**Given claims about new topics:
scope particles & perspective taking
in Italian, French, German & Dutch**

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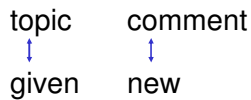**Basic dimensions of information structure**

1. given-new
2. topic-comment

➡ Topic Situation (Klein 2008)
  • Topic Time (TT)
  • Topic Entity (TE)
  • Topic Place
  • Topic World
  • …?

Basic dimensions of information structure

1. given-new
2. topic-comment

typical relation between the two:

  topic   comment
  ↕   ↕
  given   new

What if comments are 'given'?

If two comments have the same descriptive properties, at least one component of the Topic-sit must change

  Mr. Green went to bed   TE1
  Mr. Red went to bed   TE2

Speakers can mark that both assertions hold and one is not correcting the other

  Mr. Green went to bed   TE1
  *Mr. Red **ALSO** went to bed*   TE2

What if comments are 'given'?

'Given comments' can hold for one Topic SIT

but not for another one (change of Polarity):

Mr. Green was tired   TE1
*Mr. Red was **NOT** tired*   TE2

Information units in narrative main structure

topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		

Relation to given-new dimension

topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift (PNO)	change or maintenance	same or opposite polarity	given description or new

Cross-linguistic differences in the encoding of information configurations?

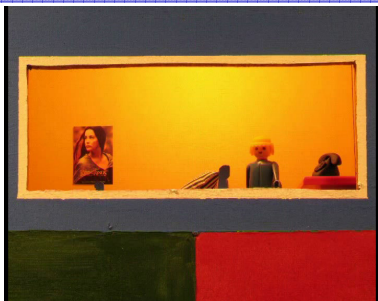| topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift	change or maintenance	same or opposite polarity	**given**

Method

- Elicited production
- video clips "Finite Story" in which the same event occurs several times
- Adult native speakers of Italian (20), French (20), German (20) and Dutch (20)
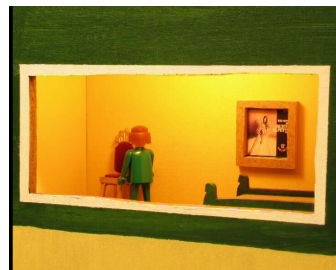
Information configuration 1

topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift	**change**	**same** polarity	**given**

Info Configuration 1: antecedent

Info Configuration 1: antecedent

Info Configuration 1: target

Information configuration 1

topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift	**change**	**same** polarity	**given**

➡ Which information unit do speakers of different languages choose to highlight ?
TE change or COMMENT maintenance ?

Examples : TE change

monsieur rouge <u>aussi</u> e: il s'allonge sur son lit et éteint la lumière

<u>anche</u> *il signor rossi va a letto e spegne la luce*

herr rot hat sich <u>auch</u> hingelegt und hat <u>auch</u> das licht ausgemacht

meneertje rood ploft op zijn rug neer, doet het licht uit en gaat <u>ook</u> slapen

Examples: "given comment"

monsieur rouge <u>fait de même</u>

là monsieur rouge a <u>fait la même chose</u>

e il signor rossi <u>idem</u>

<u>la stessa cosa viene ripetuta</u> *dal signor rossi*

de roode meneer <u>doet hetzelfde</u>

Results Info Configuration 1
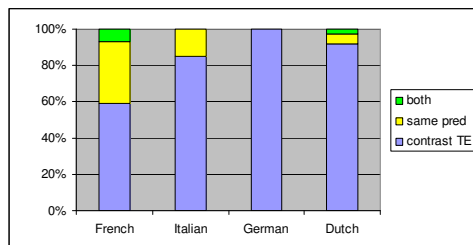
20 speakers x 3 contexts per language

IS	means	French	Italian	German	Dutch
Change TE	Add. Part.	*aussi* (13) *egalement* (4), *non plus* (6)	*anche* (28)	*auch* (13) *AUCH* (26) *ebenfalls* (1)	*ook* (2) *OOK* (32)
	Cleft	*là c'est X qui* (2)	-	-	-
	Other	*a son tour* (1)	-	-	-
	Tot.	**26**	**28**	**40**	**34**
Same Comm.	Anaph. VP	*faire même ch.* (6) *faire de même* (2) *pareil/idem* (4)	*fare / succedere/ etc. stessa cosa* (4) *idem* (1)	-	*hetzelfde doen* (2)
	Other	*de même que* (2) *ainsi que* (1)	*come* (1)	-	-
	Tot.	**15**	**6**	**0**	**2**

3

Information configuration 2

topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift	**change**	**opposite** polarity	**given**

Info Configuration 2: antecedent

Info Configuration 2: antecedent

Info Configuration 2: target

Information configuration 2

topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift	**change**	**opposite** polarity	**given**
...	Mr. Blue on the other hand	DOES	jump out of the window

➡ Which information unit do speakers of different languages choose to highlight ? TE change or POL change?

Examples: TE contrast

par contre monsieur bleu voit ce qui se passe... donc lui il (n') hésite pas, il saute

il signor blu invece (...) decise di buttarsi
il signor blu è l'unico che ...

DER entscheidet sich dann zu springen

HIJ hoort het

Ex. polarity contrast: intonation

het blauwe mannetje heeft geen keuze meer, dus die MOET wel springen
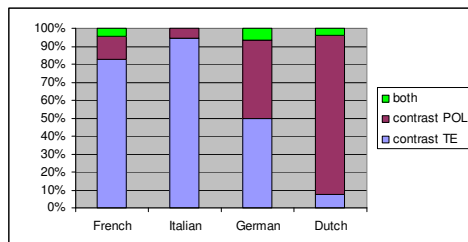
und deswegen IST er dann wohl auch gesprungen

Mr Bleu a VU l'incendie

Il Signor Blu viene sveGLIAto da questi rumori

Ex. polarity contrast: particles

monsieur bleu a <u>bien</u> voulu sauter
der hat sich dann entschieden, <u>DOCH</u> zu springen
meneer blauw springt <u>WEL</u> uit het raam

Info Configuration 2: Results

20 speakers x 2 contexts per language

IS	means	French	Italian	German	Dutch
TE contr.	Stressed NP/ pro	-	-	DER (3)	HIJ (2)
	Strong pro.	*lui (14) celui-ci (1)*	-	*Dieser (1)*	-
	Cleft	-	*l'unico che (6)*	-	-
	Particles	-	-	Nur (3)	-
	Adverb.	*par contre (3) en revanche (1)*	*Invece (10) in compenso (1) per primo (1)*	*Als einziger (1)*	-
	Tot.	**19**	**18**	8 [-int 5]	2 [-int 0]
POL contr.	Particles	Bien (1)	-	Doch (3)	Toch (2) Wel (18)
	Stressed VP	VU (2)	sveGLIAto (1)	SPRINGT (2) STEIGT (1) IST (1)	MOEST (2) SPRINGT (1)
	Tot.	3 [-int 1]	1 [-int 0]	**7** [-int 3]	**23** [-int 20]

Summary Info Configuration 2

- Germanic languages:
  - preference for highlighting the **polarity contrast**
- Romance languages:
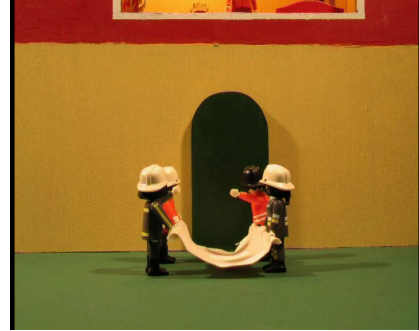 - preference for highlighting the **topic entity contrast**

Information configuration 3

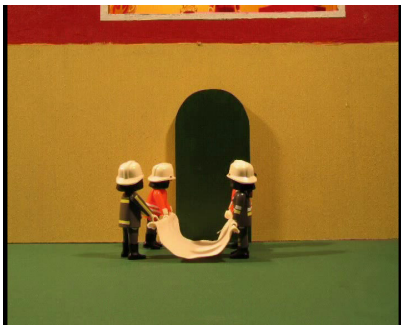| topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift	**maintenance**	**opposite** polarity	**given**

5

Info Configuration 3: antecedent

Info Configuration 3: antecedent

Info Configuration 3: target

Information configuration 3

topic situation		assertion	comment
TT	TE		
shift	**maintenance**	**opposite** polarity	**given**
this time	he	DOES	jump out of the window

➡ Which information unit do speakers of different languages choose to highlight ? Shift of TT or change of POL?

Examples Contrast TT

finalement il saute quand même

questa volta il signor rossi si butta

schliesslich springt herr rot aus dem fenster

uiteindelijk is meneer rood gesprongen

Examples Contrast POL

M. rouge décide tout d(e) même de le faire

il signor rossi eh decide che è giunto il momento di effettivamente salvarsi

hij springt TOCH

herr rot springt DOCH

Results Info Configuration 3
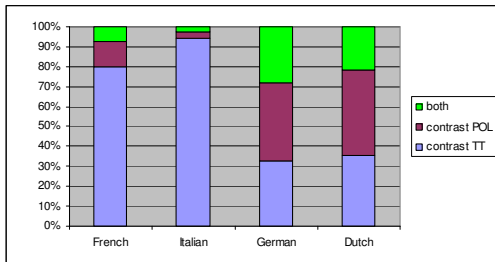
20 speakers x 3 contexts per language

IS	Means	French	Italian	German	Dutch
TT contr.	Temp. adv.	*cette fois (8), finalement (12), enfin (4), là (1)*	*Questa volta (9), finalemente (12), alla fine (9), infine (2)*	*Diesmal (4), schliesslich (3), zum schluss (1), letztendlich (1), JETZT (3), NUN (2), DANN (1)*	*Deze/dit keer (5), uiteindelijk (13), NU/NOU (11)*
	V. Per.	*Finir par (7)*	-	-	-
	Other	*Ça y est (1)*	*dopo molta insistenza (1)*	-	-
	Total	32	33	**15** [-int 9]	**29** [-int 18]
POL contr.	Part.	-	-	*Doch (15)*	*Wel (16), toch (12), toch wel (5), alsnog (1)*
	Str.VP	-	-	*ERREICHT (3)*	*SPRINGT (1)*
	Other	*Quand même (4), tout de même (1)*	*Effettivamente (1)*	-	-
	Total	5	1	18 [-int 15]	35 [-int 34]

"enriched" comments

FR	IT	GE	DU
(se) decider à se laisser convaincre finir par persuader à	decidere di/a convincersi a farsi coraggio	überzeugen überreden sich überwinden	besluiten overtuigen sich bedenken
16/20	**13**/20	9/20	6/20

Summary Info Configuration 3

- Germanic languages:
  - preference for **polarity contrast**, or
  - **topic time and polarity contrast**
- Romance languages:
  - preference for **topic time contrast**
  - tendency to lexically "enrich" the given comment

assertion-related particles

- Stressed particles like *WEL, TOCH / DOCH* relate assertions with opposite polarity

  M Groen springt niet
  M. Groen springt WEL

Summary: info conf. 2 & 3

- Speakers of Germanic languages use assertion-related particles or intonation in order to highlight **polarity** contrasts
- Speakers of Romance languages signal changing **topic situations** more explicitly, or they modify the comment
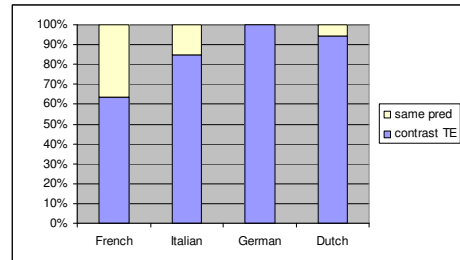- What about information configuration 1, where polarity was maintained?

Information configuration 1

topic situation		assertion	predicate
TT	TE		
shift	**change**	**same** polarity	**given**

massively attested in all 4 languages:

additive particles like *aussi/anche/auch/ook*

Results Info Configuration 1

Legend: □ same pred ■ contrast TE (French, Italian, German, Dutch)

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additive particles: cross-linguistic differences

anche *[il signor verdi] va a letto*
auch *[herr grün]   ist ins bett gegangen*
ook *?*

*[hij]   gaat   **OOK**   slapen*
*[herr grün] legt sich **AUCH** schlafen*
*[il signor verdi]...   **anche** ??*

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additive particles: cross-linguistic differences

French 'aussi' seems to be inbetween:

[Mr Vert] ***aussi*** *va se coucher*   = auch [H.Grün]….
    *([Mr Vert] va lui **aussi** se coucher)*

*[Mr Vert] va **aussi** se coucher* = [HG.] geht AUCH...

*[Mr Vert] va se coucher **aussi*** **?**

OOK/AUCH as assertion-related particles

- same position and stress pattern like negation, *DOCH* etc.

  Herr Grün geht   schlafen
 *Herr Rot geht   **AUCH** schlafen*
  *Herr Blau geht **NICHT** schlafen*
 *Später geht er **DOCH** schlafen*

- speakers highlight the polarity with which the given comment is asserted about the topic

- *OOK/AUCH* are **assertion-related** particles like *WEL, TOCH/DOCH*

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information configuration 1: *OOK/AUCH* as assertion-related particles

Legend: □ same pred ■ contrast POL ■ contrast TE (French, Italian, German, Dutch)
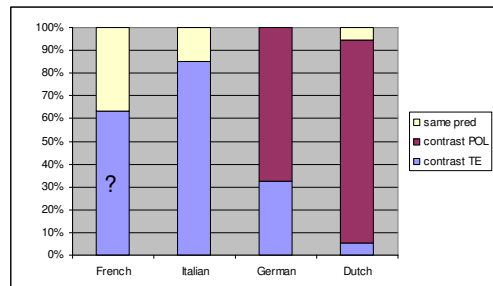
Information units preferred for highlighting: Romance vs. Germanic way
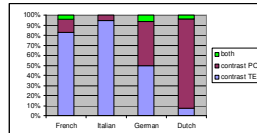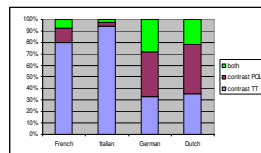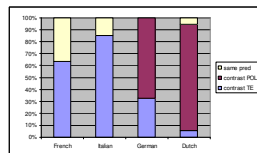
- Changed or given information can be used for highlighting.
- Different information units are preferred for establishing a comparison to antecedent utterances in the context.

Summary

- Romance languages:
  - mark change of **Topic Situation**
  - express givenness of comment (*faire la même chose*)
  - enrich given comments
- Germanic languages:
  - mark change of **Topic Situation** (TE more than TT)
  - focus on **polarity** of assertion

Conclusions

- Germanic way vs. Romance way
  Fundamental differences in the choice of highlighted info units
- Germanic languages highlight changes on the assertion level whereas Romance languages highlight changes in the descriptive content

And about L2 acquisition?

- These preferences influence the form of simple learner utterances from early on:

  - *OOK/AUCH* hinder the acquisition of finiteness (Schimke, Verhagen, Dimroth 2008);
  - *anche* does not (Andorno 2005)
  - *aussi* is once again in between (Benazzo 2005)

Further research / data

- Native speakers:
  - Japanese, Polish, Finnish, English

- Basic Variety level (=relation particles / finiteness):
  - German L2
  - Dutch L2

- Advanced level (= perspective taking):
  - Italian L2
  - French L2
  - Dutch L2