

# THE ACQUISITION OF INTENSIFYING CONSTRUCTIONS IN DUTCH AND ENGLISH BY FRENCH-SPEAKING CLIL AND NON-CLIL STUDENTS

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Cognition



Education



Linguistics



# Outline

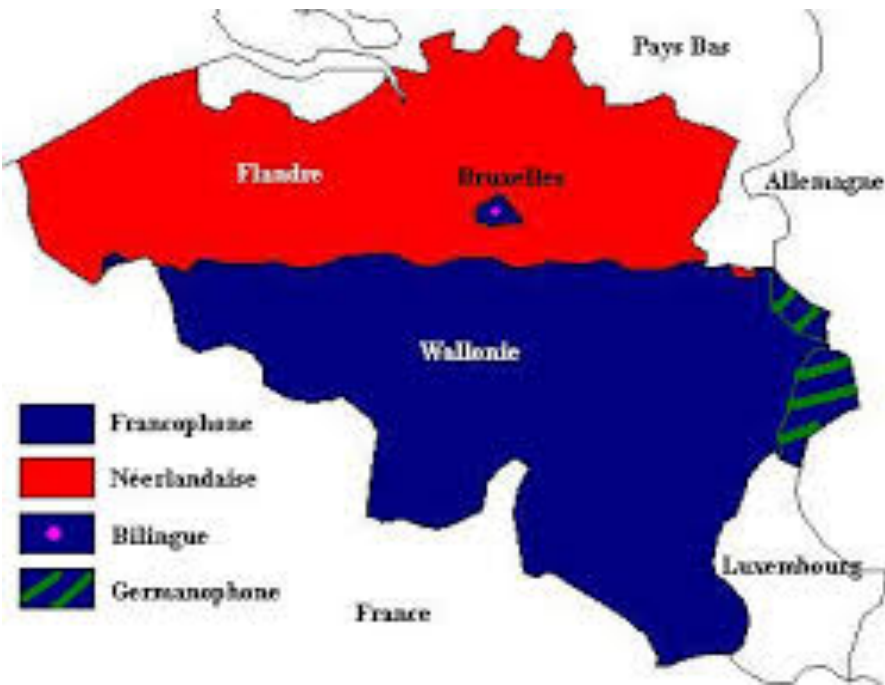
1. The project: Assessing Content and Language Integrated Learning
2. My work package: the acquisition of intensifiers
  1. Research goals and hypotheses
  2. Method
  3. Results to date
3. Visiting UF
4. Questions/discussion

# 1. THE PROJECT: ASSESSING CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL)

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## 1.2 CLIL in French-Speaking Belgium

- In French-speaking Belgium
  - 2/3 schools provide CLIL in Dutch
  - 1/3 schools provide CLIL in English
  - 8 à 13 h/week in target language



➔ More input in target language in CLIL

## 1.2 Participating schools



|                  | CLIL       |               | FRENCH-SPEAKING (non-CLIL) |               |            |
|------------------|------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------|
|                  | Dutch (NL) | English (ENG) | Dutch (NL)                 | English (ENG) | TOTAL      |
| <b>Primary</b>   | 175        | 103           | 71                         | 106           | 455        |
| <b>Secondary</b> | 141        | 104           | 114                        | 114           | 473        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | 316        | 207           | 185                        | 220           | <b>928</b> |

## 1.3 Goals of the research

- Which **conditions** foster second language learning?
  - Didactic, cognitive and motivational factors
- Which **educational strategies** could we put into practice to improve second language learning?
- Is the **subject matter** acquired as well in immersion programs?
- What is the **profile of pupils** benefitting most of one approach or the other?

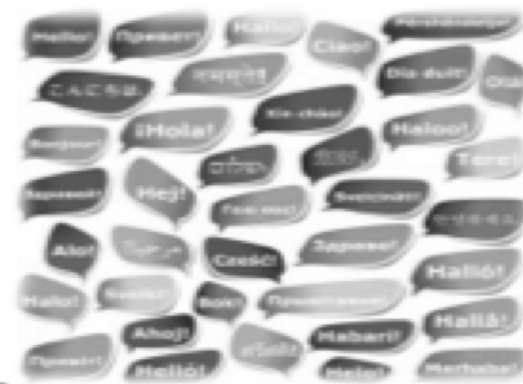
## Cognition



## Education



## Linguistics



**Morgane Simonis:**  
Executive functions

**Audrey de Smet:**  
Socio-emotional  
dynamics

**Amélie Bulon:**  
Phraseological  
units

**Isa Hendrikx:**  
Intensifying  
constructions

Project Coordinator: Dr. **Van Mensele**

Prof. **Hilgsmann**, Prof. **Galand**, Prof. **Mettewie**,  
Prof. **Meunier**, Prof. **Szmalec**, Prof. **Van Goethem**

## 2 THE ACQUISITION OF INTENSIFYING CONSTRUCTIONS IN DUTCH AND ENGLISH BY FRENCH-SPEAKING CLIL AND NON-CLIL STUDENTS

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## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

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## 2.1.1 Definition

- Intensifier: “a **scaling device**... which co-occurs with a gradable adjective” (Quirk et al. 1997: 445)
- Intensifier as amplifier – “upward scaling” (Lorenz 1999)

↑  
*très riche*  
“very rich”  
  
*riche*  
“rich”

↑  
*gloednieuw*  
“brand new”  
  
*nieuw*  
“new”

↑  
*hypersensitive*  
  
*sensitive*

## 2.1.2 Previous studies on intensifiers

- **Rapid renewal** and **variety** intensifiers due to constant need for emotional expressivity (Foolen, Wottrich & Zwets 2012, Van der Wouden & Foolen forth.)
- **Stylistic specialisation** (Hoeksema 2005, Foolen, Wottrich & Zwets 2012)
- Abundant intensification in **youth language** (Lorenz 1999, De Decker & Vandekerckhove 2013)

➔ **Intensifiers may be hard to acquire**

## 2.2 INTENSIFYING CONSTRUCTIONS IN DUTCH, ENGLISH AND FRENCH

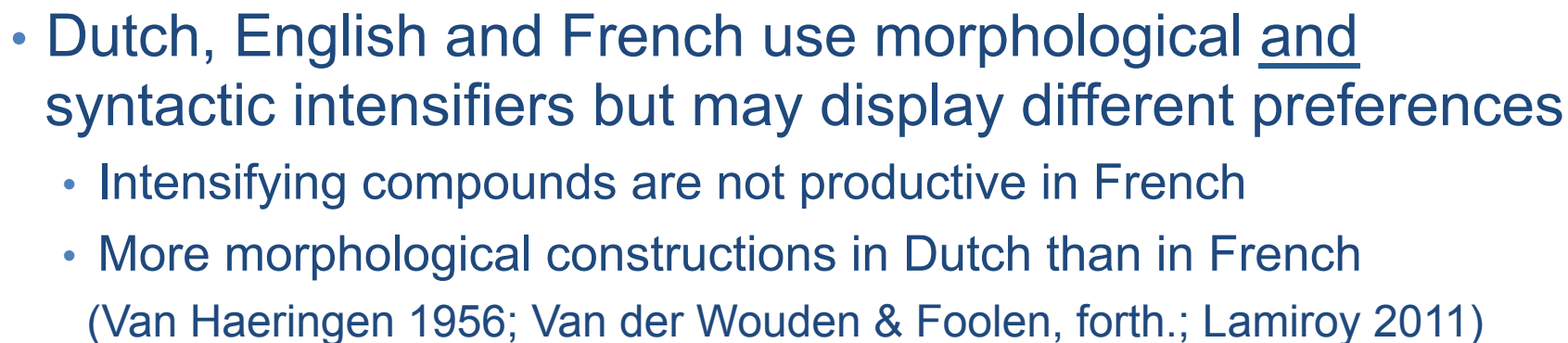
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## 2.2.1 Lexicon / grammar interface

- Intensifying construction  $[[X]_{\text{INT}} [Y]_{\text{ADJ}}]_{\text{AP/ADJ}} \leftrightarrow \text{'very Y'}$
- At the interface of lexicon and grammar
  - $[[\text{heel}]_{\text{ADV}} [\text{moe}]_{\text{ADJ}}]_{\text{AP}} \leftrightarrow \text{'very tired'}$
  - $[[\text{super}]_{\text{PREF}} [\text{moe}]_{\text{ADJ}}]_{\text{ADJ}} \leftrightarrow \text{'very tired'}$
  - $[[\text{dood}]_{\text{N}} [\text{moe}]_{\text{ADJ}}]_{\text{ADJ}} \leftrightarrow \text{'very tired'}$
- “learning words and learning grammar are really all part of the same developmental process” (Tomasello 2003:42)

## 2.2.2 Adjectival intensifying constructions

| Language Domain | Intensifying construction                                              | Dutch                                                                                             | English                                        | French                                                                                                  |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SYNTAX          | [Adv + Adj] <sub>AP</sub>                                              | <i>heel ziek</i> 'very ill'                                                                       | <i>very ill</i>                                | <i>très malade</i> 'very ill'                                                                           |
|                 | [Adj Adj] <sub>AP</sub><br>[Adj <i>maar dan ook</i> Adj] <sub>AP</sub> | <i>mooi, mooi</i><br><br><i>mooi maar dan ook echt mooi</i> 'beautiful but than really beautiful' | <i>a crazy crazy crazy world</i>               | <i>un monde fou fou fou</i><br><br><i>joli mais alors vraiment joli</i> 'pretty but than really pretty' |
|                 | [as ADJ as X] <sub>AP</sub>                                            | <i>zo trots als een aap</i> 'proud like a monkey'                                                 | <i>as gentle as lambs, as fast as possible</i> | <i>fort comme un Turc</i> 'strong like a Turkish person'                                                |
| MORPHOLOGY      | [Prefix + Adj] <sub>ADJ</sub>                                          | <i>supermodern</i>                                                                                | <i>supermodern, ultrapowerful</i>              | <i>ultrapuissant</i>                                                                                    |
|                 | [N/A + Adj] <sub>ADJ</sub>                                             | <i>beresterk</i> 'bear strong'<br><i>dolgelukkig</i> 'madly happy'                                | <i>ice-cold, brand-new, stock-still</i>        | ?                                                                                                       |
| PHONOLOGY       | Stress / vowel lengthening                                             | <i>Het was praaaach-tig!</i> 'It was amaaaaazing'                                                 | <i>It was huuuuuuge!</i>                       | <i>C'était maaaagnifique !</i> 'It was amaaaaazing'                                                     |



## 2.2.4 Research question

- Compared to non-CLIL learners, do French-speaking **CLIL-learners of Dutch or English** develop a more **native-like** use of intensifiers due to more native input?
- We will compare CLIL and non-CLIL learners to native Dutch-speakers and native English-speakers in terms of **under-, over- and misuse** of intensifiers (Gilquin 2008)

## 2.2.5 Hypotheses

- **Overuse** (transfer) of the preferred mother tongue constructions
  - Especially **syntactic** constructions (e.g. adverbial modification, *heel waarschijnlijk* ‘very probable’)
- **Underuse** of idiosyncratic second language constructions
  - Especially **morphological** constructions (e.g. compounds: *doodmoe* ‘dead tired’)
- We expect CLIL learners to show a more native-like use of intensifiers (less **overuse**, **underuse** and **misuse**)

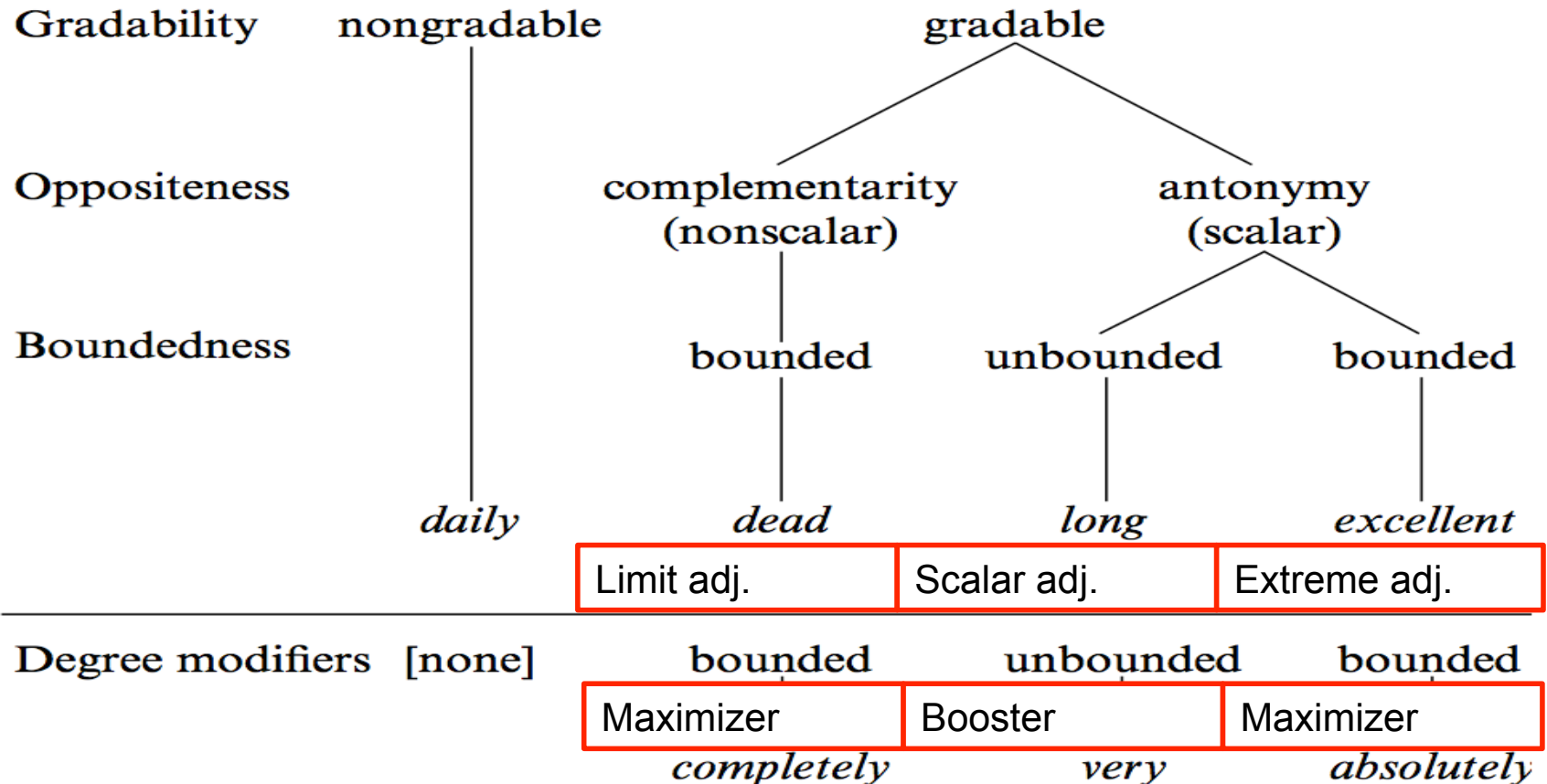
## 2.2.6 Adjectival Intensification: Semantic criteria

Gradability and boundedness (Paradis 1997:62)

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### SCHEMATICITY IN ADJECTIVES

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## 2.2.7 Adjectival intensification: semantic types

- Maximizers
  - *absoluut onvoldoende* ‘absolutely insufficient’, *complètement fou* ‘completely crazy’
- Boosters
  - *zeer mooi* ‘very beautiful’, *très sympa* ‘very nice’
- Similes
  - *glashelder* ‘crystal-clear’, *dur comme de la pierre* ‘stone-hard’
- Excess
  - *overvol* ‘overcrowded’, *hypermoderne* ‘hypermodern’
- Lexicalised meaning
  - *overweldigend* ‘overwhelming’, *extraordinaire* ‘extraordinary’

## 2.2.8 Hypotheses semantic level

- Do **learners** use
  - **Unbounded** intensifiers to modify **unbounded** adjectives?
  - **Bounded** intensifiers to modify **bounded** adjectives?

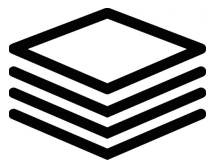
## 2.3 METHOD

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## 2.3.1 Threefold method

1. **Inventory** intensifying constructions in French, Dutch and English through overview of the specialized literature

2. **Pilot** corpus study



- *Leerdercorpus van het Nederlands* (Degand & Perrez 2004)
  - *International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE)* (Granger et al. 2009)
  - *Corpus Hedendaags Nederlands (CHN)*
  - *Louvain Corpus of Native English Essays (Locness)*
  - *Frantext* corpus.
- 
- Morphological / syntactic type of the intensifiers
  - Semantic type intensifier and adjectives

## 2.3.2 Data collection CLIL project

### 3. Data **CLIL** project

- 438 French-speaking secondary school learners (16-17 years old) of English or Dutch in CLIL and non-CLIL
- Once in L2 (English or Dutch) and once in L1 (French)



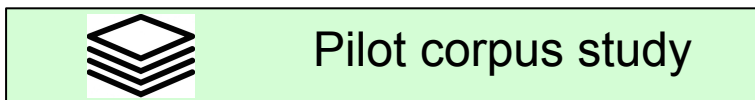
- E-mails of at least 15 lines
- Topics: holidays or party
- 843 productions

The dog  
is \_\_\_\_ cute!

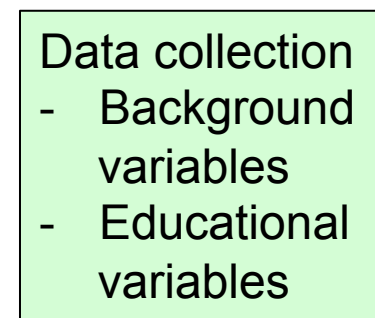
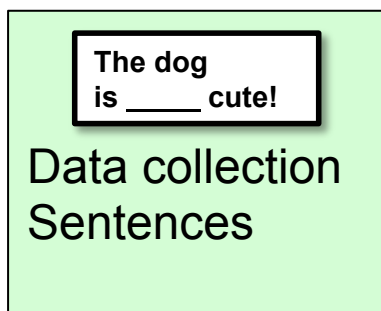
- Fill the gap exercise
- 10 sentences
- 902 productions

| French | Dutch non-CLIL | Dutch CLIL | Dutch control group | English Non-CLIL | English CLIL | English control group |
|--------|----------------|------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 431    | 100            | 132        | 63                  | 90               | 90           | ??                    |

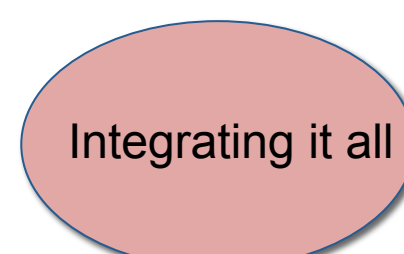
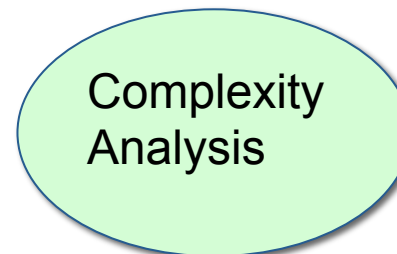
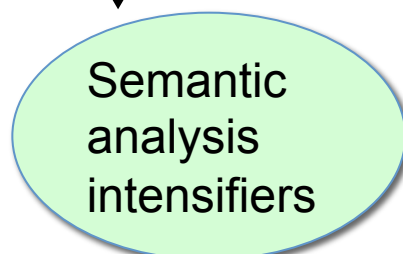
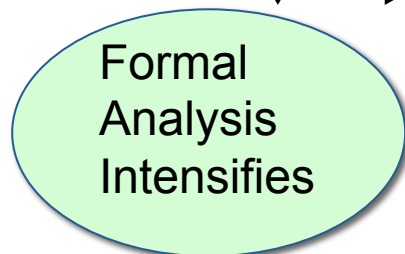
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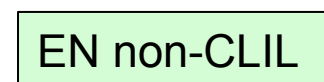
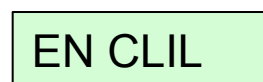
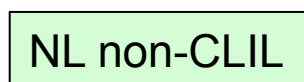
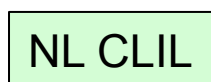
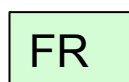
2015



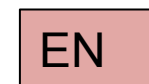
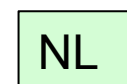
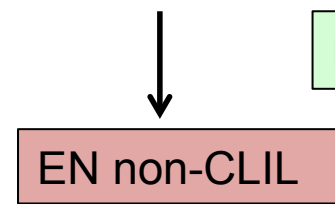
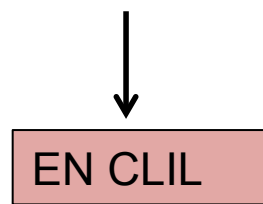
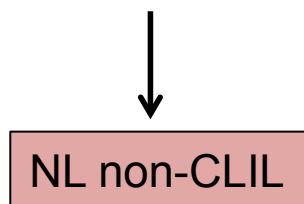
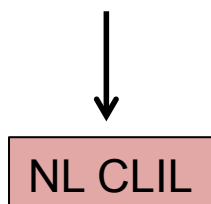
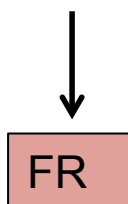
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2016-17



2017-18



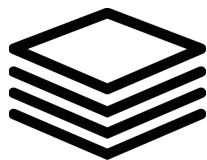
## 2.4 RESULTS TO DATE

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L1 French, L1 Dutch and L2 Dutch

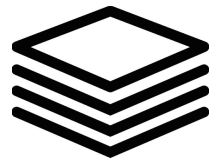
## 2.4.1 Results Pilot studies

- Lowest variety and productivity in learner corpora



|                  | L1 Dutch (CHN) | L2 Dutch (LCN) | L1 French (Frantext) |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Type/token ratio | 0,266          | 0,058          | 0,122                |
| Hapax legomena   | 0,146          | 0,020          | 0,057                |

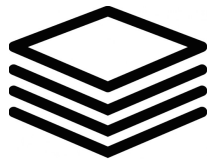
## 2.4.2 Proportions intensified adjectives pilot study



|                                   | L1 Dutch (CHN) | L2 Dutch (LCN) | L1 French (Frantext) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Adjectives extracted per corpora  | 21200          | 8454           | 9009                 |
| Intensified adjectives            | 308            | 498            | 353                  |
| Percentage intensified adjectives | 1.45%          | 5.89%          | 3.92%                |

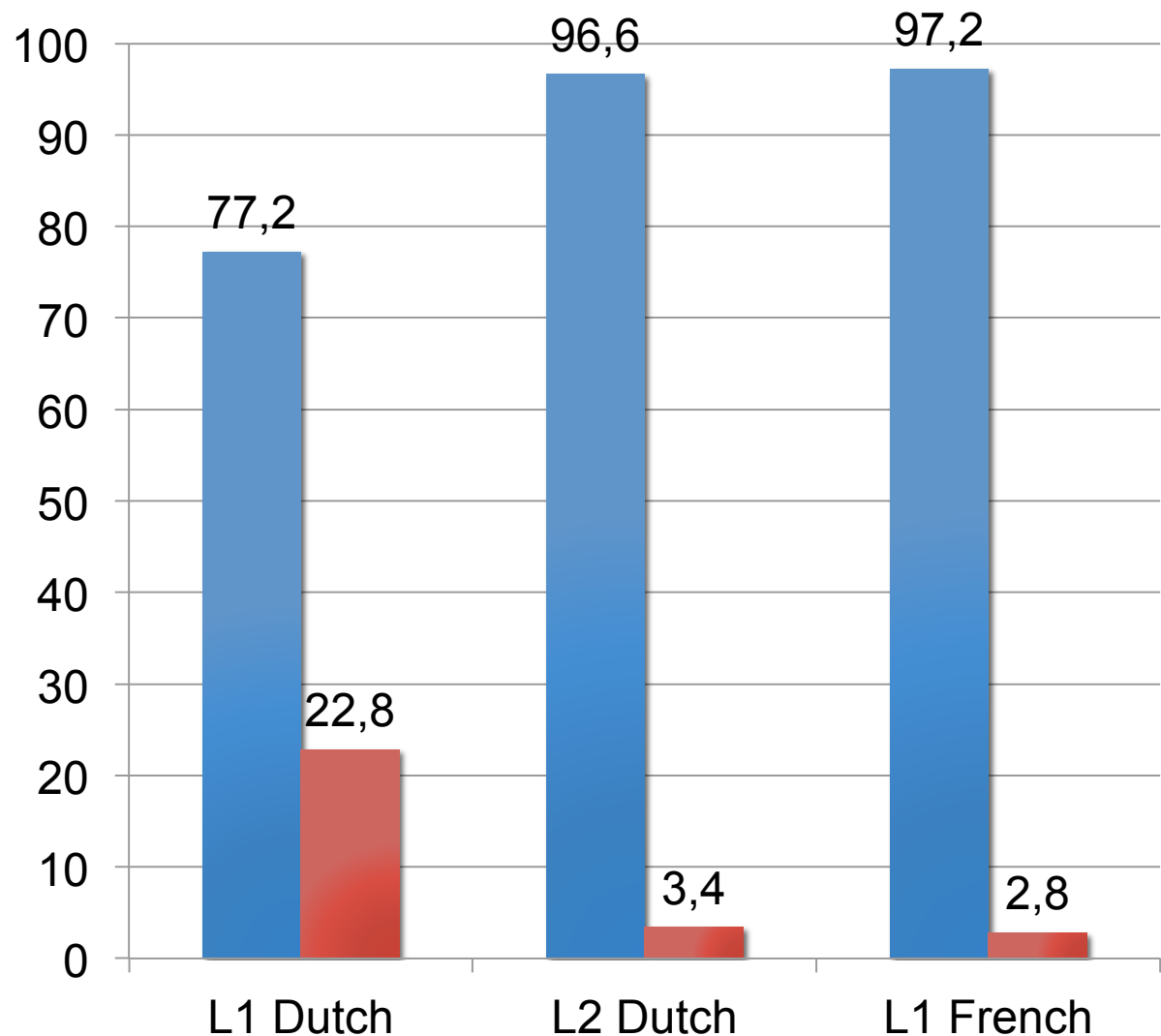
Granger (1998), Lorenz (1999)

## 2.4.3 Formal comparison intensifiers pilot study



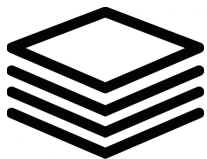
■ Syntactic

■ Morphological



## 2.4.4 Results Pilot studies

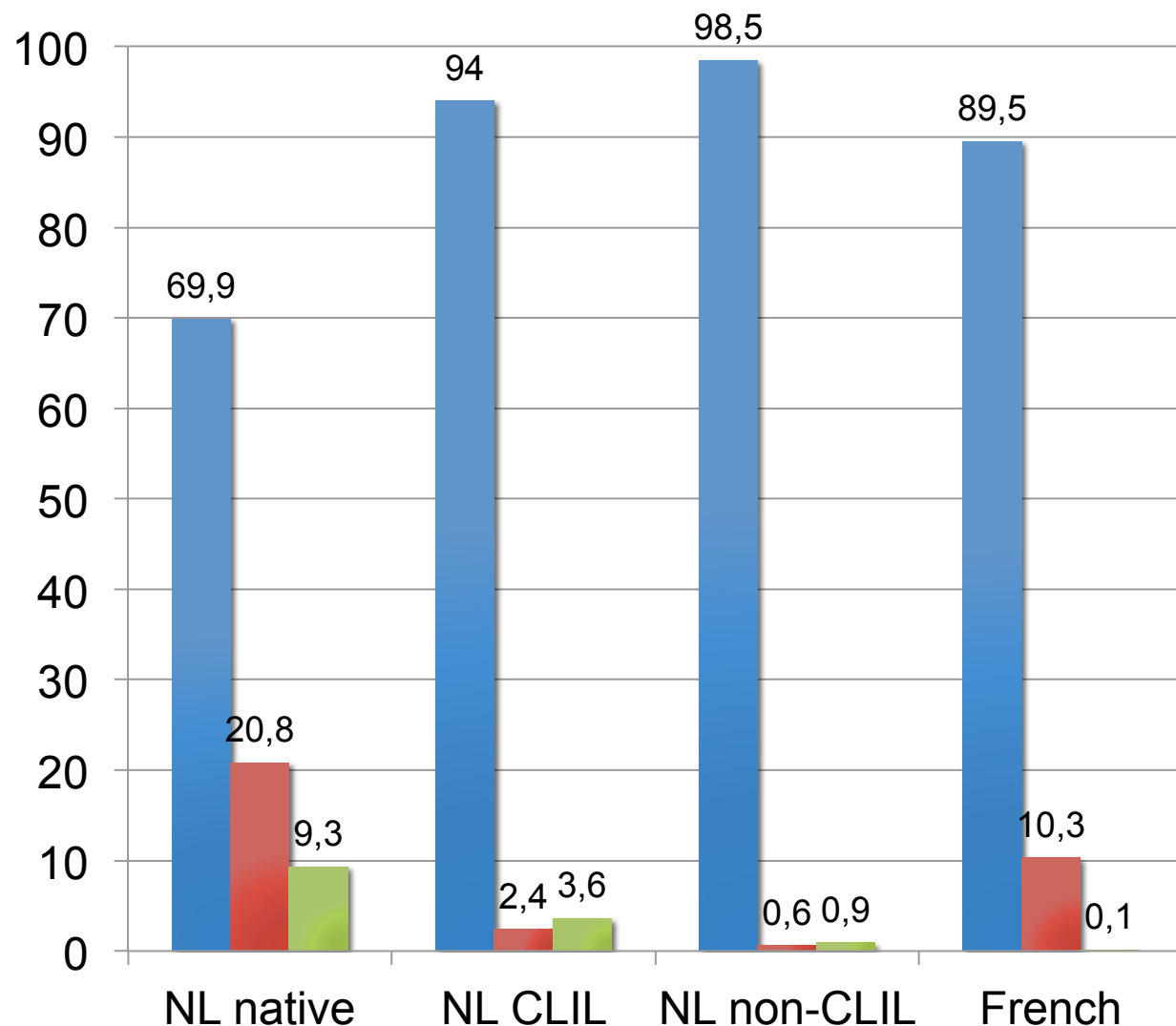
- Semantic level
  - Unbounded modifiers intensifying unbounded adjectives (but also bounded ones!)



## 2.4.5 Formal comparison gap sentences

The dog  
is \_\_\_\_ cute!

- Syntactic
- Synt. OR Morph.
- Morphological



## 2.4.6 Semantic comparison gap sentences

The dog  
is \_\_\_\_ cute!

- Both CLIL and non-CLIL underused bounded intensifiers and **overused unbounded** intensifiers with regard to L1 French and L1 Dutch → similar finding to the pilot study
- **CLIL** group differed from non-CLIL group in a more **native-like use** of **similes** and constructions expressing **excess**

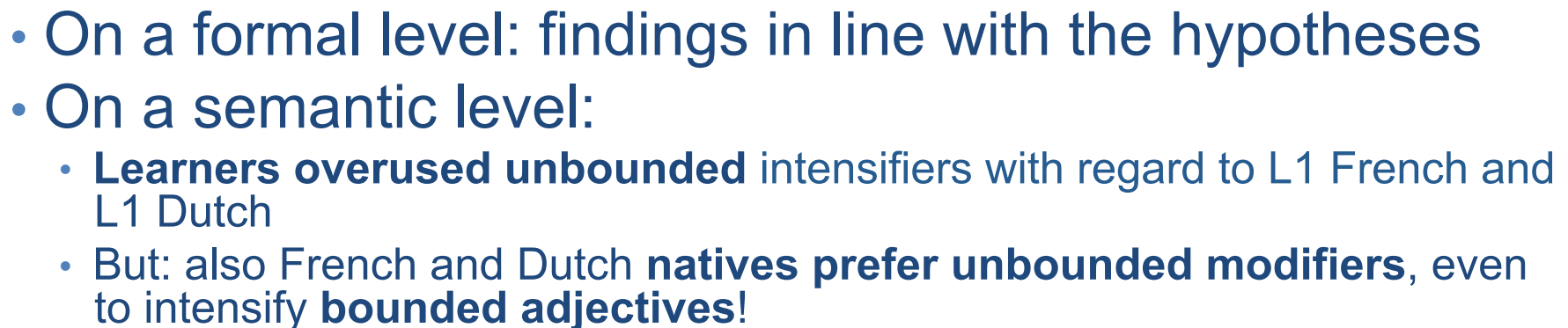
## 2.4.7 Results Complexity Measures

- Coh-Metrix
- T-Scan
- Software by François (2011)
- Bias from spelling and grammar mistakes?



## 2.4.8 Median scores complexity measures e-mails

|                           | NL       |       | ANG      |       | FR       |       |
|---------------------------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
|                           | non-CLIL | CLIL  | non-CLIL | CLIL  | non-CLIL | CLIL  |
| Sentences per text        | 21       | 26    | 21       | 20,5  | 17       | 19    |
| Words per text            | 194,5    | 274   | 266      | 328   | 287      | 299   |
| Words per sentence        | 9,05     | 10,72 | 12,26    | 15,59 | 9,83     | 12,13 |
| Syllables/morphs per word | 1,23     | 1,27  | 1,31     | 1,29  | -        | -     |
| Letters per word          | 4,27     | 4,35  | 3,86     | 3,85  | 4,05     | 4,09  |
| TTR content words         | 0,77     | 0,77  | 0,71     | 0,71  | 0,68     | 0,68  |
| TTR all words             | 0,54     | 0,51  | 0,49     | 0,49  | 0,76     | 0,77  |
| MTLD                      | 58,9     | 73,0  | 60,2     | 70,4  | -        | -     |



# Conclusions

- On a formal level findings are in line with “constructional transfer hypothesis”
- On a semantic level: would Paradis’ (1998) model not be applicable to French and Dutch?
- CLIL / non-CLIL:
  - CLIL learners show more native like use of intensifiers
  - CLIL learners wrote more complex texts

## 3. MY STAY AT UFL

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## 3.1 At UF:

- **Learn from professor Wulff and from all of you!**
- **Analyze the intensifiers in the e-mails**
  - Relation between **polarity** of the adjective and presence or absence of intensification?
  - Relation between adjectives used **predicatively** and **attributively** with the presence or absence of intensification?
- How to integrate the **non-linguistic variables** in my analysis?
- Collect data **control group** native **English speakers!**

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THANK YOU!  
BEDANKT!  
MERCI!

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