THE IMPACT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE INPUT ON THE ACQUISITION OF INTENSIFYING CONSTRUCTIONS

A CASE STUDY FROM CLIL AND NON-CLIL LEARNERS IN FRENCH-SPEAKING BELGIUM

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Outline

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3. Method
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Intensifiers: state of the art

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

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**

1.3 Project on CLIL education

- Project on CLIL education "Assessing Content and Language Integrated Learning: Linguistic, Cognitive and Educational Perspectives"
  - Université catholique de Louvain and Université de Namur
  - 2014- 2019

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

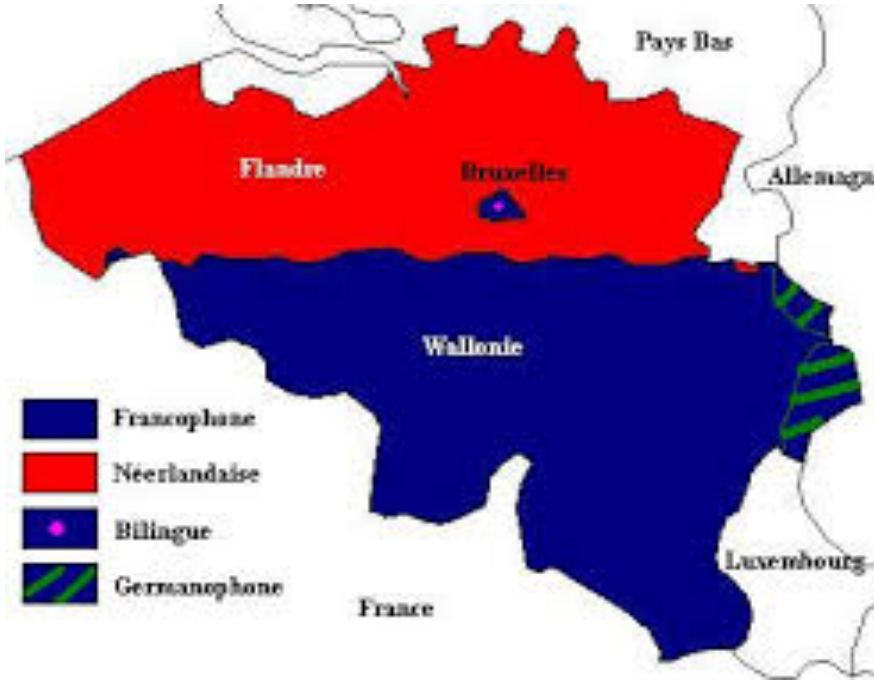
- The focus of my PhD:
  - Comparison adjectival intensification by French-speaking CLIL and non-CLIL learners of English and Dutch

1.4 CLIL in French-Speaking Belgium

- In French-speaking Belgium 2/3 of the schools CLIL in Dutch 1/3 CLIL in English

- 8 à 13 h/week in target language
- 4 h/week language classes

➔ **More input in target language in CLIL**



2. INTENSIFYING CONSTRUCTIONS IN L1 DUTCH AND FRENCH

2.1 Intensifying constructions

- Intensifying construction $[[X]_{INT}\,[Y]_{ADJ}]_{AP/ADJ}$ ↔ 'very Y'
- At the interface of lexicon and grammar
  - $[[heel]_{ADV}\,[moe]_{ADJ}]_{AP}$ ↔ 'very tired'
  - $[[super]_{PREF}\,[moe]_{ADJ}]_{ADJ}$ ↔ 'very tired'
  - $[[dood]_{N}\,[moe]_{ADJ}]_{ADJ}$ ↔ 'very tired'

- "learning words and learning grammar are really all part of the same developmental process" (Tomasello 2003:42)

2.2 Adjectival intensifying constructions

Language Domain	Intensifying construction	Dutch	French
SYNTAX	[Adv + Adj]$_{AP}$	*heel ziek* 'very ill'	*très malade,* very ill'
	[Adj Adj]$_{AP}$ [Adj *maar dan ook* Adj]$_{AP}$	*mooi, mooi* 'beautiful beautiful' *mooi maar dan ook echt mooi* 'beautiful but than really beautiful'	*un monde fou fou fou* 'a crazy crazy crazy world' *joli mais alors vraiment joli* 'pretty but than really pretty'
	[*as* ADJ *as* X]$_{AP}$	*zo trots als een aap* 'proud like a monkey'	*fort comme un Turc* 'strong like a Turkish person'
MORPHO-LOGY	[Prefix + Adj]$_{ADJ}$	*supermodern* 'supermodern'	*ultrapuissant* 'ultrapowerful'
	[N/A + Adj]$_{ADJ}$	*beresterk* 'bear strong' *dolgelukkig* 'madly happy'	*?*
PHONO-LOGY	Stress / vowel lengthening	*Het was praaaach-tig!* 'It was amaaaaazing'	*C'était maaaagnifique !* 'It was amaaaaazing'

2.3 Germanic sandwich hypothesis

- Both Dutch and French use morphological and syntactic intensifiers but may display different preferences
  - Intensifying compounds are not productive in French
  - More morphological constructions in Dutch than in French

  (Van Haeringen 1956; Van der Wouden & Foolen, forth.; Lamiroy 2011)

2.4 Research question

- 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?
  - We will compare CLIL and non-CLIL learners to native Dutch-speakers in terms of **under-, over-** and **misuse** of intensifiers (Gilquin 2008)

2.5 Hypotheses

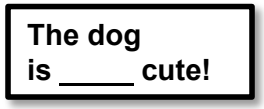
- **Overuse** (transfer) of the preferred mother tongue constructions
  - Especially **syntactic** constructions (e.g. adverbial modification, *heel waarschijnlijk* 'very probable')
- **Underuse** of idiosyncratic second language constructions
  - Especially **morphological** constructions (e.g. compounds: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

3. METHOD

3.1 Data collection

- 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



- Fill the gap exercise
- 10 sentences
- 902 productions

French	Dutch non-CLIL	Dutch CLIL	Dutch control group
431	100	132	63

3.2 Example fill-the-gap-exercise

Les vacances d''été commencent aujourd'hui, il fait très beau, et tu es dehors au soleil avec tes amis. Ce soir, vous allez tous ensemble à un super concert. Tu te sens ..... heureux(se).

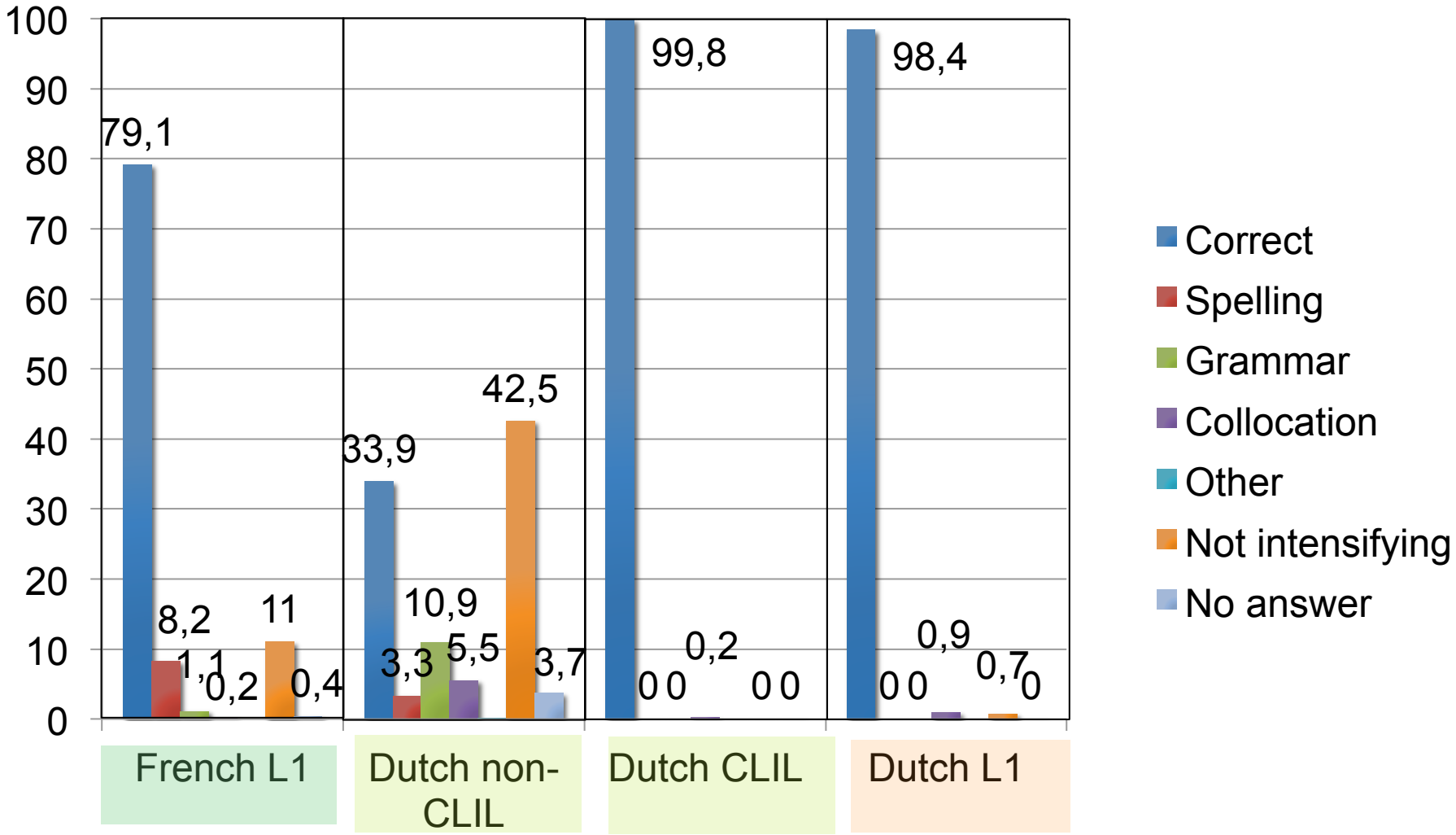
L'équipe de rugby de la Nouvelle Zélande est composée de joueurs ..... forts. C'est l'équipe la plus forte du monde.

3.3 Ten adjectives to be intensified

Dutch	French	English
groot	*gros*	‘big’
belangrijk	*important*	‘important’
gelukkig	*heureux*	‘happy’
duidelijk	*clair*	‘clear’
moeilijk	*difficile*	‘difficult’
sterk	*fort*	‘strong’
moe	*fatigué*	‘tired’
gek	*fou*	‘crazy’
waarschijnlijk	*probable*	‘probable’
koud	*froid*	‘cold’

4. RESULTS

4.1 “Misuse”


100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
79,1
8,2
1,1
0,2
11
0,4
33,9
3,3
10,9
5,5
42,5
3,7
99,8
0 0
0,2
0 0
98,4
0 0
0,9
0,7
0
French L1
Dutch non-CLIL
Dutch CLIL
Dutch L1
Correct
Spelling
Grammar
Collocation
Other
Not intensifying
No answer

4.3 Results: Variation and productivity

- (Baayen, 2009)

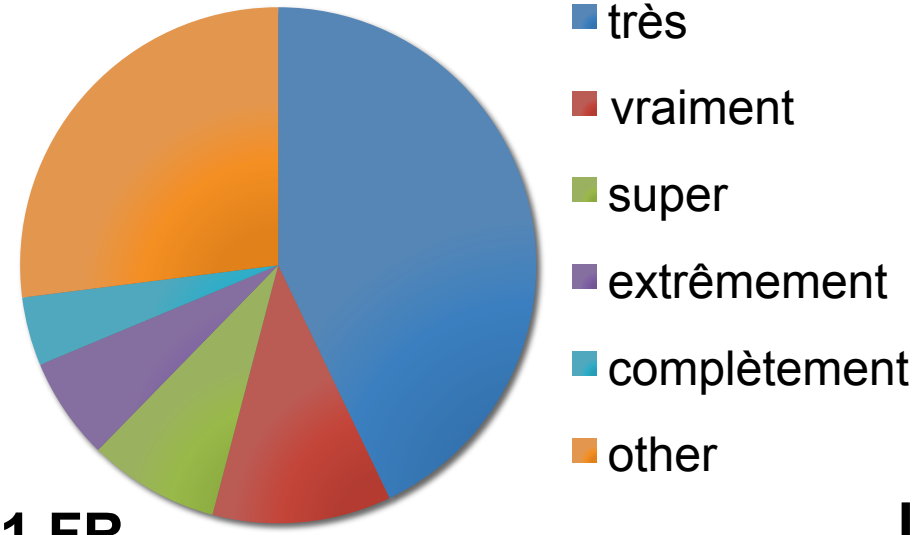
	French L1 Only correct intensifiers	Dutch non-CLIL Only correct intensifiers	Dutch CLIL	Dutch (L1)
Type/token ratio	0,027	0,034	0,043	**0,074**
Hapax legomena/ tokens	0,011	0,012	0,013	**0,110**

4.4 Results: Most frequent intensifiers

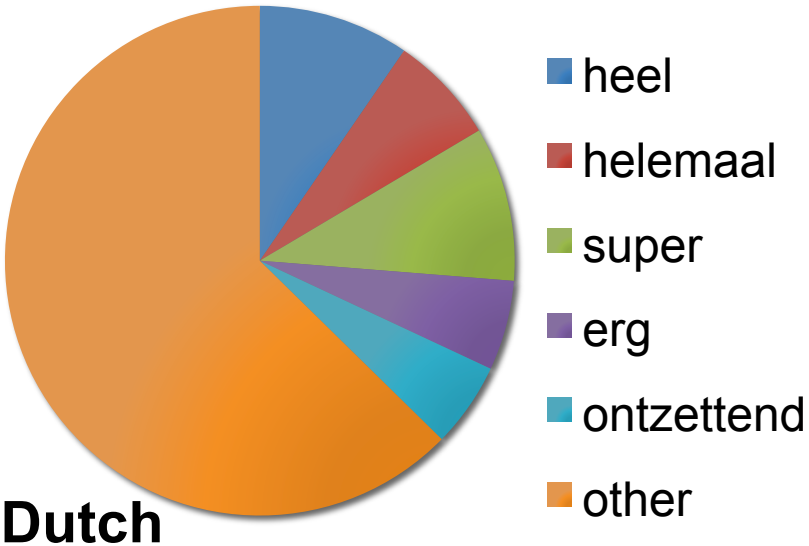
(normalized frequencies)

French L1	Dutch non-CLIL	Dutch CLIL	Dutch (L1)
***1.très* 'very' (42,9%)**	***1.heel* 'very' (50,0%)**	**1.*heel* 'very' (40,7%)**	**1.*heel* 'very' (8,9%)**
2. *vraiment* 'really' (11,2%)	2. *veel* 'many' (15,0%)	2. *zeer* 'very' (21,8%)	2. *helemaal*
3. *super* 'super' (8,2%)	3. *te* 'too' (6,0%)	3. *echt* 'really' (10,6%)	'completely' (6,4%)
4. *extrêmement*	4. *zeer* 'very' (5,0%)	4. *helemaal*	3. *super* 'super' (6,2%)
'extremely' (6,4%)	5. *echt* 'really' (4,8%)	'completely' (3,1%)	4. *erg* 'very' (3,6%)
5. *complètement*		5. *enorm*	5. *ontzettend*
'completely' (4,3%)		'enormously' (2,5%)	'terribly'(3,4%)

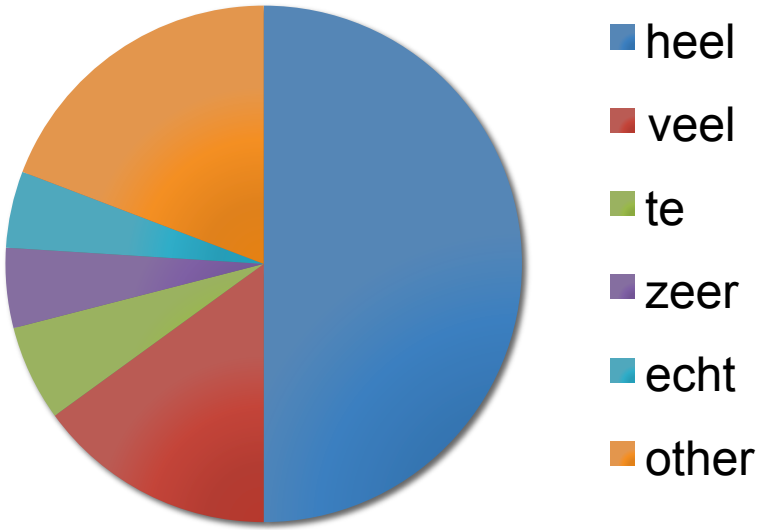
4.4 Results: Most frequent intensifiers



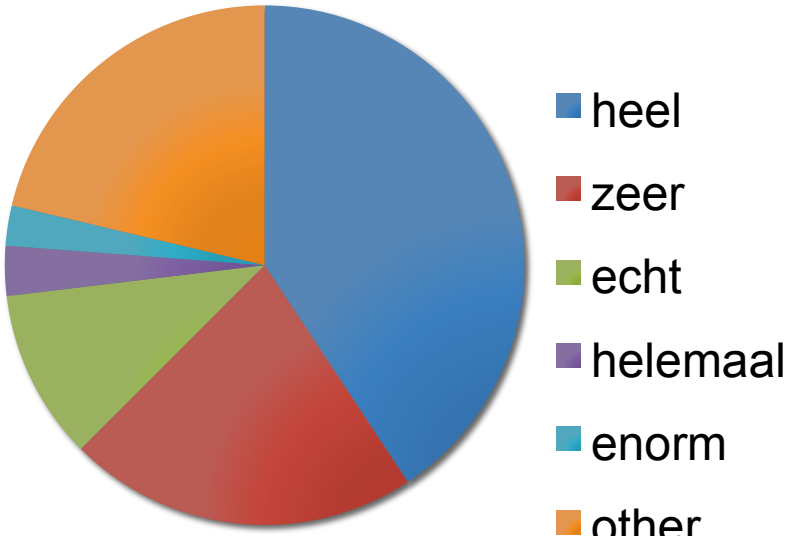
L1 FR



L1 Dutch

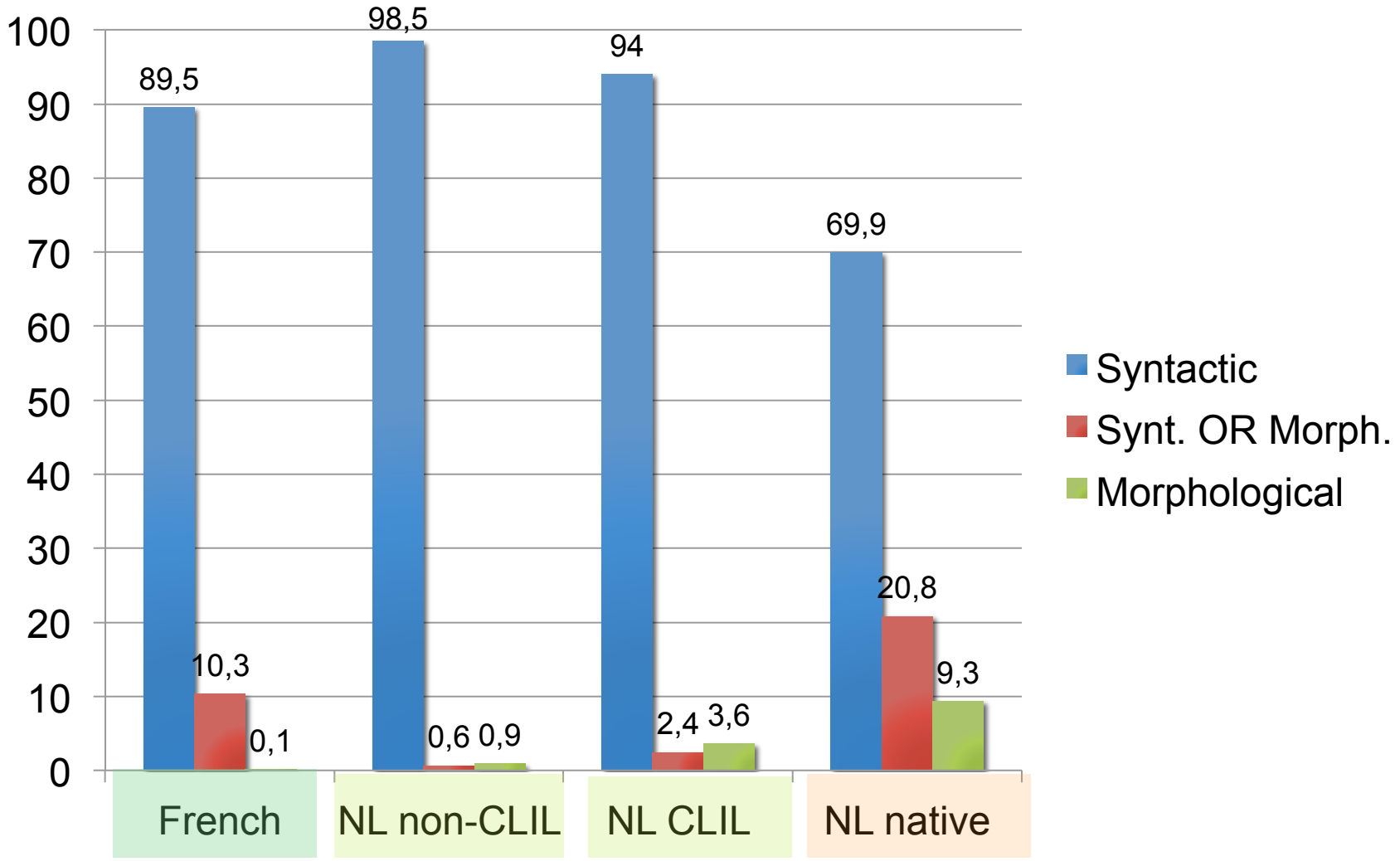


Non-CLIL Dutch



CLIL Dutch

4.6 Results: syntax vs. morphology



5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Conclusions

- Both CLIL and non-CLIL
  - **Overuse syntactic** intensifying constructions
  - **Underuse morphological** intensifying constructions

- But **CLIL-learners** develop a **more native-like** use of intensifiers:
  - Almost no (spelling, grammatical, collocational) mistakes
  - Less overuse of intensifying adverbs
  - Less underuse of morphological intensifiers especially compounds (= more compounds)

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Thank you

Bedankt

Merci!

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