (Håkansson et al., 2002). PT proposes that morpho-syntactic structures can only be produced when learners are developmentally able to process them. DMTH suggests that language transfer is limited by the architecture of the human language processor and thus, L1/L2 features are only transferable if the corresponding processing procedures are processable in the Lx. Consequently, it is assumed that transfer plays a subordinate role in language acquisition and does not lead to a change in the so-called route of acquisition of English.

To investigate whether the participants systematically transfer L1/L2 syntactic structures, the learners' English data regarding syntactic structures that resemble structures of their L1/L2s are qualitatively examined. Moreover, I perform linguistic profile analyses to determine whether the proposed route of acquisition has been altered due to syntactic transfer.

In addition to the study's initial results, first trends regarding the aforementioned PT- and DMTH-related assumptions will be discussed.

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Beyond Clause Boundaries: Operationalizing the Acquisitional Path of Additive Particles in L2 Russian

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The licensing and distribution of additive particles (APs) in Contemporary Russian (CR) is constrained by a variety of factors at the syntax-prosody and syntax-pragmatics interfaces. For instance, the lexical alternation between *tože* and *takže* ‘also, too’ is governed by the scopal relation each APs entertains with its domain of association (DA). While *tože* linearly follows its DA, introducing topic contrast and ensuring comment continuity with the propositional content of the previous sentence (1), *takže* linearly precedes it, introducing comment contrast and ensuring topic continuity (2) (cf. Padučeva 1974; Gundel 1975; Pekelis 2023):

- (1) [Anton]_{top1} [rabotaet]_{com}. [Ja]_{top2 / da} *tože* rabotaju.
‘Anton is working, and so am I.’
- (2) [Anton]_{top} [rabotaet]_{com1}. On *takže* [slušaet muzyku]_{com2 / da}.
‘Anton is working and also listening to music.’

This paper examines the acquisition of APs in L2 CR by proposing the integration of discourse-pragmatic features within PT’s S-bar procedure stage, i.e. at the level of interclausal information exchange. Specifically, building on Padučeva’s (1974) work on APs in Russian and SLA research on anaphora resolution (e.g., Sorace & Filiaci 2006), we hypothesise that, in order to produce sentences like (1)–(2), learners must process features such as [± topic shift] and [± focus] with referents beyond the clause boundaries.

To test our hypothesis we conducted a cross-sectional study on nine L1 Italian learners with a self-declared level of L2 Russian between A2 and B2. A visual storytelling task was

provided featuring two participants who performed on screen a number of identical or different actions. Different DAs (i.e., NP-SUBJ, VP, NP-OBJ) were contextually targeted so as to elicit the most appropriate AP from informants.

Results show that, even after mastering sentential morphology, learners struggle with AP distribution. In particular, while syntactic placement of APs proves largely accurate, selecting the appropriate form remains challenging. Such difficulties are only partially attributable to L1 transfer and seem to be highly dependent on the processing demands of interclausal unification of pragmatic features.

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Morphological Transfer in L1 Arabic – L2 French – L3 English Acquisition: Testing the Processability Theory Hierarchy

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Abstract

This study examined morphological transfer in the acquisition of English as a third language (L3) by Moroccan learners whose first language (L1) is Arabic and second language (L2) is French, using the framework of Processability Theory (PT). The primary aim was to assess the applicability of the PT hierarchy in a multilingual context and to explore how cross-linguistic influence from L1 and L2 shapes the morphosyntactic development of English. PT posits a universal hierarchy of processing procedures that language learners follow in a predictable sequence; this study tested whether this sequence remains consistent when multiple previously acquired languages interact.

Data were collected from 40 Moroccan university students enrolled in English language programs, all of whom had advanced proficiency in French and intermediate proficiency

in English. Three data collection instruments were employed: elicited oral production tasks, grammaticality judgment tasks, and written narrative texts. The analysis focused on core morphosyntactic structures predicted by PT, including subject-verb agreement, regular and irregular past tense marking, plural formation, and noun phrase constructions involving determiners and modifiers.

Findings revealed significant evidence of both positive and negative transfer from Arabic and French. French, due to its closer typological proximity to English, exerted a stronger influence, particularly in areas such as verb morphology and agreement patterns. While the majority of learners progressed through PT's predicted developmental stages, several deviations were observed. Some learners displayed accelerated acquisition of certain structures due to facilitative transfer from French, whereas others showed delayed development attributed to interference from Arabic.

These findings underscore the relevance of PT in multilingual acquisition contexts, while also pointing to the need for further refinement of the theory to account for transfer effects. The study offers practical implications for language instruction, assessment, and curriculum design in trilingual education settings.

Keywords: Processability Theory, Morphological Transfer, Multilingual Acquisition, Cross-linguistic Influence

Acquisitional sequences in textbooks for German as a foreign language: a case study

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Does the didactics of German as a foreign language (DaF) follow, in the study books used, the

acquisition phases hypothesised by acquisitional research, in particular the phases envisaged by the PT and referring to the German language?

The answer to this question could serve to improve the supply of teaching manuals, making the

acquisition process more accessible but also more natural and sustainable on a cognitive level.

A number of studies have verified that compliance with acquisition sequences is usually disregarded in textbooks for learners of German (Diehl et al. 2000, Kwakernaak 2002, Ballestracci 2008), particularly with regard to the acquisition of syntactic phenomena (SOV, V2). Empirical studies focused instead to morphological acquisition, in particular

of nominal phrases, have shown greater attention to the syntactic phases of acquisition than to the morphological ones, an area in which, moreover, learners usually turn out to be weaker (Baten 2011, Ricci Garotti 2022). The analysis of the most widespread German textbooks is part of an ongoing Italian ministerial project (LITI - Lingua Tedesca in Italia): the study has so far found quite a few discrepancies between the sequences, materials and activities proposed for the acquisition of the different syntactic phenomena (Satzklammer, V2, VE), as well as a weaker attention to the acquisition of the complex nominal group (Art. + Adj. + Noun in the different cases, numbers and gender).

In this contribution the partial results will be presented, that are so far obtained in the LITI project, paying particular attention to the acquisition of syntactic phenomena specific to German, to the times and ways in which these are proposed in study books and to the comparison between the space dedicated, on the one hand, to the morphological acquisition of the complex nominal group, and, on the other, to syntactic construction in German.

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Entrenchment in SLA - the paradox of its dual roles

Anke Lenzing, Manfred Pienemann, Howard Nicholas, Frank Lanze

Processability Theory provides a formal constraint-based framework that defines L2 development and variation within Hypothesis Space. Individual learners traverse Hypothesis Space on different routes. Pienemann, Lanze, Nicholas and Lenzing (2022) demonstrated that each individual route is determined by the specific dynamics of the given route.

In our paper, we discuss two distinct roles that entrenchment can play in this process. In the fields of language evolution and cognitive linguistics, entrenchment has been conceptualized as a cognitive process of reorganization. Langacker (1987, p. 59) argues the general case that “[w]ith repeated use a novel structure becomes progressively entrenched, to the point of becoming a unit ...”.

We view entrenchment as one key principle influencing the learner’s acquisition process. However, in contrast to the perspective proposed by Langacker, we argue that in SLA, entrenchment has two faces: one that enhances and one that inhibits a learner’s approximation of the L2. We have used a formalised account of Dynamical Systems Theory in our exploration of this paradox. In our approach to Dynamical Systems Theory and Processability Theory (see also Lenzing, Pienemann and Nicholas, 2023), we have designed a computational system that incorporates entrenchment as a core principle and that can simulate the evolution of two competing types of SLA processes – simplification and standardisation. We demonstrate the paradox of the dual roles of entrenchment by simulating the use and/or non-use of the copula by L2 learners. Our computational system is based on an ongoing interaction between a simulated learner and their interlocutor, constructing an L2 lexicon in which entries are progressively annotated for the presence or absence of elements over many thousands of turns. A simplification index ranging between 0 and 1 is calculated after each turn. The value 0 signals the total absence of semantically redundant elements such as the copula, and the value 1 signals the consistent use of such elements in obligatory contexts. The concept of entrenchment is separately (and formally) operationalised in the simulation. Each simulation yields a developmental trajectory represented by a curve ranging through points between 0 and 1.

This simulation demonstrates the significance of entrenchment as a principle driving L2 dynamics by showing that the simplification index changes significantly when entrenchment is active - compared to a steady simplification index in simulations with entrenchment being inactive. Thus, activating entrenchment results in trajectories that either develop towards 0 or 1 over time.

When learners develop a simplified TL variety (marked by the dominant absence of the copula or other semantically redundant but structurally obligatory elements) any further development that structurally requires such elements (e.g. copula inversion in questions) is blocked, resulting in stabilisation. In contrast, the dominant presence of such elements facilitates the further development of grammatical forms that require these elements. In other words, the inclusion of entrenchment in the simulation of L2 dynamics yields markedly different linguistic varieties along a learner’s trajectory in Hypothesis Space, each revealing a different face of entrenchment.

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Emotional and Cognitive Engagement in Online and Offline Language Learning: A Processability Theory Perspective

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Abstract

Processability Theory (PT) has been widely applied in second language acquisition (SLA) research to explain how learners develop morphosyntactic structures. However, the role of emotional and cognitive engagement in progressing through PT stages remains underexplored, particularly in online versus offline learning environments. This study examines how students' engagement influences their language processing abilities and syntactic development in face-to-face classrooms and virtual learning platforms. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 180 secondary and tertiary-level learners studying English as a second language (L2) across diverse contexts, including Bangladesh. The study measures learners' progression through PT stages while analyzing the impact of teacher-student interaction, real-time feedback, affective factors (motivation, anxiety, and engagement), and the pragmatics-syntax interface across learning modes. Findings reveal that emotionally and cognitively engaged students progress faster through PT stages, with interactive online learning fostering greater syntactic complexity than traditional lecture-based classrooms. Additionally, students with high cognitive engagement show improved accuracy in morphosyntactic structures, demonstrating that engagement-driven approaches enhance SLA outcomes. These insights have significant implications for language teachers, curriculum developers, and assessment designers, highlighting the need to integrate engagement-focused strategies

into online and offline L2 instruction. This research contributes to the growing intersection between PT, SLA, and engagement theory, advocating for a more student-centered, interactive approach to language teaching.

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Exploring Processability and Second Language Acquisition Dynamics: A Scoping Review of English Language Development in Children of International Students

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This study explores the English second language development of multilingual children through the lens of Processability Theory (PT) by focusing on the first step in my doctoral research, a scoping review. It reviews studies that analyze factors relevant to children's development in English as a second language, including cognitive processes, particularly those relating to processability, linguistic inputs children are engaged and exposed to, and social-affective variables. This scoping review brings together the evidence of four longitudinal studies investigating second language acquisition patterns in Indonesian children in English-speaking countries and studies of children from other language backgrounds. My preliminary analysis of the four studies of Indonesian children, carried out in England and Australia, show that they investigated different facets of second language acquisition from 2010 to 2024 with observation durations ranging from 9 months to 3 years. The study found three general themes of second language acquisition: patterns of development, family language patterns, and environmental influence. In terms of patterns of development, analysis revealed consistent progress in language processability, beginning with initial vocabulary acquisition and foundational communicative capacity, through to intermediate level problems such as overgeneralization of rules, to concluding with varying levels of morphological competence. English-rich environments and family language policies were demonstrated to be major factors influencing acquisition trajectories in terms of family language

patterns (Rizki; Al Fajri, 2021) and in terms of environmental influence (Sabbila; Miftachudin, 2022).

This review highlights the complex interplay of family dynamics, environmental factors, and individual development in second language acquisition. The presentation closes by mapping out my future doctoral research which will focus on longitudinal study examining specific developmental stages within different age groups and family circumstances to continue to trace the path of language acquisition in multilingual environments.

Keywords: Second Language Acquisition, Processability Theory, Multilingualism, Child Language Development, Scoping Review

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Do the cognitive constraints in language pedagogy apply to L2 English speaking and writing of high school students? Extended evidence from Indonesia

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This study is one of two parts of a larger doctoral research project aiming to integrate Processability Theory (PT: Pienemann, 1998, 2005) with the Genre-based approach (GBA) to develop the speaking and writing skills of L2 English learners in the Indonesian high school context. The first part of the study examines whether PT's cognitive constraints apply to the L2 English speaking and writing of high school students in Indonesia. The second explores the integration of developmental readiness into the grammar teaching nominated in the GBA. The former part will be presented in this article. This study employed a longitudinal design for six months, combined with a cross-sectional approach. It included a pretest, two instructional sessions, two mini posttests (one focusing on syntax and the other on morphology), and a delayed posttest, involving 40 high school students. To date, the results for pretests support PT since they show no counterevidence to PT's predictions for L2 English syntactic and morphological development. These results also confirm Spada and Lightbown's (1999) findings that stages on both skills do not largely mirror each other and that some students reached higher stages in their writing than in speaking. Added to this, the results for the mini posttest 1 show that after receiving instructions on the syntax of adverb-fronting (stage 3), some unready learners ($N=3$) stayed at stage 1, and most ready learners (stage 2) moved up to stage 3 ($N=17$) as predicted by PT. However, four ready learners stayed at stage 2, showing no or a lack of evidence of stage 3 production, while two unready learners (stage 1) moved up to stages 2 and 3. The latter confirm Bonilla's (2015) findings and further support Dyson's (2019) concept of 'developmental resources', suggesting that while instruction cannot enable learners to bypass developmental stages, it can facilitate progress for unready learners. This calls for teachers and PT scholars to consider cognitive constraints accordingly.

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Abstracts

Day 2

Thursday, 19 September

Machine translation, ethics and second language acquisition: A study of adult migrants' English language use and perceptions

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The increasing accuracy of machine translation, such as Google Translate, is raising concerns among language teachers, including in relation to ethics. Ducar and Schocket (2018) observe that one way to detect machine translation output is when lower- and intermediate-level learners, who would be expected to produce language errors, submit perfectly accurate text. Starting with this observation, the study examines how learners respond to machine translation when writing in their second language. The context is the Adult Migrant English Program in Australia. The study creates a novel theoretical framing by synthesizing a psycholinguistic theory of language development – Processability Theory (Pienemann, 1998) – with research on ethical writing collaborations (Ede & Lunsford, 2001). The linguistic part of the study adopts 3rd person singular -s (3SG-s) as the focal grammatical form since its sentence-level processing should test the participants' ethics. Data are being collected by an established protocol (Chon, Shin & Kim, 2021). The participants (thus far, 16) complete a pretest of English writing ability and a three-step procedure: direct writing in English, written self-translation from the L1 and written machine translation from the L1. Then, the participants read one of the following forms of advice: 1) the institutional guide on acknowledging AI and 2) a suggestion to use only some of the machine's output, after which they can change their direct writing. Finally, the participants complete a questionnaire on their machine translation use. Focusing on the results for 3SG-s emergence, the preliminary findings suggest that the participants vary in three ways: one group shows 3SG-s across the conditions, another group shows emergence in the machine translation condition despite a lack of emergence in some prior conditions, and the final group shows no emergence in the machine translation condition despite some prior emergence. The implications for PT, language teaching and future research are discussed.

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Acquiring grammar through input-based tasks. A quasi-experimental study with beginner learners of Italian in Austria

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Previous studies on the application of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to beginner level classrooms have shown encouraging results regarding the acquisition of vocabulary and simple grammatical features (Erlam & Ellis, 2019; Shintani, 2016; Shintani & Ellis, 2010). However, the research in this field remains limited, especially concerning foreign languages other than English and more complex grammatical features (Bygate, 2020; Ellis, 2020; Erlam & Tolosa, 2022; Révész & Chung, 2023). Additionally, most studies have focused on accuracy-based measures of grammar, which may be less suitable for assessing beginner-level learners. Therefore, the advantages of TBLT in beginners' classrooms are still largely unexplored.

This PhD project addresses these gaps by examining the acquisition of Italian plural morphology through input-based tasks. We conducted a quasi-experimental intervention study on noun pluralization with four intact beginner-level school classes (n=78) in Tyrol, Austria. Two classes received input-based tasks with an extensive focus on form (TBLT) during the tasks, while the other two were given explicit grammar explanations prior to the tasks (TaskSupported Language Teaching, TSLT). The two-week intervention, held in November 2024, included five teaching sessions. All participants completed pre-, post-, and delayed posttests measuring receptive and productive grammar and vocabulary knowledge. Productive data, collected via a same-or-different task, will be analyzed with focus on individual learner profiles and the emergence of the plural forms, drawing on Processability Theory (Bettoni & Di Biase, 2015; Pienemann, 1998). Acquisition is operationalized as the productive use of the target structures across lexically and morphologically diverse contexts (Di Biase & Kawaguchi, 2002; Lenzing, 2013; Schmiderer, 2023).

This paper presents preliminary findings from the productive data analysis and discusses implications for classroom practice.

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A PT perspective on Norwegian and Swedish children with Developmental Language Disorder. A new way to analyse Sentence Repetition.

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Children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) have considerable problems with language acquisition, with morphosyntax being one of the vulnerable areas. In the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF; Semel, Wiig & Secord 2003) Sentence Repetition is used to elicit particular structures of varying complexity. The scoring is either to note down whether there is an exact repetition or not, or to give minus points for each error in the repetition.

In this paper, the focus is not on the errors, but on which structures the children produce, and the PT hierarchy of developmental stages (Pienemann 1998), is used to differentiate between these structures. The stages are predicted to be emerge in an implicational order. Based on this, two research questions are formulated.

RQ 1 will there be an implicational order between the structures in the children's production?

RQ 2 will children with DLD have more problems with later stages

The data come from one study of 38 Norwegian-speaking children (19 with DLD, 19 controls; Håkansson et al. 2024) and one study of 49 Swedish-speaking children (Håkansson & Kalnak 2025). Structures from the CELF test that could be placed in the PT hierarchy were selected and analysed. A robust implicational order between the structures emerged (RQ 1). With very few exceptions, children who produced higher stages also produced lower stages. As for RQ 2, only two of 19 Norwegian children with DLD and one of 49 Swedish children with DLD produced the subordinate clause procedure with a specific word order. Out of the 19 children in the Norwegian control group 16 children produced this, demonstrating that the last PT stage is particularly vulnerable in children with DLD. The clinical advantages of analyses based on developmental stages in children with DLD will be discussed.

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Is ‘the teachability hypothesis’ a pedagogy?

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When Pienemann (1984) outlined the teachability hypothesis, he focused on then-known features of L2 morphosyntactic development. He demonstrated that (in relation to these features) the capacity of teachers to induce learning was constrained. Learning was defined in relation to learners’ independent production of increasingly complex grammatical features. The approach to teaching was not analysed. The fundamental point was having the same approach to teaching in both the experimental and the control conditions.

Since then, work related to teachability research has embraced various approaches to teaching and the methodological consequences of (developmentally-moderated) task-based approaches (Di Biase 2008; Roos 2019). Critical research has been based in

approaches such as socio-cultural theory (Zhang & Lantolf 2015). Thus, in practice, there is no explicitly-defined pedagogy associated with the teachability hypothesis. The question addressed in this presentation is whether this pedagogy exists.

Pienemann (1984) investigated the emergence of those word order features in learners' independent production of L2 German identified in Meisel, Clahsen & Pienemann (1981). Each term is important. Emergence as the acquisition criterion means that teachability makes no claims about full control of the feature. Word order as the focus means that teachability makes no claims about multiple other features ranging from pronunciation to politeness. Independent production of novel examples stands in contrast to rote memorisation of examples, the latter not being viewed as 'successful learning' because of the location of rote-learned chunks at stage 1 in the model. In contrast, a 'pedagogy' for L2 development must address the full range of communicative resources, both production and comprehension, the dynamics of interaction in (inter)cultural contexts, knowledge as well as use and the process of gaining control after emergence.

In this presentation, I locate teachability within that wider pedagogy, showing that there is no unique 'teachability' pedagogy despite a specific measure of learning.

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