

# Dutch compound constructions in additional language acquisition: a diasystematic-constructionist approach

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# Introduction



# Introduction

- **Compound constructions in Dutch and French:**
  - In both Dutch and French, morphological and syntactic patterns are available to build lexical multi-word units
    - Du. *wetenschapsbeleid* 'science policy' vs *wetenschappelijk beleid* 'scientific policy' (Booij 2019: 105)
    - Fr. *village(-)vacances* vs *village de vacances* 'holiday resort'
  - Languages may significantly vary with respect to their degree of analyticity (cf. « Germanic / Romance Sandwich », e.g. van Haeringen 1956, Hüning et al. 2006, Lamiroy 2011)
    - Dutch is a more synthetic language than French
    - **Dutch has a stronger tendency towards compounding than French** (Van Goethem 2009; Van Goethem & Amiot 2019)

# Introduction

- 3 important **differences** between Dutch and French compounding:
    1. **Productivity:** Compounding is more productive in Dutch than in French (Van Goethem 2009; Van Goethem & Amiot 2019)
      - Du. *badkamer* vs Fr. *salle de bains* 'bathroom'
      - Du. *zoutwaterzwembad* vs Fr. *piscine d'eau salée* 'saltwater pool'
    2. **Word order:** Dutch has right-headed compounding, whereas French has left-headed compounding
      - Du. *bloemkool* vs Fr. *chou-fleur* 'cauliflower'
    3. **Demarcation compound/phrase:** The distinction between compounds and (lexicalized) phrases is more clearly established in Dutch than in French (spelling, prosody, linking elements, loss of adjectival inflection)
      - Du. *hoogspanning* vs Fr. *haute tension* 'high voltage'
- ➔ **Research question:** What is the impact of these differences on the acquisition of Dutch compounds by French-speaking learners?  
(cf. Hiligsmann 1997: mistakes in the formation of Dutch compounds)

# Outline

- 1. State of the art
- 2. Diasystematic Construction Grammar
- 3. Aims of the study and research hypotheses
- 4. Corpus data and methods
- 5. A multilevel constructional analysis
- 6. Discussion and conclusions

# 1. State of the art

## State of the art: acquisition of word-formation

- Little attention has been paid to the **acquisition of word-formation** (Lefer 2011)
- **Morphological awareness** is well documented in English (e.g. Pasquarella et al. 2011), but it is still an **uncharted territory for languages such as Dutch and French** (except for some fragmented studies, e.g. Deacon et al. 2007 for French)
- Nevertheless, several studies emphasize the **need for more explicit attention to word-formation in foreign language pedagogy**
  - Balteiro (2011): word-formation awareness and knowledge are crucial for learners' AL proficiency and creativity
  - Jeon (2011) and Leontjev et al. (2016) prove that derivational knowledge is a significant predictor of AL reading comprehension and writing proficiency

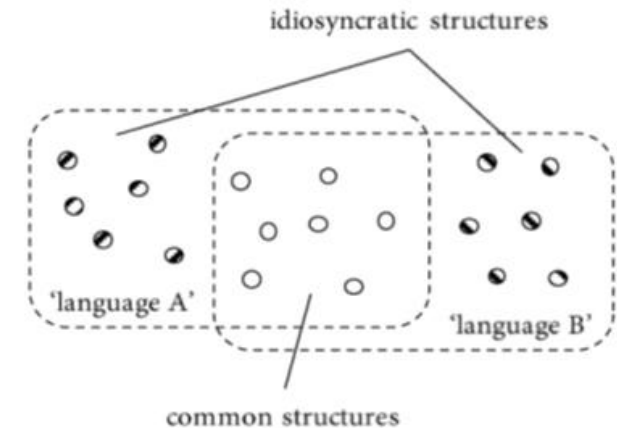
# State of the art: CLIL

- **Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)** is a pedagogical approach promoted by the European Union to enhance widespread multilingualism (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010)
  - Several school subjects (e.g. history, geography) are taught in a language other than the students' L1 (Blondin, 2003; Chohey-Paquet, 2008)
- Although the CLIL approach has been extensively documented internationally (e.g. Ruiz de Zarobe et al., 2011; Rumlich, 2016), its **impact on AL acquisition** remains unclear.
  - Dalton-Puffer (2007): at least for AL English, morphology, receptive skills, vocabulary, and spoken fluency are skills that are positively affected by CLIL, while skills such as syntax, writing, and pragmatics are less clearly affected
- **Multidisciplinary ARC-CLIL project** (2014-2019, UCLouvain & Université de Namur) exploring the linguistic, cognitive, educational and socio-affective effects of CLIL in French-speaking Belgium (cf. Hiligsmann et al., 2017).
  - Students enrolled in CLIL secondary schools in the French-speaking Community of Belgium receive a considerable amount of **additional target-language exposure** (at least **4 hours** per week more than their non-CLIL peers), which is expected to be beneficial for their foreign language acquisition.

## 2. Diasystematic Construction Grammar

# Diasystematic Construction Grammar (DCxG)

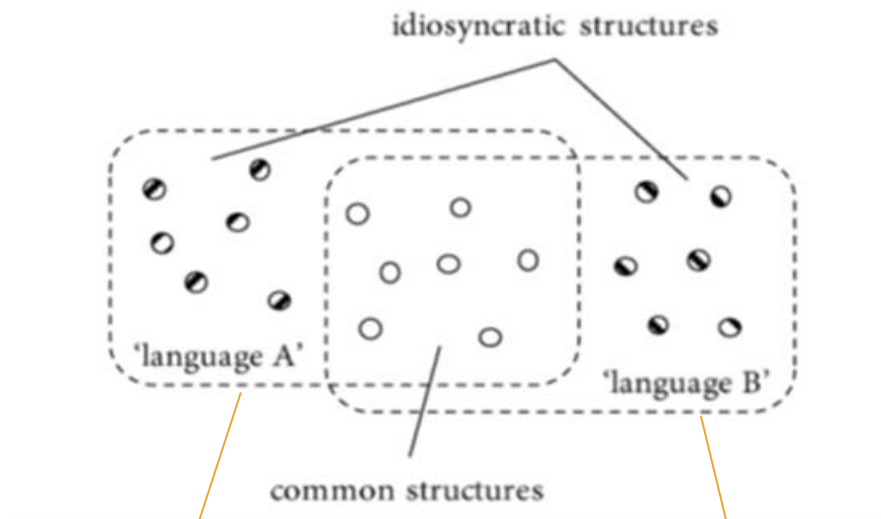
- DCxG recently developed by Höder (2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2018)
- **Integration of CxG into the study of multilingualism**, in line with most recent cognitive insights
  - “multilingual speakers store and process all of their languages in terms of constructions that are organized into one common constructicon” (Höder et al. 2021, p. 311) ↔ earlier static conceptions of separate language systems in the bilingual’s mind
- The **multilingual constructicon**
  - contains “some constructions [that] are unspecified for language (such as abstract syntactic constructions and lexical concepts), while others (above all lexically and phonologically filled constructions) are language-specific” (Höder, 2012, p. 247).
  - The common structures are called “**diaconstructions**”, the idiosyncratic structures are “**idioconstructions**”.



# DCxG applied to AL acquisition

- DCxG first applied to **language contact** (Boas & Höder, 2018, 2021), but more recently also to **(additional) language acquisition** (Höder et al. 2021; Jach 2021; Van Goethem and Hendrikx 2021)
  - **Dynamic and emergent view on AL learning:**
    - Dynamic process of constructional reorganization involving construction addition (entrenchment of newly acquired constructions) and deletion (disentrenchment of redundant constructions) (Höder et al. 2021)
  - **Effects of cross-linguistic similarities and differences:**
    - The greater the typological difference between the L1 and AL, the more reorganizational processes need to take place in the learners' construction.

# DCxG applied to the acquisition of Dutch compounds



**Language A = L1 French**  
Mostly phrasal constructions  
[N1 Prep N2]<sub>NP</sub>  
(e.g. *salle de bains*)

**Language B = AL Dutch**  
Mostly compound constructions  
[N2 N1]<sub>N</sub> (e.g. *badkamer*)

## • During AL acquisition:

1. Dutch compound constructions ([N2 N1]<sub>N</sub>, e.g. *badkamer*) will have to be added to the learner's multilingual constructional network and have to be tagged as **Dutch idioconstructions**
2. Some other constructions will have to be disentrenched, evolving into **French idioconstructions** (e.g. [N1 Prep N2]<sub>NP</sub>, e.g. *salle de bains* vs \**kamer van bad*)
3. Some schematic phrasal constructions evolve into shared **diaconstructions**: e.g. [N1 Prep Det N2]<sub>NP</sub> (e.g. *fête pour mon anniversaire / feest voor mijn verjaardag*)

### 3. Aims of the study and research hypotheses

# Aims of the study

- The **aims of this study** are threefold:
  - i. to provide an in-depth **analysis of the acquisition of Dutch compounds at multiple levels of abstraction** (schematic and substantive compound constructions)
  - ii. to investigate the impact of **additional target-language input through CLIL programs** on the acquisition of compound constructions, within the context of learning Dutch in French-speaking Belgium
  - iii. to further **explore the DCxG approach**, applied to AL acquisition
- Focus on **Dutch nominal compounds**

# Research hypotheses

- **Research hypotheses:**
  - i. Overgeneralization of French idioconstructions** (mistagged as FR-DU diaconstructions):
    - Phrasal structures instead of compounds (*\*kamer van bad*)
    - Left-headed compounds instead of right-headed compounds (*\*kamerbad*)
  - ii. Positive impact of CLIL** on accuracy and productivity of the compounds and word-formation in AL Dutch



# 4. Corpus data and methods



# Data collection and corpus sample

- *Multilingual Traditional Immersion and Native Corpus (MuLTINCo)* (Meunier et al. 2020)
  - Written corpus collected in 2015-2017 from 213 AL Dutch learners in French-speaking Belgium and 59 L1 Dutch speakers (17 Y.O.)
  - The 5 sampled secondary schools are socio-economically and geographically diverse
  - The participants were asked to write an e-mail to a friend about a party or their holidays

	AL Dutch non-CLIL	AL Dutch CLIL	Control corpus native Dutch
Number of participants	84	129	59
Number of nouns	3205	5964	2146
Number of compound nouns*	240	476	155
Proportion compounds per nouns	0,075	0,080	0,072

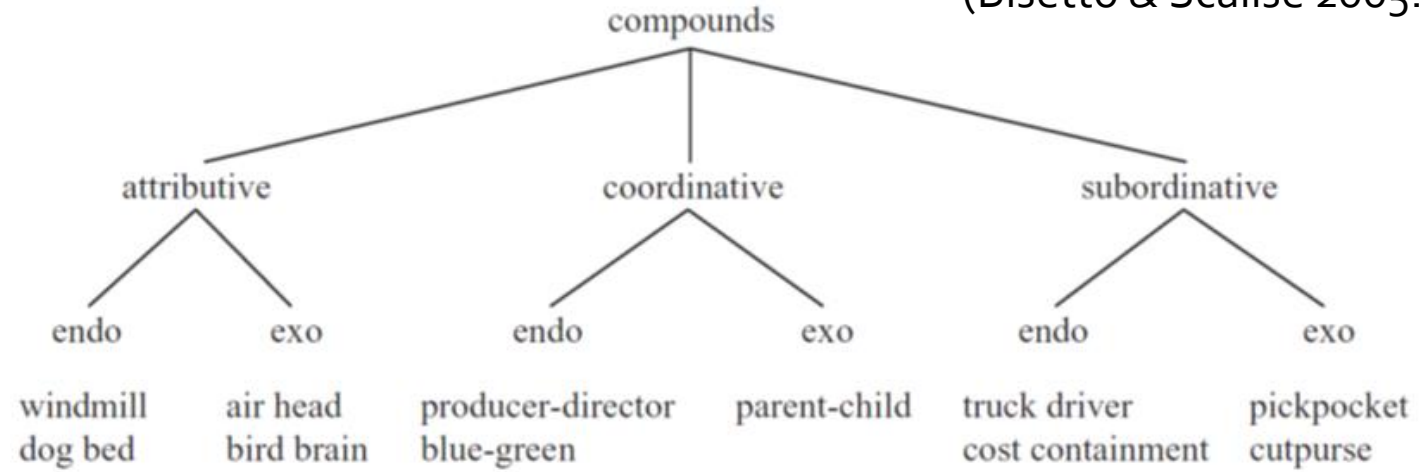
\*Excluded: blends, derivational compounds, lexicalized compounds, proper names

# Data annotation: formal properties

Formal properties	Categories of the variable	Examples
Compound length	Number of lexical components	2: <i>voetbal</i> 'football'
		3: <i>voetbalclub</i> 'football club'
Compound structure	$[N+N]_N$	<i>telefoonnummer</i> 'phone number'
	$[V+N]_N$	<i>surfplaatsje</i> 'surfing site'
	$[A+N]_N$	<i>rondtrip</i> 'round trip'
	$[Num+N]_N$	<i>vijftal</i> 'about five'
	$[NP+N]_N$	<i>onderwaterwereld</i> 'lit. under water world; the universe under the water'

# Data annotation: semantic properties

(Bisetto & Scalise 2005: 326)



Compound function	Example
Attributive endocentric	<i>windmolen</i> 'windmill'
Attributive exocentric	<i>leeghoofd</i> 'air head'
Coordinative endocentric	<i>hotel-restaurant</i>
Coordinative exocentric	<i>ouder-kind(relatie)</i> 'parent-child (relationship)'
Subordinative endocentric	<i>kurkentrekker</i> 'corkscrew'
Subordinative exocentric	<i>zakkenroller</i> 'pickpocket'

# Data annotation: accuracy of the compound

Accuracy of the compound	Example
Spelling mistakes	* <i>vliechtuig</i>
Lexical mistakes	* <i>lievelingseetje</i> (lievelingseten)
Grammar mistakes (gender/number)	* <i>dit</i> e-mail * <i>mijn nieuwe zonnebrilen</i>
Linking morpheme	* <i>verjaarsdag</i>
Word order	* <i>schoolmuziek</i> (muziekschool)
Codeswitching (FR/ENG)	<i>pasta met</i> * <i>basilic sauce</i> * <i>football</i>

# Data annotation: word-formation accuracy

Word-formation accuracy	Example
Phrase instead of compound*	* <i>vakantie van Pasen</i> (Paasvakantie)
Simplex instead of compound	<i>een *stap in Padoue</i> (uitstap)
Compound instead of phrase	* <i>vrijtijd</i> (vrije tijd)

\*Checked in *Corpus Hedendaags Nederlands*: the compound had to be at least 10 times as frequent as the phrase to consider it misuse:  
e.g. *mensen van mijn klas* (1 hit) vs *mijn klasgenoten* (123 hits) → misuse  
e.g. *in het centrum van de stad* (1076 hits) vs *in het stadscentrum* (956 hits) → no misuse

# 5. A multilevel constructional analysis

# Schematic level: formal properties

Compound length	AL Dutch non-CLIL	AL Dutch CLIL	Control corpus native Dutch
2 components	227 (94,58%)	443 (93,07%)	139 (89,68%)
3 components	9 (3,75%)	33 (6,93%)	16 (10,32%)
4 components	3 (1,25%)	0	0
coordination	1 (0,42%)	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>155</b>

## 2 components:

- *Er waren veel **nachtclub** en het was niet duur.* (non-CLIL)

## 3 components:

- *Ik dacht vandaag weer terug aan de leuke avond die we gisteren hadden op de **kerstboomverbranding** en in de winterbar* (Controls)

## 4 components:

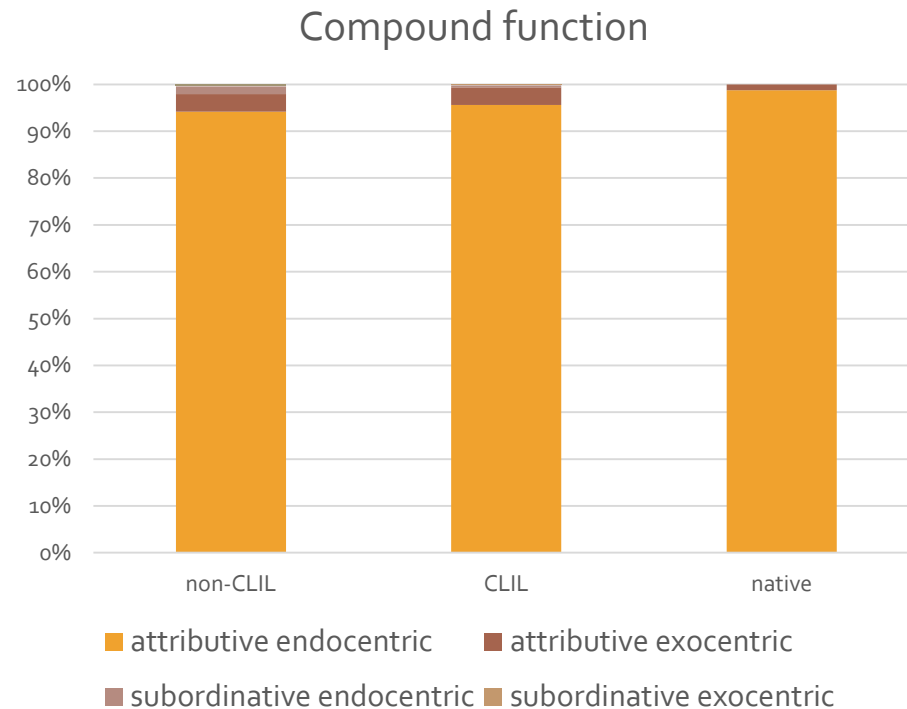
- *We hebben een groot **voetbal wedstrijd** met anderen jongeren georganiseerd.* (non-CLIL)

## Coordination:

- *het best was dat zijn heel goed speelde ( ze deden meestal **rock- en popcovers**, ook met een paar van hun eigen liedjes).* (non-CLIL)



# Schematic level: semantic properties



## Attributive endocentric

- *het was de verjaardag van mijn **buurjongen**.* (Non-CLIL)

## Attributive exocentric

- *We konden ook alcohol drinken zelfs als we nog **snotneuzen** zijn, ik moet toch aanvaarden dat ik vandaag een kater heb* (CLIL)

## Subordinative endocentric

- *Daarna hebben we de GSM gedrogen met een **haardroger** en we hebben zijn geld op de chauffage gezet.* (CLIL)

## Subordinative exocentric

- *Er waren veel mensen in de straten en wij waren bang voor **pickpocketen**.* (CLIL)

Substantive  
level:  
frequency and  
productivity

## Most frequent compounds per condition

Top 5	AL Dutch non-CLIL	AL Dutch CLIL	Control corpus native Dutch
1	zwembad (27)	verjaardag (54)	zwembad (9)
2	verjaardag (22)	zwembad (52)	verjaardag (6)
3	vliegtuig (19)	vliegtuig (17)	verjaardagsfeest (5)
4	**aeroport (6)	*Paasvakantie (10), verjaardagsfeest (10)	dansvloer <sup>o</sup> (4)
5	*voetbal (5) /*volleybal (5)/ verjaardagsfeest (5)	*ziekenhuis (9)	halfuur <sup>o</sup> (3) / vliegtuig (3)/ zonsondergang <sup>o</sup> (3)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>155</b>

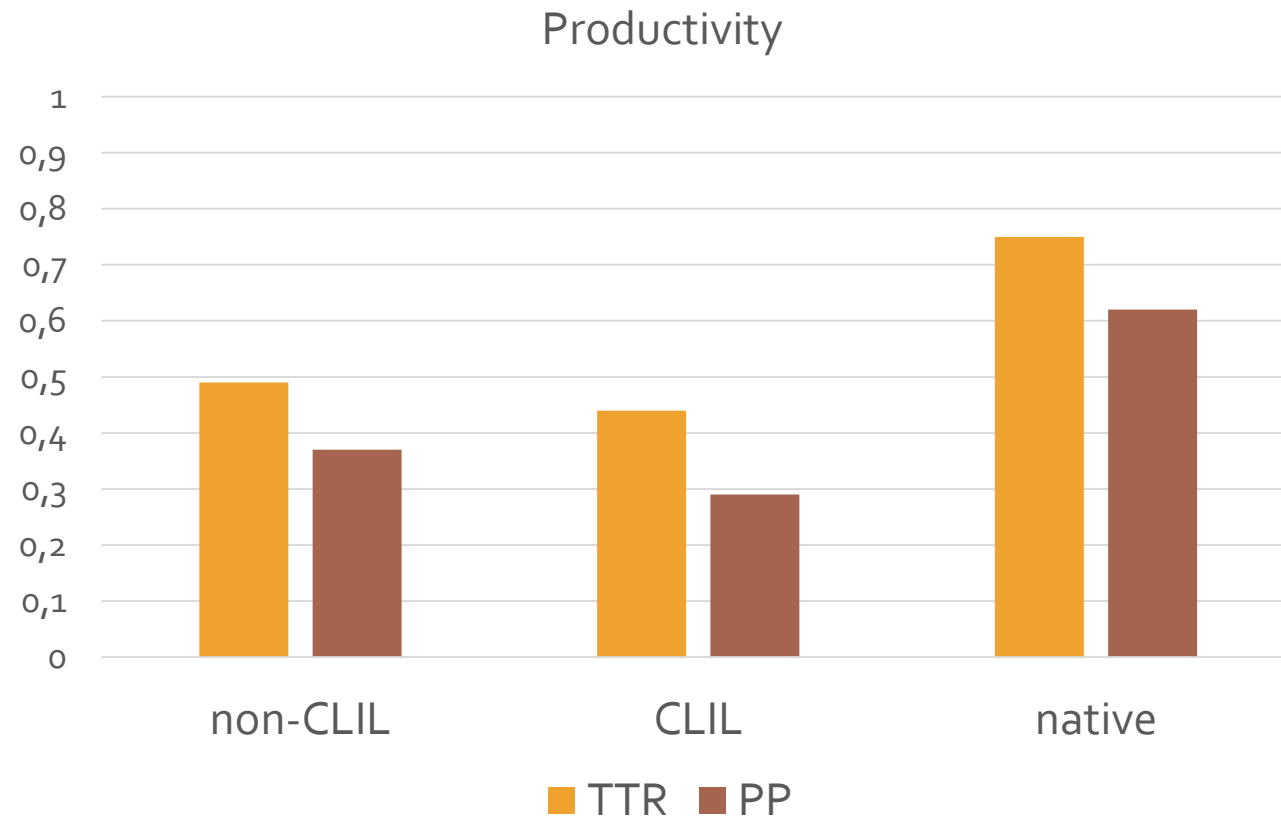
<sup>o</sup> = occurs in native corpus, not in non-CLIL nor in CLIL

\* = occurs in non-CLIL but not in native corpus

\*\* = misuse (codeswitching)

Substantive  
level:  
frequency and  
productivity

## Productivity of compounds per condition



# Substantive level: accuracy hapaxes

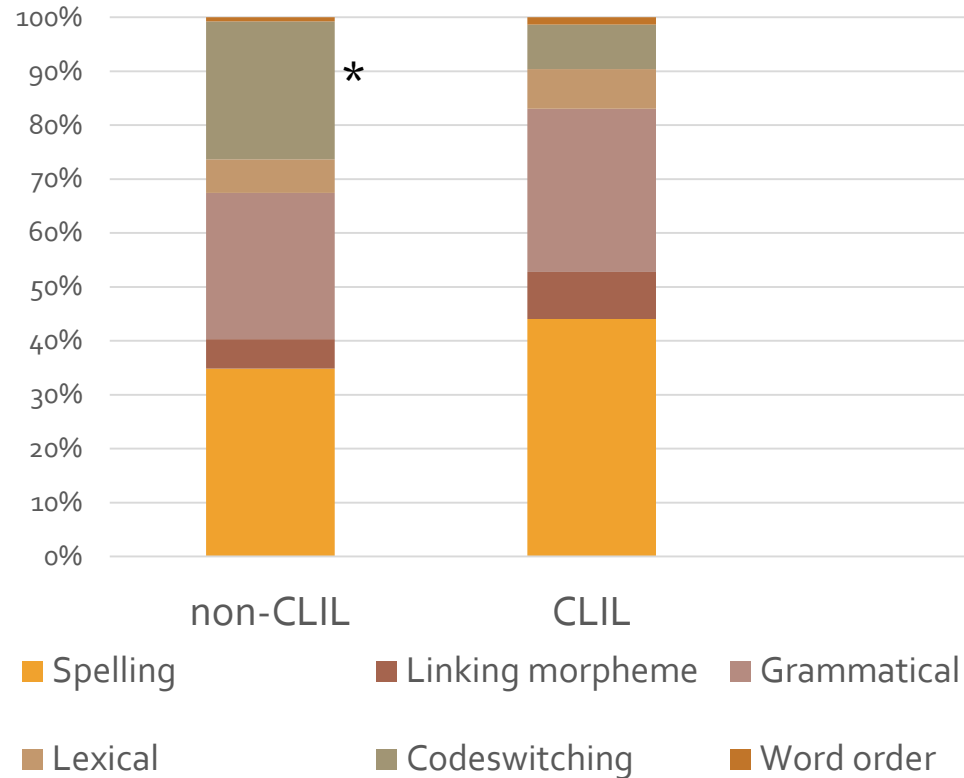
## Accuracy hapaxes

	non-CLIL		CLIL	
Spelling	20	22,47%	34	24,46%
Grammatical	12	13,48%	16	11,51%
Lexical	6	6,74%	15	10,79%
Linking morpheme	3	3,37%	11	7,91%
Codeswitching*	12	13,48%	4	2,88%
Word order	1	1,12%	2	1,44%
Compound instead of phrase	4	4,49%	0	0
<b>Total mistakes in hapaxes</b>	<b>58</b>		<b>82</b>	
<b>Hapaxes with mistakes</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>59,55%</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>53,24%</b>
<b>Total hapaxes</b>	<b>89</b>		<b>139</b>	

- **Spelling:** *We kwamen op zaterdag avond aan a een hele dag rijden . (CLIL)*
- **Codeswitching:** *Het koek kwam van mijn vriend die een aspirant-pâtissier is. (non-CLIL)*
- **Compound instead of phrase:** *Als cadeaus heb ik twee mooie parfume van een goede artisanaalwinkel die ik goed ken. (non-CLIL)*

# Substantive level: accuracy

Misuse in the compound nouns



	Non-CLIL	CLIL
Total number of mistakes	129 (53,75%)	218 (45,80%)
Total number of compound nouns with mistakes	111 (46,25%)	188 (39,50%)
Total number of compound nouns	240	476

## Spelling mistake

- *We zullen met de auto gaan omdat mijn moeder voor het **vliegtruig** bang is?* (Non-CLIL)

## Lexical mistake

- *Bovendien waren er geen proper **voetweg** zoals het uitgelegt werd in onze guide.* (CLIL)

## Code switching\*

- *Ik heb ook een **lakeside** gedaan .* (Non-CLIL)

## Grammatical mistake

- *Iedereen houdt van **vuurwerken**, en een beetje in de frisse , zwarte nacht stappen en naar de sterren kijken* (CLIL)

## Mistake in the linking morpheme

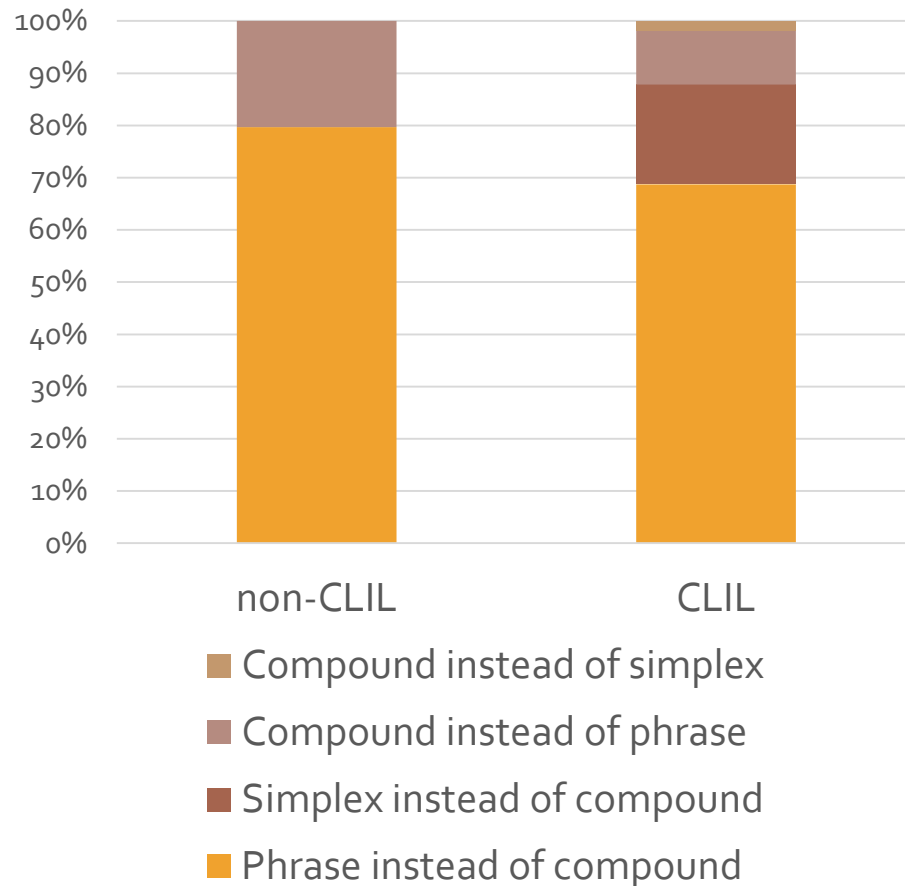
- *Daarna hebben we een **aardbeienstaart** gegeten dat de koker had gemaakt .* (CLIL)

## Mistake in the word order

- *een nieuwe jas , een **album foto** een fototoestel, nieuwe zonnebrillen, ...* (CLIL)

# Substantive level: accuracy

## Word-formation mistakes



### Phrase instead of compound

- *we zijn in een mooie **hotel met 2 sterren** gebleven . (non- CLIL)*

### Compound instead of phrase

- *dat was een idea op mijn zusje en mijn **bestvriend** Floriane. (non-CLIL)*

### Simplex instead of compound

- *... het was voor de 18 **jaar** van mijn vriend Felix ... (CLIL) (verjaardag)*

### Compound instead of simplex

- *Ik was de **kookman** , ik weet het als het best idëe was want ik heb nooit koken van mijn hele leven (CLIL)*

	Non-CLIL	CLIL
Total number of word-formation mistakes	19	68
Total number of nouns	3205	5964
Proportion mistakes/nouns	0.59%	1.14%*



# 6. Discussion and conclusions



# Main results

## Multilevel constructional analysis:

### ➤ Schematic level:

- **Compound length:**

- Learners use 2-component compounds more frequently than natives; natives use more often 3-component compounds

- **Compound structure:**

- $[N+N]_N$  compounds are “the norm” in the native corpus and also predominant in the learner corpora
- Compared to the natives, the learners use more often  $[V+N]_N$  compounds (cf. frequency of *vliegtuig*)

- **Compound function:**

- attributive endocentric compounds are “the native norm” and also predominant in learner data

### ➤ Substantive level:

- **Productivity:**

- Lower productivity (both TTR and PP) of compounds in learner group; natives use a greater variety of compounds (e.g. *dansvloer*, *halfuur*) (in spite of a smaller dataset!)

- **Accuracy:**

- Mostly spelling and grammatical mistakes in compound use (+ codeswitching FR/ENG in non-CLIL group)
- ‘phrase instead of compound’ is the most frequent word-formation mistake in learner group

## Cf. Research hypotheses

### (1) Overgeneralization of French idioconstructions (mistagged as FR-DU diaconstructions):

- Phrasal structures instead of compounds
  - 'phrase instead of compound' is indeed the most frequent word-formation mistake in the learner group
  - However, also cases of overgeneralization (compound instead of phrase/simplex)  
(= diaconstruction mistagged as Dutch idioconstruction)
- Left-headed compounds instead of right-headed compounds
  - Difference in word order between FR/DU does not seem to be an obstacle (few mistakes)  
(= Dutch right-headed word order correctly tagged as Dutch idioconstruction by the learners)

# Conclusions

## (2) Positive impact of CLIL on accuracy and productivity of the compounds and word-formation in AL Dutch

- Better entrenchment of newly acquired constructions (Dutch compounds) in CLIL-group with respect to compound structure and accuracy, but not with respect to productivity and frequency
  - however non-CLIL learners have a higher proportion of misused hapaxes
- Significantly more codeswitching in non-CLIL group (= overgeneralization of French substantive idioconstructions)
- Significantly more word-formation mistakes in CLIL group; typical word-formation mistakes of CLIL group: simplex instead of compound and compound instead of simplex (linguistic creativity?)

# Outlook

- **Perspectives for future research:**
  - Semi-schematic level (but few cases)
  - Impact of CLIL on accuracy while controlling for general vocabulary knowledge and extracurricular target-language input
  - Other morphological constructions: adjectival compounds, complex verbs, derivations
  - Follow-up project: comparison of AL learners with novice translators

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