

INTENSIFYING CONSTRUCTIONS IN FRENCH-SPEAKING L2 LEARNERS OF DUTCH: A COLLOSTRUCTIONAL ANALYSIS

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Outline

1. Introduction

- Research project on *Content and Language Integrated Learning* in French-speaking Belgium
- PhD project on the acquisition of intensifying constructions

2. Research questions

3. Method

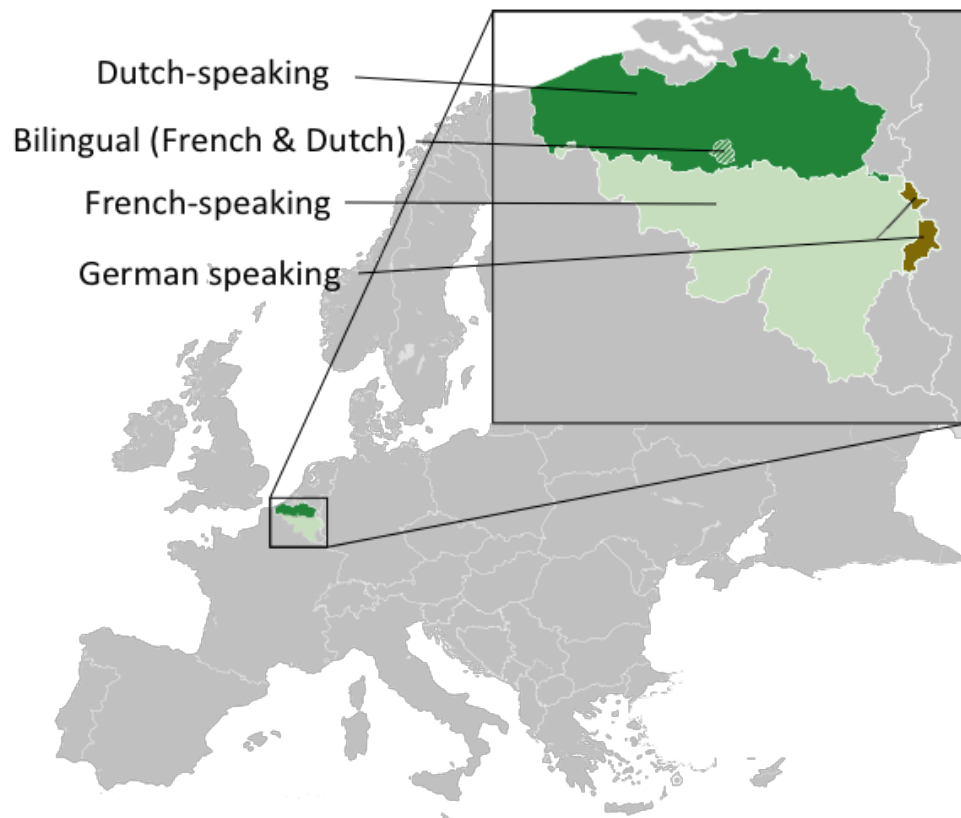
- Data collection
- Collostructional analysis

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. CLIL in French-speaking Belgium



- Language learning often seen as problematic in French-speaking Belgium
- Linguistic, educational and socio-economic issues at stake
- CLIL in French-speaking Belgium:
 - 2/3 of the CLIL schools have CLIL in Dutch and 1/3 in English
 - 8-13 h/week in target language (incl. FL class)

→ **More input of target language in CLIL than in traditional language learning settings**

1.2. Research project on CLIL (1)

- “Assessing Content and Language Integrated Learning: linguistic, cognitive and educational perspectives” (Hiligsmann et al. *forth.*)
 - 4 PhD-students (Amélie Bulon, Audrey De Smet, Isa Hendrikx, Morgane Simonis)
 - 1 post-doc (Luk Van Mensel)
 - 6 academics (Benoit Galand, Philippe Hiligsmann, Laurence Mettewie, Fanny Meunier, Arnaud Szmalec, Kristel Van Goethem)



1.2. Research project on CLIL (2)

Research aims:

Comparison foreign language learning of CLIL and non-CLIL learners:

- What are the differences, if any?
- For which linguistic aspects?
- Impact of cognitive, socio-affective and educational factors?

Cognitive

Socio-educational

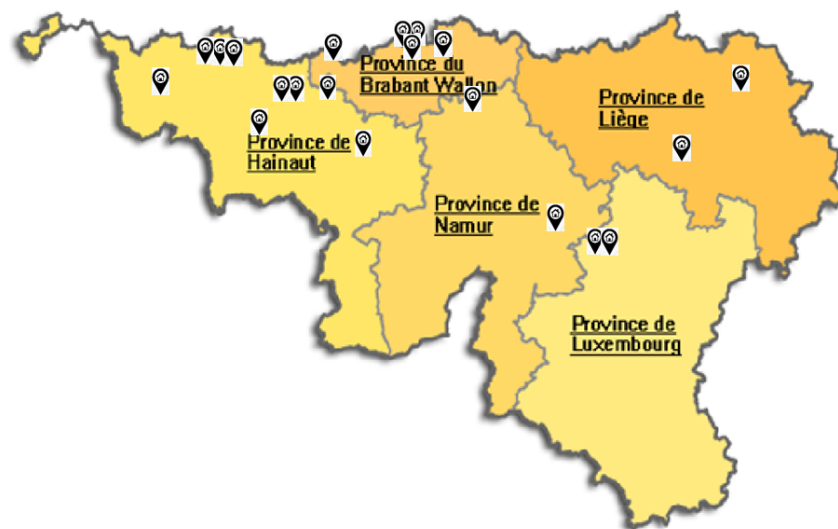
Linguistic



1.2. Research project on CLIL (3)

A large-scale and longitudinal study:

- 13 primary schools
- 9 secondary schools
- 928 pupils
- followed for two consecutive school years (2015-2016 and 2016-2017)



	CLIL Dutch	Non-CLIL Dutch	CLIL English	Non-CLIL English
Primary school pupils (455)	175	71	103	106
Secondary school pupils (473)	141	114	104	114

1.3. Research axis on the acquisition of intensifiers

- **Definition:**

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



- **Intensifiers may be difficult to acquire by foreign language learners:**

- Wide variety of intensifiers, but language-specific preferences (Rainer 2015)
- Subject to rapid change (De Clerck & Colleman 2013; Foolen 2015; Lorenz 1999)
- Stylistic specialisation (Hoeksema 2005; Foolen, Wottrich & Zwets 2012)
- Abundant intensification in youth language (Lorenz 1999, De Decker & Vandekerckhove 2013)
- Not often subject to explicit instruction in foreign language teaching

1.4. Morphological and syntactic intensifiers

- “[...] intensifiers represent an extremely varied and ever-changing set, which takes an intermediate position **between lexis and grammar**” (Cacchiani 2009: 229)
- “[...] at least in the more familiar Indo-European languages (...), **analytic expressions of degree** by far outnumber **synthetic patterns**, which nevertheless constitute a substantial part of word-formation” (Rainer 2015: 1340)
 - Fr. *bête comme ses pieds* ‘lit. stupid as his feet’
 - Eng. *incredibly beautiful*
 - It. *bellissimo* ‘very beautiful’
 - Germ. *bitterkalt* ‘bitterly cold’

1.5. A constructional approach

- Construction: form-meaning pair at phrase or word-level (cf. Booij 2010)
- Intensifying construction:
[[X]_{INT} [Y]_{ADJ}]_{ADJ/AP} ↔ ‘very Y’
- “learning words and learning grammar are really all part of the same developmental process” (Tomasello 2003: 42)

1.6. Intensifying constructions in Dutch

[[X]_{INT} [Y]_{ADJ}]_{ADJ/AP}

[N/A/V + Adj]_{ADJ} [Prefix + Adj]_{ADJ} [*as ADJ as X*]_{AP} [Adj Adj]_{AP} [Adv + Adj]_{AP}

keihard 'lit.
boulder hard'

supermodern

zo trots als
een pauw 'as
proud as a
peacock'

mooi mooi
'beautiful
beautiful'

heel ziek
'very ill'

dolgelukkig
'madly
happy'

1.7. Intensifying constructions in French

[[X]_{INT} [Y]_{ADJ}]_{AP/ADJ}

[N/A/V + Adj]_{ADJ} **[Prefix + Adj]_{ADJ}** **[as ADJ as X]_{AP}** **[Adj Adj]_{AP}** **[Adv + Adj]_{AP}**

ultrapuissant

fort comme un

Turc

‘strong like a
Turkish person’

un monde

fou fou fou

‘a crazy
crazy crazy
world’

très malade

‘very ill’

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2.1. Research questions (1)

1. Do **French-speaking pupils** encounter difficulties when they acquire **Dutch intensifying constructions**?

- What are the **language-specific preferences** for intensifying constructions in Dutch, in French and in the interlanguages?
- Do learners have difficulties related to **collocational specialization**?

2. Compared to non-CLIL learners, do French-speaking **CLIL-learners** of Dutch develop a **more native-like** use of intensifiers due to more native input of Dutch?

- Importance input for L2 acquisition (Ellis & Cadierno 2009; Goldberg 2010)

3. METHOD

3.1. Data collection

- 438 Belgian French-speaking secondary school learners of English or Dutch in CLIL and non-CLIL
 - Fifth grade secondary school (average age 16,5 years old)
- Timed writing task in computer rooms
 - E-mails of at least 15 lines: one in L2 (English or Dutch) and one in L1 (French)
 - Topics: holidays or party
- 63 Flemish and Netherlandic Dutch-speaking secondary school pupils
 - Fifth grade secondary school (average age: 16,7 years old)

	Control group Dutch	Dutch CLIL	Dutch non-CLIL	French
Texts	61	100	132	431
Words	16262	37209	19399	131539

3.2. Collostructional analysis

Collexeme	construction [<i>kei</i> + ADJ] → lexeme <i>hard</i> , <i>etc.</i>
Collostruct	lexeme <i>hard</i> → construction [<i>kei</i> + ADJ], [<i>heel</i> + ADJ]

“the combination of a collexeme and a collostruct will be referred to as a ***collostruction***” (Stefanowitsch and Gries 2003: 215)

Collexeme ↔ Collostruct

→ Comparison of the statistically significant “**intensifying collostructions**” that occur in the native and learner corpora

Collostructional analysis applied to **SLA** (Gries & Wulff 2005; Ellis & Ferreira-Junior 2009; Wulff & Gries 2011; Gilquin 2012; Gries 2012; Martinez-Garcia & Wulff 2012)

3.3. Covarying Collexeme Analysis

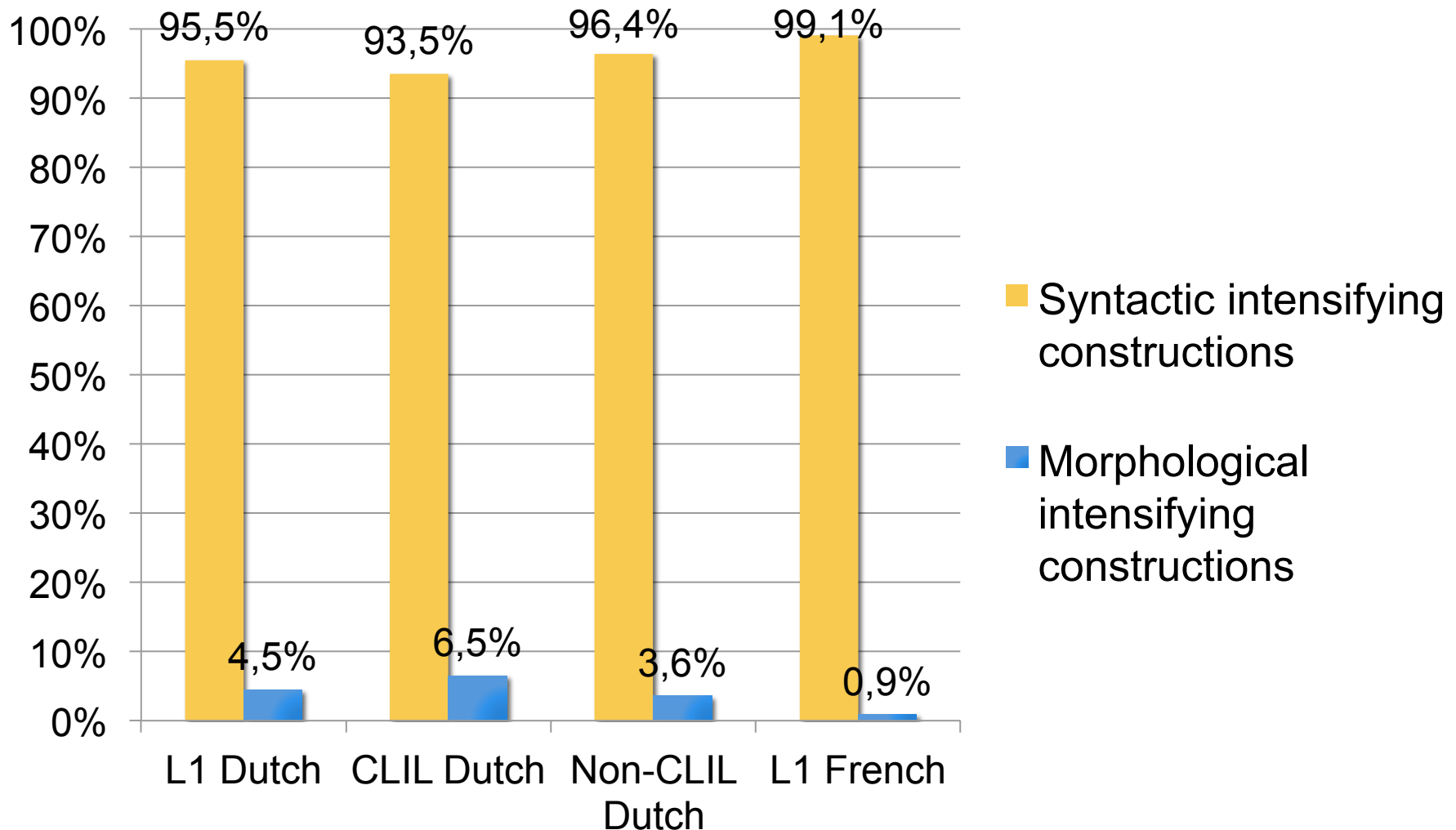
(Gries 2007; Stefanowitsch 2013)

- "aims to identify pairs of words that occur with each other more or less frequently than expected in two slots of the same construction" (Stefanowitsch 2013: 223)
- $[[X]_{\text{INT}} [Y]_{\text{ADJ}}]_{\text{ADJ/AP}} \leftrightarrow \text{'very Y'}$
- Gries (2007) uses **Fischer Yates exact test**

	Word l_1 in slot s_1 of construction C	Other words in slot s_1 of construction C	Total
Word l_2 in slot s_2 of construction C	<i>completely clear</i>	<i>crystal, totally, -est ever</i>	
Other words in slot s_2 of construction C	<i>green, flat, empty</i>	<i>totally empty, greenest ever</i>	
Total			

4. RESULTS

4.1. Morphological vs syntactic intensifying constructions



4.2. Most frequent intensifiers (1)

	L1 Dutch		CLIL Dutch		NON-CLIL Dutch		L1 FRENCH	
	Intensifier	freq	Intensifier	freq	Intensifier	freq	Intensifier	freq
	No intensifier	672 (72,2%)	No intensifier	1697 (75,4%)	No intensifier	793 (73,6%)	No intensifier	5416 (84,8)
1	heel	65 (7,0%)	heel	251 (11,2%)	heel	187 (17,3%)	très	360 (5,6%)
2	erg	28 (3,0%)	zeer	72 (3,2%)	veel	23 (2,1%)	vraiment	221 (3,5%)
3	zo	26 (2,8%)	super	48 (2,1%)	zo	16 (1,5%)	super	89 (1,4%)
4	super	25 (2,7%)	zo	43 (1,9%)	zeer	15 (1,4%)	trop	56 (0,9%)
5	echt	24 (2,6%)	echt	42 (1,9%)	super	10 (0,9%)	tellement	43 (0,7%)

4.2. Most frequent intensifiers (2)

- The most frequent intensifier is **heel** ‘very’ in Dutch and **très** ‘very’ in French. **Heel** is **overused** by both learner groups:
Het is heel leuk. ik heb veel activiteit gedaan met mijn familie.
 (non-CLIL Dutch)
 ‘lit. It is very nice. I have done many activity with my parents.’
- Non-CLIL learners used the **quantifier veel** ‘many’ erroneously as second most frequent intensifier
Ze waren veel sympathiek en we hebben samen geamuseerd.
 (non-CLIL)
 ‘lit. They were many sympathetic and we have enjoyed ourselves.’

4.3. Variety and productivity

	L1 Dutch	CLIL Dutch	Non-CLIL Dutch	L1 French
Percentage intensified adjectives	23,98%	30,01%	28,54%	23,39%
Extreme adjectives (without intensifier)	9,78%	5,19%	3,34%	8,02%
Type-Token Ratio (Baayen 2009)	0,104	0,070	0,060	0,056
Hapax Legomena Ratio (Baayen 2009)	0,039	0,025	0,011	0,020

- Overuse all-round intensifiers in L2 English (Granger 1998, Lorenz 1999)
- TTR sensitive to text length (a.o. Koizumi 2012)

4.4. Collostructional analysis

	L1 DUTCH			CLIL DUTCH			NON-CLIL DUTCH			L1 FRENCH		
	Intens	Adj	Pbin	Intens	Adj	Pbin	Intens	Adj	Pbin	Intens	Adj	Pbin
1	echt	super	11.86 2	super	tof	17.692	No intens	best goed	7.416	très	bien	24.796
2	super	leuk	6.757	peper	duur	17.242	heel	leuk	6.711	No intens	petit	21.536
3	No intens	best goed	6.527	No intens	best goed	12.722	super	tof	5.896	plein	mort	16.946
4	erg	gezellig	6.054	aller	leukst	11.849	kei	hard	4.986	No intens	autre	16.589
5	No intens	volgend	3.303	dood	moe	9.688	aller	leukst	4.814	No intens	plein	16.589
6	heel	grappig	3.105	heel	mooi	9.509	No intens	nieuw	4.065	vraiment	génial	12.947
7	te	warm	2.769	No intens	nieuw	7.222	heel	mooi	3.321	vraiment	bien	12.294
8	heel	erg	2.759	No intens	ander	6.97	heel	blij	3.081	trop	cool	10.565
9	super	gezellig	2.749	heel	leuk	6.663	really	fun	2.732	No intens	même	9.402
10	super	tof	2.689	No intens	volgend	6.339	heel	grappig	2.652	De ma vie	meilleur	8.838

4.5. Result 1: Collostructions without an intensifier

1. Non-gradable adjectives: *volgend* ‘next’, *autre* ‘other’, *même* ‘same’
2. Adjectives that are never intensified in the subcorpora: *nieuw* ‘new’, *zeker* ‘certain’, *laatst* ‘last’
→ “limit” adjectives (Paradis 1997; 2001)
3. Not intensified scalar adjectives, for example *petit* ‘small’ (339 occurrences)
→ hypothesis: inherently positively/negatively valued adjectives intensified more frequently (Boucher et al. 1969; Baumeister et al. 2001; Liebrecht et al. 2013)

4.5. Result 1: language-specific collocations (1)

- **L1 French**

- Complex intensifying constructions (Cacchiani 2009)
 - *hyper mega cool* ‘hyper mega cool’, *tout juste sublime* ‘lit. all just sublime’, *vraiment très riche* ‘really very rich’, *vraiment trop cool* ‘really too cool’
- Idiosyncratic constructions
 - *MON DIEU que bizarre* ‘lit. my god that bizarre’
 - *extraordinaire* – lexicalized intensifying construction
 - *sympa comme tout* ‘lit. nice as all’
 - *le plus ADJ de ma vie* ‘of my life’ in L1 French (cf. *ADJ van mijn leven* ‘of my life’ in both learner corpora)
 - *plein mort* ‘lit. full dead, very drunk’

4.5. Result 1: language-specific collocations (2)

- **L1 Dutch**

- Morphological intensifiers:
 - *bloedheet* 'lit. blood hot', *keihard* 'lit boulder hard'
 - *mega-* (also in CLIL corpus, not in non-CLIL corpus)
- 'Youth language' / informal language in L1 corpus but not in L2 corpora
 - *wel cava* 'lit. well ok', *wel chill* 'lit. well chill', *wat fix* 'what nice', *vet bang* 'lit. fat scared', *fucking hard*, *erg cute* 'terribly cute'

4.5. Result 1: interlanguage-specific collocations (3)

- **CLIL Dutch**

- Compounds

- *doodmoe* 'lit. dead tired', *oersaai* 'lit. originally dull', *beeldschoon* 'lit. image-beautiful; gorgeous', *keigespierd* 'lit. boulder muscular'

- Repetition

- *groot zeer groot* 'big very big'

- [as ADJ as X]_{AP}

- *zo rap mogelijk* 'as fast as possible'

4.5. Result 1: interlanguage-specific collocations (4)

- **Non-CLIL Dutch**
 - Fewer collocations, fewer unique collocations
 - Quantifier instead of intensifier
 - *veel leuk* 'many nice' (4x)

4.5. Result 2: misuse

- Misuse in 8 collocations CLIL corpus, while 7 in non-CLIL corpus (cf. Bulon et al. 2017)
- Types of misuse
 - Transfer from French
 - *De mensen zijn **zeer accueillant**.* (CLIL)
'lit. The people are very hospitable'
 - Transfer from other L2
 - *Hoe was jouw vakantie? Mijn was **verry toffe**.* (non-CLIL)
'lit. How were your holidays? Mine was very nice'
 - Grammatical mistakes
 - *Het was mooi en **veel luxurius**.* (CLIL)
'lit. It was beautiful and many luxurious'
 - Semantic/collocational misuse
 - *Het was daar **uitstekend mooi** weer (...)* (CLIL)
'lit. It was there outstandingly beautiful weather (...)'

5. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions (1)

- The study confirms that **CLIL** education has a **positive impact** on the development of a more native-like use of intensifying constructions:
 - **CLIL learners** use more **morphological** intensifying constructions
 - **Non-CLIL** learners slightly **overuse** intensifying **adverbs**
 - Compared to CLIL-learners, non-CLIL learners show a **lower productivity and variety of intensifying constructions** (lower TTR and Hapax legomena ratio)

Conclusions (2)

- The collostructional analysis revealed:
 - (inter)language-specific intensifying collostructions
 - **more variation** in the collostructions of the **CLIL subcorpus** than of the non-CLIL subcorpus
 - **more different types of misuse** among the collostructions of CLIL learners in Dutch

Perspectives for future research

- Longitudinal analysis: comparison data 2015-2017
- Analysis spoken data
- Impact of cognitive, socio-affective and educational variables on the linguistic results

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σας ευχαριστούμε!

Thank you!

Bedankt!

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