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# The role of prosodic cues in mapping meaning to words in monolingual and bilingual infants

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KEYWORDS

word segmentation  
bilingualism  
prosodic cues

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ABSTRACT

To acquire a language, infants must learn to segment words from fluent speech. Infants can rely on different sources to discover word boundaries, for example prosodic cues and statistical regularities. Prosodic cues are language specific segmentation cues, because a language can have predominant trochaic or iambic stress patterns for words. However, little research is done to examine how prosodic cues are used for word segmentation by bilingual children learning an iambic and trochaic language. Furthermore, little is known about how prosodic cues influence the mapping of meaning to newly segmented words in infants. The current study proposes to investigate the effect of stress cues on mapping meaning to newly segmented words in monolingual and bilingual infants of 17 months old. A paradigm is suggested in which both word segmentation and the ability to map meaning to words can be examined. This paradigm consists of a familiarization phase, a label-object association task and a test phase, in which eye-tracking is used to see whether the infants learned the association between newly segmented words and objects. The proposed study can contribute to a deeper understanding of how monolingual and bilingual infants use prosodic cues in word segmentation and how they map meaning to words.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

To acquire a language, infants must learn to segment words from fluent speech. Infants can rely on different sources to discover word boundaries, for example prosodic cues and statistical regularities. Several studies examined how infants rely on these cues to segment words. It has been found that infants of 7 months rely more on statistical cues, but infants of 9 months rely more on stress cues (Thiessen & Saffran, 2003). At an age of 11 months, infants are also able to segment words that have a different stress pattern than the predominant stress pattern of their native language (Seidl, 2009). At an age of 17 months old, infants can map meaning to newly segmented words (Graf Estes et al., 2007). So far, however, the effect of prosodic cues on this ability is not investigated. Furthermore, word segmentation studies are mostly done in English infants. English has a predominant trochaic stress pattern for words, but there are also languages that have a predominant iambic stress pattern for words. Still very little research has been done to word segmentation in bilingual infants who learn a trochaic and an iambic language. This would be interesting to examine, because this could give us more insight in whether, and if so how, the language environment of an infant influences their sensitivity to different segmentation cues. The current paper is a research proposal to examine the effect of stress cues on mapping meaning to newly segmented words in monolingual Dutch and bilingual Dutch and French infants of 17 months old. This

proposal contains, thus, an acquisition as well as a typology perspective on the link between word segmentation and mapping meaning to words. A paradigm will be proposed in which both word segmentation and the ability to map meaning to words can be examined.

## 2. BACKGROUND

In this section, literature on word segmentation will be explained. First, cues that can help word segmentation will be explained. Then, several studies that examined the use of stress cues to discover word boundaries will be discussed. Section 2.3 concerns the link between word segmentation and mapping meaning to words. Finally, the current study will be explained.

### 2.1 WORD SEGMENTATION CUES

Spoken utterances do not contain clear boundaries between words. However, to acquire a language, infants must learn to segment words from fluent speech. Word segmentation abilities start to develop between 6 and 7.5 months of age (Johnson & Jusczyk, 2001). Infants can rely on different sources to learn word boundaries, including prosodic markers, phonotactic constraints, context-sensitive allophones, and statistical regularities. From these cues, no single cue is sufficient to segment words correctly. It depends on the sound organization of a language which cues are most useful for word segmentation. Therefore, segmentation cues are language specific.

One language specific cue to word boundaries is the stress pattern of a language. For example, almost all English bi-syllabic words have a trochaic stress pattern, which is strong-weak. Take, for example, *pencil* and *paper*. Therefore, a potential strategy for English learners to segment words is treating a stressed syllable as a word onset. However, this strategy would lead to an incorrect segmentation of weak-strong (iambic) words as *guitar*. To segment words with a stress pattern other than a trochaic one, listeners need to be sensitive to other segmentation cues as well. In contrast to English, French bi-syllabic words have an iambic stress pattern, which is weak-strong. So, in general, a stressed syllable indicates a word ending in French, instead of a word onset.

Another cue for word segmentation is how often certain syllables (or sounds) co-occur. In other words, how likely it is that one syllable is followed by another syllable (Saffran, Aslin, & Newport, 1996). This is known as statistical cues, or statistical regularities. For instance, in Dutch, given the utterance *lieve vogel* ('sweet bird'), the probability of the co-occurrence of *lie* and *ve* is greater than the probability of the co-occurrence of *ve* and *vo*. Based on the statistical information, *lieve* is a statistical word, whereas *vovo* is a statistical part word. In other words, a part word consists of a sequence of syllables crossing word boundaries, and it has, therefore, a lower probability than a statistical word sequence. Therefore, based on the statistical information, it is more likely that *lieve* is a word than that *vovo* is a word.

### 2.2 THE USE OF STRESS CUES IN WORD SEGMENTATION

As is noted before, word segmentation abilities start to develop between 6 and 7.5 months of age (Johnson & Jusczyk, 2001). In this section, several studies that examined the use of stress cues in infants of different ages will be discussed.

Thiessen and Saffran (2003) examined whether English infants of 7 and 9 months old attend more to statistical cues or stress cues to segment words. They used head turn preference procedures to test what happens if stress and statistical cues indicate different word boundaries. The familiarization phase consisted of either an iambic or trochaic artificial language, in which four bi-syllabic non-words occurred. In the trochaic language, the statistical regularities and stress cues indicated the same word boundaries. For example, in the two-word string *Dlti#BUGo*, in which stressed syllables are capitalized, both stress and statistical cues indicated *diti* and *bugo* as words. However, in the iambic language, there was a conflict between the cues. Statistics would indicate *diTI* as word in the two-word string *diTI#buGO*, but the English stress pattern would indicate *Tibu* as word. The 7-month-old infants showed in both conditions a novelty preference for the statistical words. So, they relied on the statistical cues, regardless of stress. In contrast, the 9-month-old infants showed a familiarity preference for words (*Dlti*) in the trochaic condition, but for part-words (*Tibu*) in the iambic condition. Therefore, stress cues outweigh statistical cues in word segmentation at this age. The authors suggest that infants of different ages use different segmentation strategies and that there is, therefore, a shift from using only statistical cues to using other speech cues as well.

In a study by Johnson and Seidl (2009), the weight of stress cues and statistical cues in 11-month-old infants is investigated. At this age, infants start to segment non-initially stressed words from speech. Therefore, the authors hypothesized that this ability is linked to a shift from relying on stress cues (in 9-month-old infants) to relying more on statistical cues. However, they found that infants of 11 months old still weigh stress cues more heavily than statistical cues. A potential explanation for this finding in combination with the fact that infants of this age can segment non-initially stressed words could be that the infants rely more on other segmentation cues, for example phonotactic cues.

Polka and Sundara (2003) investigated stress cues for word segmentation in monolingual and bilingual 7.5-month-old learners of English and French. French and English words have different rhythmic patterns; English words have a trochaic stress pattern, while French words have an iambic pattern. The authors conducted an experiment that contained a familiarization phase and a test phase. In the familiarization phase, infants heard two words in either French or English repeated in random order when they looked at a light. During the test phase, infants heard four different text passages. In two test passages, one of the familiarized words occurred repeatedly throughout the passage. In the two control passages, a novel word occurred repeatedly. The bilingual infants were tested on both English and French and the words were all existing words in the language they were tested in. The authors found that the bilingual infants listened longer to the test passages, regardless of the language. This indicates that they could segment the words using both stress patterns, because they preferred listening to the segmented words. The authors concluded that there is no delay in the development of word segmentation skills in bilingual infants. It is important to note, however, that the authors did not compare the test passages with passages in which part words occurred repeatedly. Therefore, they cannot be entirely sure whether the effect was only due to stress cues and not (also) to statistical cues. The syllables of words occurred, namely, automatically more often together than the part words,

because there was a random order. The fact that the words used in the experiments were existing words could also have influenced the result, because it is possible that the infants were already familiar with some words. The authors did not mention these factors in their study.

### 2.3 WORD SEGMENTATION AND MAPPING MEANING TO WORDS

In a study by Graf Estes, Evans, Alibali and Saffran (2007) the link between word segmentation and the process of mapping meaning to words is examined. The authors conducted a statistical word segmentation task in infants of 17 months old, which was followed by an object-label-learning task. In this task, words were either statistical words or part words from the previous segmentation task or non-words that were not part of the segmentation task. The words were linked to 3-D images of novel objects. During the habituation phase, infants received two different label-object combinations. In each trial, an object moved across the screen while its corresponding label was played. During the test phase, infants viewed either the label-object combinations from the habituation phase or switched label-object combinations. So, for example, in the switched combination Label 1 occurred with Object 2, instead of with the associated Object 1. The authors compared the looking times for same and switched test trials. They found that the infants looked longer to the switched trials, but only in the statistical word condition. This result indicated that the infants learned the segmented words. Therefore, the authors concluded that segmented words are easier to link to objects than part words or novel words in 17-month-old infants. The findings of this study show that there is a link between word segmentation and mapping meaning to words. However, the authors examined only the effect of statistical cues on mapping meaning to words. It would be interesting to see whether other speech cues, for example prosodic cues, facilitate word learning as well.

### 2.4 CURRENT STUDY

The study of Graf Estes et al. (2007) showed that 17-month-old infants can map meanings to words they segmented based on statistical cues. They did not examine the effect of stress cues on the ability to map meaning to words. However, it is explained in the previous sections that infants of 9 to 11 months old rely more on stress cues than on statistical cues. Therefore, it could be that stress cues still outweigh statistical cues in infants of 17 months old. So far, however, no studies have investigated this nor whether stress cues facilitate mapping meaning to words.

Because languages can have different predominant stress patterns, it would also be interesting to see how bilingual infants of two languages with contradicting stress patterns rely on stress to segment words. This was done in the study by Polka and Sundara (2003) (see section 2.2). They found no difference between bilingual and monolingual infants in the use of stress cues to discover word boundaries. However, the authors did not take statistical cues into account in their analyses. In addition, the words in their experiments were existing words embedded in text passages. It is possible that the infants relied on different stress cues to segment words in their different languages. So, for example, if they listen to French they segment words iambically, but if they listen to English they segment words in a trochaic way. It would be interesting to see whether bilingual infants have a

preference for one of the two stress patterns they are familiar with in words of a different (non-existing) language. This could give us insight in how the language environment of an infant plays a role in their sensitivity to different cues for word segmentation.

So, no research has been done to examine the effect of prosodic cues on the ability to map meaning to words, nor to the use of prosodic cues in bilingual infants of different stress pattern languages. Therefore, the aim of the current study is to examine the effect of stress cues on mapping meaning to newly segmented words in monolingual Dutch infants and bilingual Dutch-French infants of 17 months of age. The research questions are:

- (i) What is the effect of stress cues on mapping meaning to newly segmented words in 17-month-old infants?
- (ii) Is there a difference in how stress cues influence mapping meaning to words in monolingual and bilingual infants?

To examine these questions, a segmentation task in combination with a word-learning task will be conducted in monolingual Dutch and bilingual Dutch-French infants of 17 months of age. The segmentation task will consist of a trochaic and iambic artificial language. In this way, the effect of stress cues on word segmentation can be investigated. Dutch and French have, namely, different predominant stress patterns for bi-syllabic words, respectively a trochaic and an iambic pattern. Thus, the stress cues for segmenting words contradict in these languages; a stressed syllable indicates either a word onset (Dutch) or a word ending (French).

One hypothesis is that stress cues will outweigh statistical cues in infants of 17 months of age. This is expected, because the study of Graf Estes et al. (2007) showed that 11-month-olds rely more on stress than on statistics. They suggested that infants use a combination of multiple cues for word segmentation at the age of 11 months, and it is likely that this strategy develops to the use of more cues at an age of 17 months. So, statistical cues will probably not outweigh stress cues at an age of 17 months. If stress and statistical cues indicate different word boundaries, it is expected that the monolingual Dutch infants will rely on stress cues to segment words and, therefore, that they will treat statistical part words as words. This would also mean that they only map the meanings of part words to objects.

Furthermore, it is hypothesized that stress cues that indicate the same word boundaries as statistical cues facilitate the ability to map meaning to newly segmented words in monolingual infants. This is hypothesized, because multiple cues to a word boundary will probably result in a more reliably segmented word. The hypotheses for the bilingual infants are less clear, because no research is done so far to examine the difference between the weight of stress cues and statistical cues in bilinguals. Based on the study by Polka and Sundara (2003), it is expected that the bilingual infants rely on different stress patterns in their languages. So, if they listen to Dutch, stress indicates a word onset, but in French it indicates a word ending. However, it is not clear how they treat stress cues in an unfamiliar language. If the bilingual infants do not have one predominant language, it is possible that they rely less on stress cues in a language they do not know. This could

be the case, because they know that stress can indicate different word boundaries in different languages. Therefore, they cannot be sure which stress pattern the new language has. This would mean that they rely on other cues than stress to segment words in a new language. It is, therefore, expected that they rely more on statistical cues than on stress cues to segment words in an artificial language. So, if stress and statistics indicate different word boundaries, it is hypothesized that they segment the statistical words as words, regardless of stress. Therefore, it is expected that they learn the combinations of objects and statistical words the best.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 PARTICIPANTS

The participants will be 40 infants of 17 months old. The age of 17 months is chosen, because Graf Estes et al. (2007) found that monolingual English children are able to map meanings to newly segmented words. Half of the infants will be monolingual learners of Dutch and the other half will be bilingual learners of Dutch and French. The bilingual infants should be exposed to both languages in a comparable amount, so that they are similarly familiar with both stress patterns. This will be checked by a questionnaire that the parents will have to fill in.

#### 3.2 STIMULI AND PROCEDURE

The experiment consists of three parts: a familiarization phase, a label-object association task, and a test phase. In the first part, the infants will be familiarized with the artificial language. In the second part, the infants will learn objects and their associated labels. Finally, they will be tested on whether they linked the labels to the objects.

##### 3.2.1 *Familiarization phase*

In the familiarization phase, infants will hear a continuous speech stream of four bi-syllabic words. Two languages will be created; one trochaic language and one iambic language. Each infant will only listen to one of the two languages. Both languages will consist of the same four words spoken in the same randomized order, without pauses between the words. The words that will be used are the same as those used in the study by Thiessen and Saffran (2003); *dapu*, *dobi*, *bugo*, and *diti*. The words will be naturally produced by a native speaker of English to avoid influences of Dutch or French. Stress is manipulated in the same way as is done in the study by Johnson and Jusczyk (2001). Syllables will be recorded in isolation pronounced either with or without stress. Because the syllables are recorded in isolation, there will be no influence of the English trochaic stress pattern of the speaker. Stressed syllables will be higher in average pitch and amplitude and longer in duration. In the trochaic language, the word onsets of the statistical words will be stressed. An orthographic representation of this language would look as follows ...*DApuDObiBUgo*... (stressed syllables are capitalized). In the iambic language, the word-final syllables will be stressed. An orthographic representation of this language would look as follows ...*daPUdoBIbuGO*... The statistical probabilities of the words in both languages are 1.0, and the statistical probabilities of the part words are 0.33. The infant will sit on the parent's lap on the middle of a three-sided booth during the whole experiment. The parent will wear headphones so (s) he cannot hear the stimuli. The familiarization phase will last approximately two minutes.

### 3.2.2 Label-object association task

After the familiarization phase, the infants will do a label-object association task. In this task, they will view two different label-object combinations that will be presented one at a time and in a random order. One of the labels will be a statistical word, the other label will be a statistical part-word. A statistical part word of the iambic language is a word based on Dutch stress cues, because the first syllable is stressed. The objects will be non-existing 2D objects that will move across the screen. During the presentation of the object, the associated label will be played repeatedly. The object-label combination will be presented as long as the infant looks at the screen. The habituation criterion will be reached when looking times across three following trials decrease to 50% of the average looking time across the first three trials, as was the case in Graf Estes et al. (2007).

### 3.2.3 Test phase

To test whether the infants have learned the label-object combination, a variant of the visual world paradigm will be used. In this paradigm, two objects of the label-object association task will be shown presented with one label. Eye-tracking will be used to measure the eye-movements of the infants. Each trial consists of a 3-seconds period in which only the objects are shown. After this period, a label will be presented that is associated with one of the objects. The next 3 seconds, the infant's looking times will be measured. A similar paradigm is used in a study by Vouloumanos and Werker (2009). These authors point out that "infants who have learned a word-object link look longer at the object that matches the word being played" (p.1612). So, longer looking times to the associated object will reflect that the infant can map the meaning of the learned words to objects.

## 3.3 DESIGN

There will be two groups of infants: a monolingual and bilingual group. In the familiarization phase, infants of both groups will be randomly assigned to one of the two speech streams: the trochaic language or the iambic language. Therefore, the study will have a mixed design. The dependent variable is the looking times of the infant during the test phase. The independent variables are the language conditions and whether the infant is mono- or bilingual.

In the test phase, the looking times of the infants will be measured. Looking times to the objects associated with statistical words and with statistical part words from the familiarization phase will be compared. If an infant learned the object-label association, (s)he will look longer to the associated object than to the other presented object. The longer an infant looks to an associated object, the better (s)he has learned the association.

## 4. PREDICTIONS

In the trochaic language condition, it is expected that the monolingual infants will learn the object-label associations better if the labels are statistical words. This would, thus, be reflected by longer looking times to objects associated with statistical words than to objects associated with statistical part words. In this condition, the stress cues and statistical cues indicate, namely, the same word boundaries for Dutch infants. In the iambic language condition, it is expected that the monolingual infants look longer to the objects

associated with the statistical part words, because it is hypothesized that stress cues outweigh statistical cues at the age of 17 months. It is possible that the monolingual infants look longer to the objects linked to words in the trochaic language condition than to the objects linked to part words in the iambic condition, because in the former the cues indicate the same word boundaries. This could lead to more robust word boundaries, and, thus, better learning.

The hypothesis for the bilingual infants is that they will rely less on stress cues for word segmentation. Therefore, it is expected that they will learn the associations between objects and statistical words better than the associations between objects and statistical part words, regardless of whether they were exposed to the trochaic or iambic language. So, if this is the case, they will always look longer to the objects associated with a statistical word than to the objects associated with a statistical part word.

If the results will be as hypothesized, there will be an effect of stress cues on mapping meaning to newly segmented words, but bilingual and monolingual infants will differ in how much they rely on stress cues compared to statistical cues. This would, thus, mean that it depends on the language environment of an infant which segmentation cues they use to discover words.

If there is no difference between the language conditions in the monolingual infants, this would mean that bilingual infants rely only on statistical cues to segment words, and not on stress cues. In this case, it would also be possible that there is no difference between the monolingual and bilingual infants. This would suggest that infants rely on the same segmentation cues, irrespective of their language environment. Finally, a possibility is that some bilingual infants will segment words with stressed syllables as word onsets, and some will segment stressed syllables as word endings. This would mean that there is variability in how bilingual infants use stress cues in word segmentation. This result would suggest that children use different segmentation strategies to discover word boundaries.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This is a research proposal to examine the effect of stress cues on mapping meaning to newly segmented words in monolingual and bilingual infants of 17 months old. A paradigm is proposed that consists of a familiarization phase, an object-labelling task and a test phase. Using this paradigm, both word segmentation and the ability to map meaning to words can be examined. Longer looking times will reflect that an infant learned the object-label combination. Whether the infants segmented the statistical words or part words is reflected by which object-label combinations are learned. It is expected that the monolingual infants will rely more on stress cues to segment words, and will, thus, look longer to objects associated with statistical part words in the iambic language condition. In contrast, it is expected that bilingual infants will rely more on statistical cues and will, thus, look longer to objects associated with statistical words, regardless of the language condition. The proposed study can contribute to a deeper understanding of how monolingual and bilingual infants use prosodic cues in word segmentation and how they map

meaning to words. Furthermore, examining bilingual infants could give us more insight in whether or not the sensitivity to different segmentation cues is determined by the language environment of an infant. ■

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# Why do we lie to please others?

## The role of prosocial deception in the communicative project

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### KEYWORDS

prosocial deception  
emotion  
ALC model  
communicative project

### ABSTRACT

Prosocial deception, also known as 'white lies', is the most current type of lie in our everyday interactions. This paper discusses its role in maintaining a good communicative project as defined by Tomasello (2008). First, the different types of deception are described, next their underlying functions are discussed. Deception in general helps regulating the emotions in three ways, among which manipulating the emotions of others (Hrubes, Feldman, & Tyler, 2004). I argue here that prosocial deception belongs to this category, with the specificity that it aims to protect the other. To visualize the role of deception in communication, the Affective Language Comprehension model by Van Berkum (2018) is adapted to show the discrepancy between the communicator's actual social intention and the receiver's perception of it: in a successful white lie, the receiver stays unaware that the communicator actively intends to 'save the project'. I therefore argue that prosocial deception fulfils the role of communication softener. The interpretation of the intention behind white lies remains however controversial and I propose that a circular categorization should replace the current continuum classification of deception types. Moreover, the different outcomes of unsuccessful white lies remain a path for further research.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Lies have been argued to constitute approximately 20% of adults' social interactions on a daily basis, from which most are used with prosocial intentions (Kashy & DePaulo, 1996). Deceiving is thus an inherent part of our communicative behaviors. Children also learn how to deceive, and studies have shown an increase in deception behaviors as they grow up (Lee, 2013). Nevertheless, there are different types of lies, with different functions. Some research targets deception from an acquisition point of view to predict different parameters (Talwar & Lee, 2008), while other studies focus on specific cases where deception tends to be positively perceived or even required, such as politeness contexts (Talwar, Murphy, & Lee, 2007).

However, in light of the literature, it seems that prosocial deception has not been extensively researched, especially with regards to its functions in communication (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014; Methasani, Gaspar, & Barry, 2017; Williams, Moore, Crossman, & Talwar, 2016). Yet, understanding prosocial lying abilities can benefit research on individuals with social deficits (Williams et al., 2016), and can be an important variable in fields such as economics, psychology and management (Methasani et al., 2017). The question of interest is therefore the following: What is the role of prosocial deception in maintaining a

good communicative project? The present discussion is based on Van Berkum's (2018) Affective Language Comprehension model, which will be broadened as to map it on Tomasello's (2008) Cooperative Model of Human Communication. This model will thus include expression as well as comprehension while illustrating a successful white lie.

This paper is organized as follows. In section 2, deception is defined together with its relation to emotion. In section 3, the functions of deception are discussed, first as a general behavior and then focusing specifically on prosocial deception, based on the Emotion Processing Model (Struiksma, 2017). In section 4, the communicative project is defined according to Tomasello (2008). Subsequently in section 5, I introduce the Affective Language Comprehension model (Van Berkum, 2018) and present an adaptation to the current topic based on the literature to represent how communication partners compute white lies. This literature review ends with a discussion (section 6).

## 2. DECEPTION AND EMOTION

First of all, *deception* is defined, according to Hrubes, Feldman and Tyler (2004, p. 232), as "any act designed deliberately to create a false belief". The Oxford Dictionary adds to this definition that this act is especially performed for personal gain<sup>1</sup>. To describe the mechanisms by which deception occurs, Hrubes et al. (2004) take as a starting point the example of a teenager burying their parent's car in a snow bank. Deception may then occur either by withholding, fabricating or distorting information. The first case would be for instance the teenager hiding the fact that he or she was under the influence of alcohol. In the second case, the teenager could say that this was the only way to avoid a car coming at full speed from the other way, and therefore make up an excuse. In the third case, information can be exaggerated, such as saying that the storm was blinding whereas it was actually gently snowing, or by minimizing the truth, such as admitting having had a beer while having actually had several. Such deception can take place via verbal channels but also non-verbal ones, such as by putting up facial expressions which are not really felt.

There are of course many different reasons for deceiving. In this example, deception is used to hide an unintentional mistake. Someone could also want to deceive to hide a voluntary transgression or to get access to information. Besides, one could lie just to please their interlocutor on an aspect that is independent from themselves. Still, drawing a line between the different categories seems inadequate as the reasons might be overlapping or combining different purposes. Williams et al. (2015) therefore propose to order deception types on a continuum going from antisocial deception on one extreme through socially neutral deception and to prosocial deception on the other extreme. The authors define antisocial deception as following: "These lies are told to protect oneself from discovery of a transgression or other self-motivations" (Williams et al., 2015). This infers that those lies benefit the liar in the social interaction. On the other hand, Williams et al. define prosocial lying as being told "for the benefit of another individual". They are thus intrinsically altruistic and are usually told to spare the other's feelings. Examples of

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<sup>1</sup> Oxford Dictionary. Definition of deceive. Retrieved June 6, 2018, from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/deceive>

such white lies are saying: 'I was just about to call you!' to someone you should have called a long time ago, or 'It's delicious!' about a dish that does not please you.

A note must be said on the terminology used in this typology. Since lying is a communicative behavior, it is, as a general concept, prosocial in the sense that communication is based on a will to unite. In this paper, however, William's et al. (2015) distinction is assumed, which is mainly based on the recipient of the lie and on the social intention: defined as 'anti-' or 'neutrally social' are lies uttered with the intention of minimizing the effect of the liar's action on the social environment (e.g. reduce the recipient's anger). They are egoistically rather than altruistically motivated, as opposed to 'prosocial' lies. The function of lies will be further detailed in section 3.

Lying, and expressing one's feelings, is related to the understanding of 'display rules', which refer to social conventions as to how to display one's emotions physically and verbally (Williams et al., 2016). According to Saarni (1979), those display rules are the pivot between 'overt expressive behavior' and 'covert emotional experience'. They describe four ways for dealing with emotion depending on the requirements from the context, namely intensification, minimization, neutralization and dissimulation/substitution. Deception may consequently arise from this emotion-expectation contrast. They will be mentioned later in relation to Tomasello's (2008) communication model.

In the next section, deception will be discussed with reference to the functions it serves intra- and interpersonally in the domain of emotion regulation. The expressive part will be discussed in section 4 in connection to the theoretical grounds for the communicative project.

### **3. FUNCTIONS OF DECEPTION**

#### **3.1 DECEPTION: AN EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGY**

As Hrubes, Feldman and Tyler (2004) describe it, deception has three main purposes while fulfilling the function of regulating emotions: 1) conformity, 2) protection and enhancement of self-views, and 3) manipulation of the emotions of others. According to the authors, individuals would resort to conformity (1) in order to avoid rejection, or at least to prevent anxiety-related feelings in response to being perceived as different. This function applies especially when people pretend to agree with norms settled by others. The other members of the group are then being deceived regarding the individual's personal beliefs. The regulation of emotion applies at the level of the potential consequences of deviating from the majority. Secondly, individuals can use deception in order to protect and enhance self-views (2). This defensive mechanism can be used to prevent embarrassment, disapproval or, by contrast, to give a good impression, especially when the individual is presented with information that is threatening to their image. This function regulates the way individuals appear to themselves and to others. The third function of deception, manipulating the emotions of others (3), is mostly used to influence the general emotional perception of a situation in order to regulate one's own emotional experience. The earlier example from Hrubes et al. (2004) of the teenager burying the car in the snow is such a case, as he or she will try to inhibit anger on the parents' side to avoid experiencing the emotional consequences. Nevertheless, this third function can be argued to be related to the previous one (i.e. protecting

and enhancing self-views) since the goal of enhancing self-views is ultimately to experience positive affect instead of negative affect (Hrubes et al., 2004).

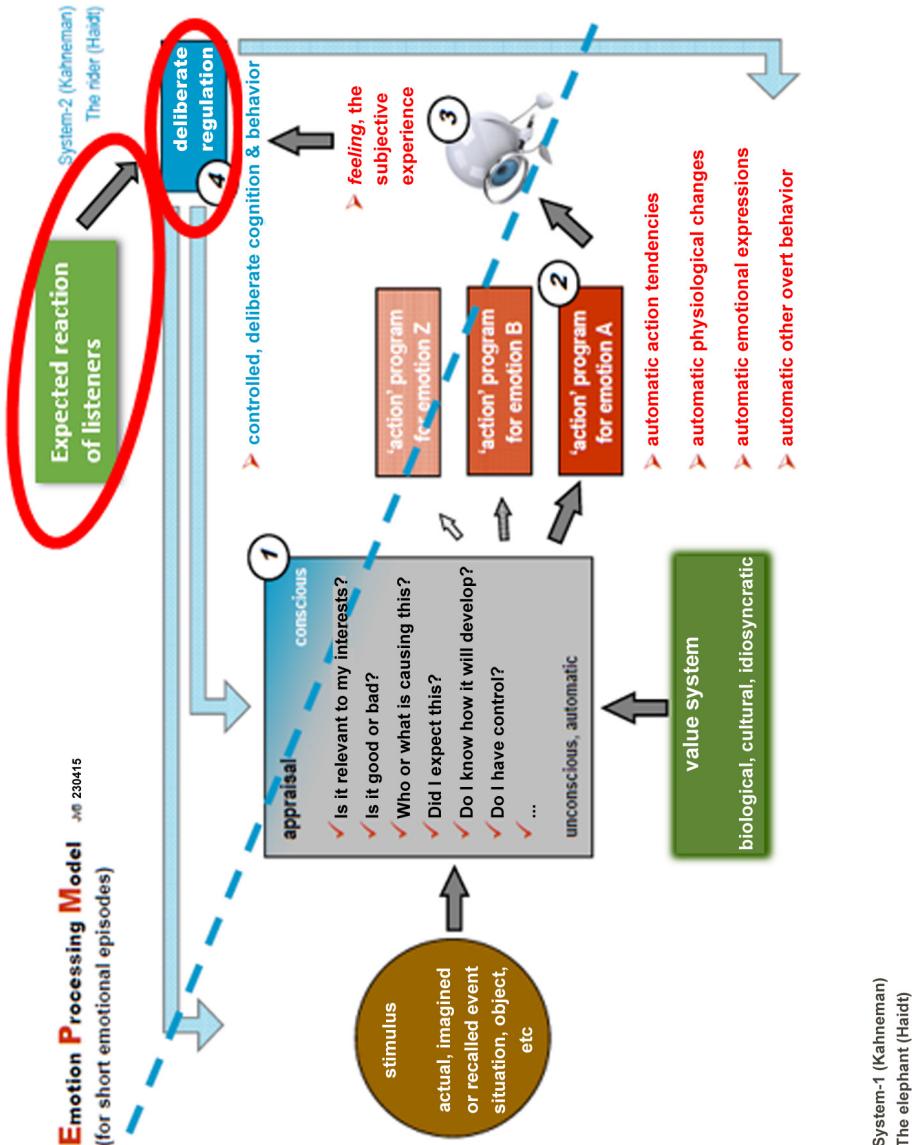


Figure 1: Emotion Processing Model (adapted from Struiksma, 2017). This model shows an account of how emotional responses follow from a stimulus, being activated in different steps spread across conscious (above the dashed line) and unconscious mechanisms (below the dashed line). The feature 'expected reaction of listeners' is added to the original model.

The function of deception can be visualized better thanks to the Emotion Processing Model (Struiksma, 2017) illustrated in Figure 1. In this model, four main steps in emotion processing are represented: appraisal (i.e. the automatic assessment of the stimulus), ac-

tion programs for automatic responses (which can be compared to spontaneous trigger for situation-appropriate reactions), feeling the subjective experience (where the emotion enters the conscious domain) and deliberate regulation (which sends conscious feedback for an appropriate final response). The dashed line separates unconscious processes (below, up to step 3) from conscious processes (above, steps 3 and 4); the appraisal (step 1) is partly conscious as it receives feedback from the deliberate regulation (step 4). The regulation function of deception occurs at step 4 (circled). However, in deception, as discussed previously, the decision is first and foremost influenced by the expected reaction of the listener. For this reason, this feature (expected reaction of the listener) was added to the model. Another important aspect is the value system: it influences the appraisal directly. Depending on the clash between, on the one hand, the objective situation and the value system of an individual, and on the other, on an undesired but expected reaction from the listener, one can decide to use deception.

### 3.2 PROSOCIAL DECEPTION

In social interactions, specific functions are fulfilled by prosocial deception. This section focuses on those functions and on features related to the perception of prosocial deception. Furthermore, the effects on among others trust and empathy are discussed with regards to both the communicator and the receiver of the lie.

As mentioned previously, this type of deception is altruistically motivated. The main function of white lies is consequently a protective function (Ennis, Vrij, & Chance, 2008; Kashy & DePaulo, 1996). Reasons for protection are developed in Kashy and DePaulo (1996) and include psychological reasons, such as the protection of someone from embarrassment, from conflict, from disapproval, or from having their feelings hurt, and protection of their interests, such as to be accommodating, to avoid physical punishment or to protect their property or safety.

In a series of economics experiments, Levine and Schweitzer (2015) challenged the traditional conviction held by philosophers and psychologists that deception prevents trust. Thanks to several 'trust games' and 'rely-or-verify games' where a counterpart told a participant either an altruistic lie or a selfish truth about a flip of coin that defines the amount of money both parties earn, they showed that white lies actually enhance trust. In another series of experiments by Levine and Schweitzer (2014), a participant learned about a situation in which an altruistic lie or a selfish truth was told about a random number (which defined the characters' payment) and then had to respond to a judgment questionnaire. It came out that altruistic liars were perceived as more ethical compared to people who answered honestly but hurt their interlocutor.

In addition to that, white lies are linked with the ability to feel empathy (Williams et al., 2016). In children, the ability to tell and maintain prosocial lies, as tested with the 'disappointing-gift paradigm' (where children are given a gift and subsequently have to answer two different experimenters' questions about it) proved to reflect a higher control of emotion regulation (Williams et al. 2016). Those findings correlate with a study by Sodian and Frith (1992) which showed that children with developmental and social

impairments (autism, cognitive delay) had difficulty deceiving. Insight in the functions related with prosocial deception might therefore help understand people who struggle with social interaction and how low skills in prosocial lie-telling might affect them (Williams et al., 2016).

Although the prosocial lie is mainly told to regulate the other's emotions, it can also have the secondary function of avoiding conflict and therefore benefit the liar as well. This remark is mentioned in several other studies (Levine & Schweitzer, 2015; Ennis, Vrij, & Chance, 2008). In their experiment, in which participants kept a diary for a week about their social interactions and deceiving behaviors, Kashy and DePaulo (1996) indeed use a scale to rate the degree to which the liars were either trying to protect themselves or their communication partner. Based on Williams' et al. (2015) interpretation of deception as a continuum, white lies could be interpreted as falling into the third of Hrubes' et al. (2004) general functions of deception, i.e. manipulating the emotions of others, described under 3.1. This function would thus be broadened to include, besides egoistically motivated intentions, manipulation performed with the intention to please others. This explains the positive although ambiguous status of prosocial deception.

#### 4. THE COMMUNICATIVE PROJECT

Why prosocial deception can be considered more ethical than selfish honesty can also be understood from the theoretical perspective of Tomasello's (2008) Cooperative Model of Human Communication (Figure 2, see page 19). Prosocial lies indeed appear to be described at an ambiguous position in communication, between the disregarded behavior of deception and the positively evaluated display of commitment to one's interlocutor. Tomasello's model precisely expresses how the communication partner receives and perceives an individual speaker's goals and stresses the role of both participants. The goals are concepts linked to individual values and elicit more specific social intentions, which imply sharing (verbal or non-verbal) information. At the other end of the communication process, the receiver eventually complies with the communicator's goals. The concept of 'display rules' (Saarni, 1979) can be understood here as the manual for the way to share an emotional goal.

However, in order for communication to be successful, Tomasello (2008) mentions the importance of the Gricean maxims, which are the basis for the communicative project. Prosocial lies arise from the combination of two of them. The tension between social and moral rules of communication (Williams et al., 2016), or between justice and care (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014) comes de facto from the demands of *Grice's maxim of quality* and the *Meta-maxim of general cooperation* (Lakoff, 1973). The former requires speakers to be truthful: listeners expect their communication partners not to misinform them. Lying is thus a violation of this principle. By contrast, the latter, equally important maxim, requires the communication partners to help, and not harm, each other, and is especially applicable in politeness contexts. This is expressed in most cultures by a less negative attitude towards prosocial lies than towards antisocial lies, and 'little white lies' are accepted when appropriate (Williams et al., 2016).

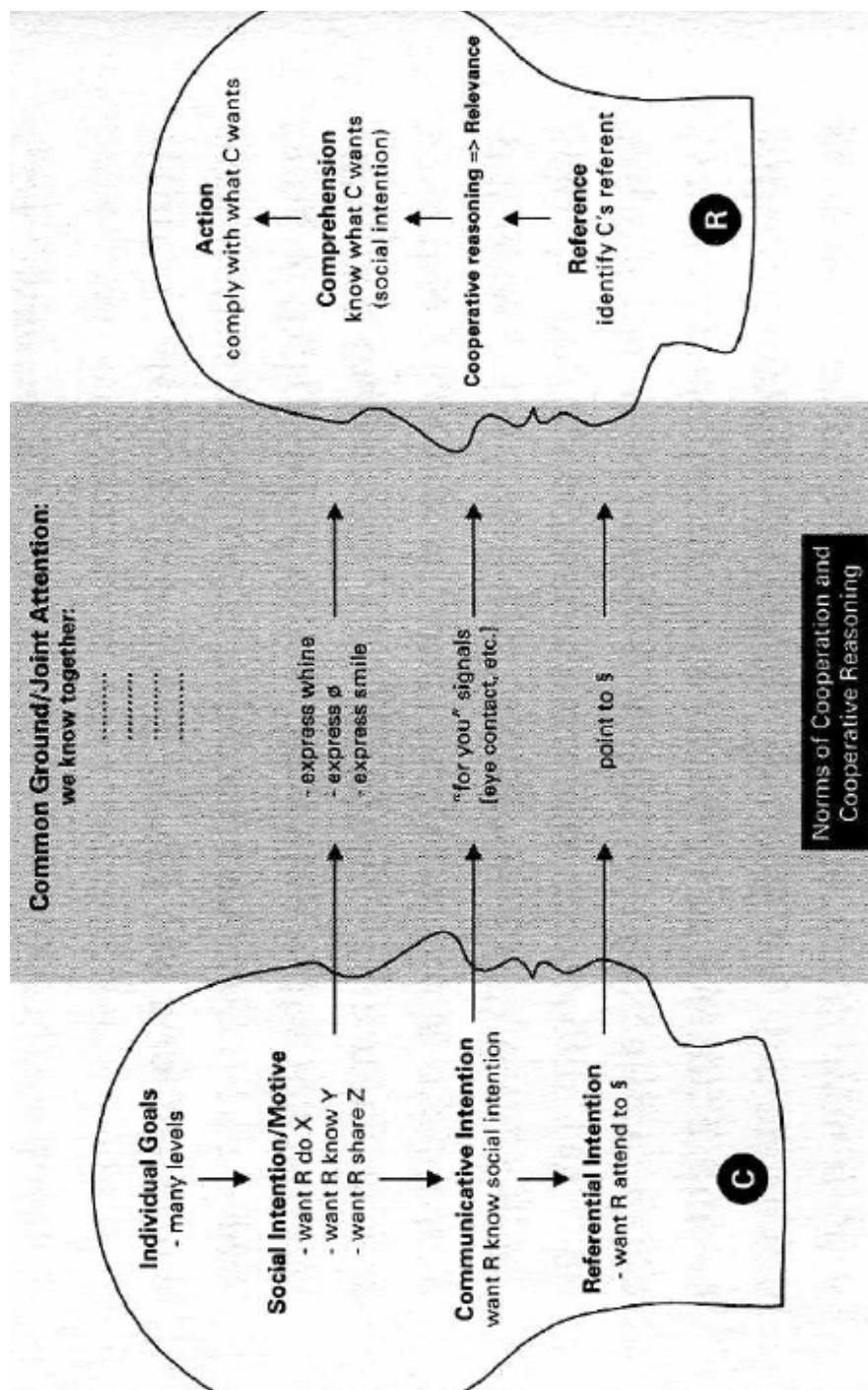


Figure 2: Cooperative Model of Human Communication (Tomasello, 2008, p. 98). The model shows how interlocutors (receivers, R) perceive the goals shared by communicators (C), relying on a Common Ground by means of verbal or non-verbal signals.

## 5. AFFECTIVE LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION MODEL

The Affective Language Comprehension model (ALC) is developed by Van Berkum (2018) to combine two systems that run, possibly in parallel, during the processing of language: the incremental code-cracking by Jackendoff (2007) and Tomasello's Cooperative Model of Human Cooperation (2008). This model contributes to the understanding of prosocial deception by representing the way people infer from linguistic and non-linguistic input at different levels of interaction. However, as Van Berkum remarks, in the original model the mental processes and the associated retrieved representations are only shown for the receiver (partner Y). For this reason, the model is adapted here as to include the communicator's (partner X) actual representations and intentions. The resulting two-sided model (Figure 3, see page 21) can be compared to a detailed view of Tomasello's communicator's and receiver's representations.

This model shows the communication partners' representations for the utterance 'You look lovely in that!'. As explained by Van Berkum, the computational processes of the participants draw upon and add to the (emotional) information stored in the Long Term Memory traces (LTM) to extend it with each communicative act. The process occurs as in Tomasello's (2008) model, downwards on the side of the communicator and upwards on the side of the receiver. At each stage, an Emotionally Competent Stimulus (ECS, smiley face) can be activated by the active representations the participant computes, and trigger emotional responses (representations are conscious or unconscious). This model makes visible that, in the case of a prosocial lie, there is a discrepancy between communicator and receiver's perceived social intentions.

Let us assume that X and Y are good friends, or at least on good terms with each other. As main communicative project, which is the goal of the interaction between X and Y, there is the will that this situation remains so. It occurs that participant Y bought a new dress; this is the situation X is referring to and that Y adequately infers thanks to their common ground. The social intention is therefore, for X, to show their friend that they have noticed this new purchase. However, the tension occurs at this level: participant X finds the dress very ugly. Following the Meta-maxim of general cooperation (because the communicative project is to maintain the relationship), participant X will decide to save the project and therefore not to hurt their friend's feelings. Among the three major social motivations discussed by Tomasello (2008), which are requesting, informing and sharing, X will chose for sharing and, for that reason, want to elicit feelings in Y so they can share them afterwards, as described in van Berkum (p.15). X's stance will also be friendly towards Y. The signs that X will send to Y are the sentence made of nice words in addition to positive prosody and facial expression. By means of cooperative reasoning, the receiver will compute the positive signs and the friendly stance, and link them to the referential intention and infer that X's social intention is to pay Y a compliment. If the white lie was successfully performed, Y will comply with X's communicative project and act consequently, i.e. maintain the good relationship.

By successfully performing their white lie, the communicator could fulfill their individual goal, but also regulate the receiver's emotions as well as the tone of the conversation. Consequently the communicator's own emotions are regulated as well by avoiding being the

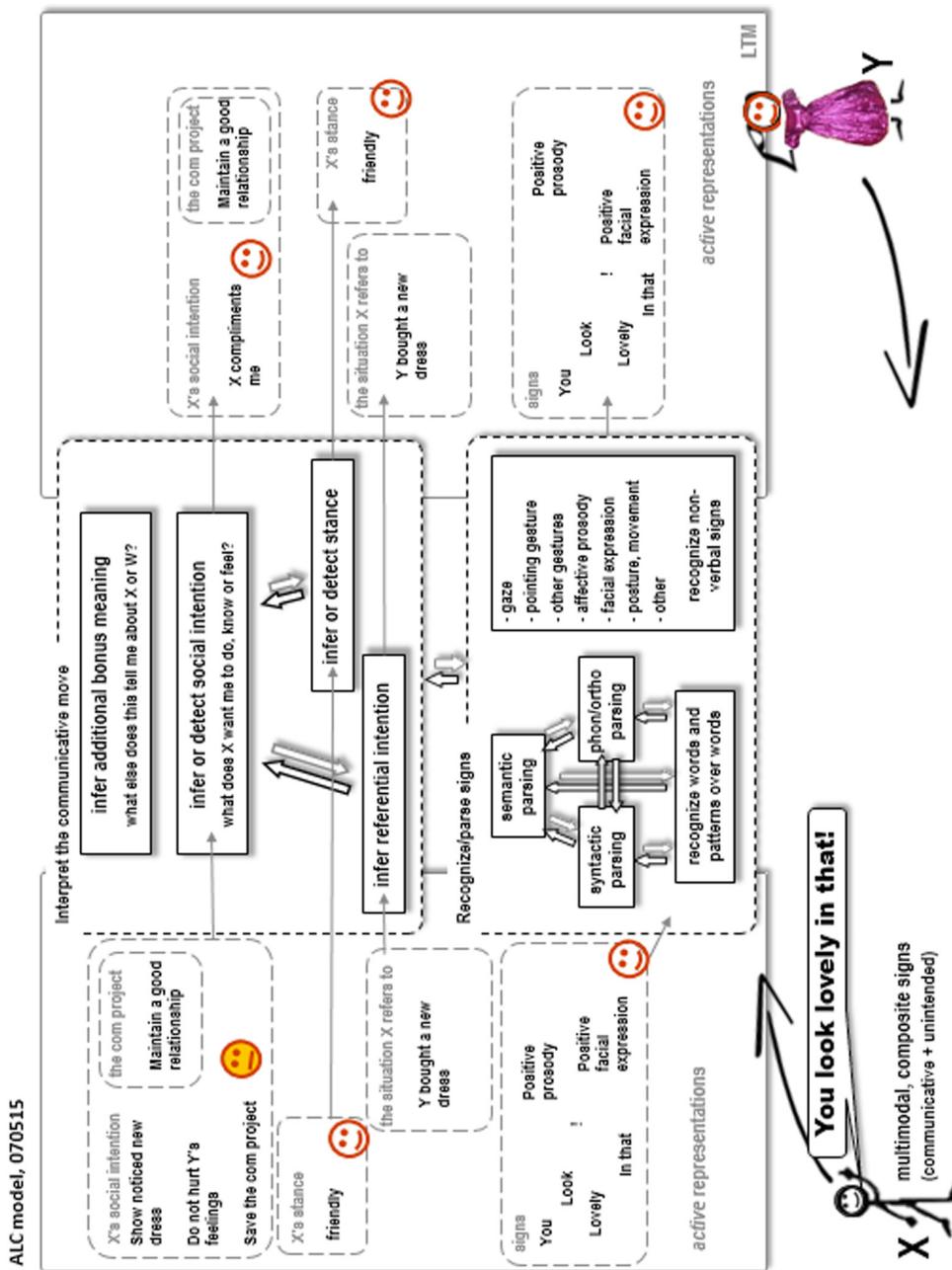


Figure 3: Affective Language Comprehension model (Van Berkum, 2018) extended to represent speaker X's communicative intentions. Com project = communicative project; LTM = Long Term Memory trace; Smiley face = Emotionally Competent Stimulus.

target of negative affect and thus appearing nice. Nonetheless, regulating the communicator's emotions was not the primary function of the deception because the intention was to show commitment to the receiver.

In this case, it can be argued that there is no specific bonus meaning; the cell was therefore taken out of the model. The bonus meaning is an inference made by the receiver that is not intentionally conveyed by the communicator, such as specific information about speaker X's person or the situation. There is a situation, however, where a bonus meaning could be assumed. When the communicator does not successfully communicate their intention to save the project and that the white lie fails, the receiver can infer from the utterance a part of the communicator's intention that was not intended to be perceived: not to hurt Y's feelings. The intended and the perceived intentions become thus identical. Nevertheless, the receiver can infer a bonus meaning about X depending on the situation: that X is a caring person for instance or, by contrast, that X is not reliable or that X does not take the relationship seriously enough to be honest. As a consequence, the function of emotion regulation would take an unexpected turn, strongly contingent on factors such as mood, context, relationship and culture.

## 6. DISCUSSION

In this paper, the concept of *deception* is defined and connected to emotion through the functions it fulfills in communication. Deception indeed occurs to serve a function of emotion regulation, which can be divided into three main functions: 1) conformity, 2) protection and enhancement of self-views and 3) manipulation of the emotions of others (Hrubes et al., 2004). Prosocial deception is mainly associated with protection of and commitment to the communication partner. Along those lines, it can be argued to fall into the category of manipulating the emotions of others, yet with the important distinction that the social intention will benefit the receiver rather than the communicator. By merging Tomasello's Cooperative Model of Human Communication (2008) and Van Berkum's Affective Language Comprehension model (2018), it becomes visible that the tension occurs at the level of the social intention: the communicator does not provide the receiver with the necessary signs to infer the whole social intention but rather misleads them into inferring an intention that is in line with the communicative project.

Going back to the initial research question: 'What is the role of prosocial deception in maintaining a good communicative project?', it seems that prosocial deception precisely maintains the communicative project in situations where it could fail. It is the consequence of the Meta-maxim of cooperation, requiring interlocutors to help and not harm each other. Prosocial deception's role is to regulate emotions, mainly those of the receiver but the emotional tone of the situation as well, in a way to avoid conflicts. It could be compared to the softener of social interactions by avoiding negative emotions.

A possible direction for further research could be to analyze the effect of failing white lies across cultures. As Williams et al. (2016) mentioned, societies often evaluate lies based on the intention behind them, which is why white lies are often more positively evaluated. As a white lie fails, however, the social intention of the communicator is unmasked for the receiver. Nevertheless, depending on how deception and prosocial deception are perceived, the receiver can feel offended or still recognize the positive intention, and accept the white lie for social purposes or not. As a result, different emotions would be triggered along with different ways to deal with them in a social context.

It must be noted, however, that the social intention behind white lies can also be subject to evaluation on a continuum. Although white lies are uttered principally to please or protect the receiver, the communicator can have different degrees of altruism, which can also modify the social intention. Taking back our example of person Y buying a new dress, the communicator could want to show Y that they noticed the dress, still in order to make Y feel positive emotions but, ultimately, (pathologically) intending to be well perceived. This raises the question whether deception could not be represented on a circular continuum rather than on a linear one: both extremities of the continuum would meet and close the circle, allowing prosocial types to merge directly with antisocial types rather than only with socially neutral ones. All types of ambiguous situations would thus be possible. Further research can therefore focus on the intention behind such subtle situations to help detect manipulations or help people who struggle with disordered social skills. ■

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# De split-ergatieve naamval in het Thulung Rai

In vergelijking met de split-ergativiteit in de hulpwerkwoordselectie van het Italiaans

The split-ergative case in Thulung Rai: Compared to the split-ergativity in the auxiliary selection in Italian

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## KEYWORDS

Thulung Rai  
(split-)ergativity  
language change  
Italian  
auxiliary selection  
language comparison

## ABSTRACT

In this language-comparing literature research paper, the split-ergativity in Thulung Rai is explained and compared to the split-ergativity in auxiliary selection in Italian. Ergativity in Thulung Rai is expressed by Case, which is morphologically expressed on the pronouns. The split-ergativity is expressed by the person and number features of the pronouns. Ergativity in Italian is expressed by the selection of the auxiliary. Unaccusative verbs take the auxiliary *to be*. Unergative verbs take the auxiliary *to have*. This can be explained by syntactic and transformational rules. The ergative split in Thulung Rai shifted over the years, under influence of the Nepalese language. When the expression of split-ergativity in Thulung Rai and Italian is compared, one finds almost only differences. They both have a form of split-ergativity, however, Italian expresses ergativity by auxiliary selection, whereas Thulung Rai expresses it by morphologically marked Case.

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## 1. INLEIDING

Het Thulung Rai is een Tibeto-Burmese taal, die gesproken wordt in delen van het Himalayagebergte in Oost-Nepal en het Sikkim-gedeelte van India. Het doel van dit paper is om een taalverschijnsel in het Thulung Rai, de split-ergativiteit in het naamvalsysteem, te vergelijken met split-ergativiteit in het Italiaans. In talen zoals het Italiaans wordt ergativiteit namelijk gemarkeerd door een split in de hulpwerkwoordselectie. Er is hier specifiek voor het Italiaans gekozen vanwege de theorie van Cocchi (1994), die de split in de hulpwerkwoordselectie voor het Italiaans verklaart. Deze toont aan dat split-ergativiteit zich in verschillende talen op heel verschillende manieren kan uiten. Daarnaast wordt in dit paper meer uitgelegd over het Thulung Rai als bedreigde taal. De taal is veranderd onder invloed van het Nepalees op het gebied van ergativiteit. Voor de beschrijving van het Thulung Rai is gebruik gemaakt van de grammatica door Lahaussois (2002). Alle voorbeeldzinnen, tabellen en informatie over het Thulung Rai komen uit deze grammatica. In de volgende paragraaf (1.1) wordt er meer informatie gegeven over het Thulung Rai. Vervolgens wordt in sectie 1.2 uitgelegd wat ergativiteit precies is. In de opvolgende paragraaf (2) wordt er meer verteld over de split-ergatieve naamval in het Thulung Rai. Daarna gaat paragraaf 3 in op de ergatieve split in de hulpwerkwoordselectie in het Italiaans. In sectie 4 worden vervolgens het Thulung Rai en het Italiaans

vergeleken met betrekking tot de daarvoor beschreven verschijnselen, waarna er in paragraaf 5 een conclusie wordt getrokken.

### 1.1. HET THULUNG RAI

In 2002, toen Lahaussois haar grammatica maakte, waren er nog een paar duizend sprekers van het Thulung Rai, waardoor de taal door haar als bedreigd werd geëindigd (Lahaussois, 2002). In 2011 zijn er volgens de Ethnologue nog 22.300 sprekers. Daar wordt het Thulung Rai als ontwikkelende taal omschreven. Dat betekent dat het veelvuldig wordt gebruikt, maar niet wijdverspreid is. Ter vergelijking: het Italiaans heeft volgens de Ethnologue 67.845.790 sprekers (Simons & Fennig, 2018). De bedreigde status van het Thulung Rai in 2002 heeft volgens Lahaussois vooral te maken met het toegenomen taalcontact tussen het Thulung Rai en het Nepalees. Een reden hiervoor is dat er op de scholen in de gebieden in Nepal waar het Thulung Rai gesproken wordt, wordt lesgeven in het Nepalees. Daarnaast verhuizen jonge generaties Thulung-sprekers naar de hoofdstad van Nepal (Kathmandu) om verder te studeren, waar zij vaak een partner vinden. Vervolgens komen zij niet meer terug naar hun geboorteplaats en geven zij hun moedertaal niet door aan de volgende generatie. Bijna alle Thulung Rai-sprekers spreken dus ook Nepalees. Het Thulung Rai is van origine een ongeschreven taal, maar wordt tegenwoordig geschreven in het Devanagari schrift; het schrift van het Nepalees (Lahaussois, 2002; Simons & Fennig, 2018). Dat de taal nu een geschreven vorm kent zou een verklaring kunnen zijn voor het verschil in het aantal sprekers in de negen jaar tussen de twee metingen, hoewel een bewezen verklaring ontbreekt. Omdat het Devangari schrift niet leesbaar is voor de meeste lezers met een Nederlandse taalachtergrond zijn alle voorbeelden in dit paper fonetisch geschreven.

### 1.2. WAT IS ERGATIVITEIT?

Een taal wordt ergatief genoemd wanneer het onderwerp (subject) van een intransitieve zin hetzelfde behandeld wordt als het lijdend voorwerp (object) van een transitieve zin, maar anders dan het onderwerp van een transitieve zin (agent) (Dixon, 1979). Dit 'behandelen' doen talen op verschillende manieren. Zo geeft het Thulung Rai een *ergatieve naamval* aan pronomina (persoonlijke voornaamwoorden), namen en andere nominale elementen door middel van een suffix *-ka*. Echter, het Thulung Rai is niet een gewone ergatieve taal, maar een split-ergatieve taal. Bij een split-ergatieve taal wisselt het naamvalsysteem van ergatief naar nominatief-accusatief bij bepaalde kenmerken. In het Thulung Rai wisselt het systeem op basis van persoon en getal bij pronomina. Namen en andere nominale elementen krijgen wel altijd de ergatieve naamval.

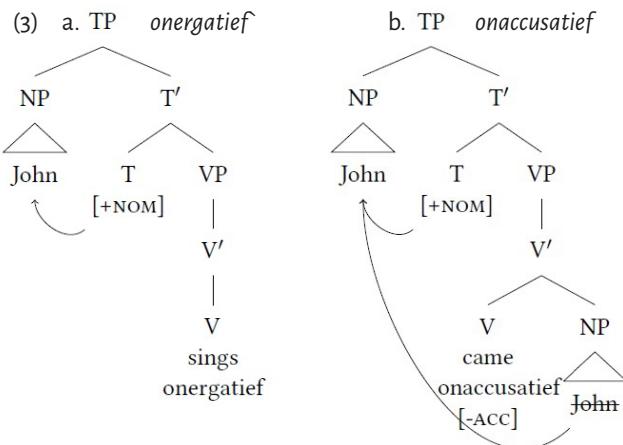
Naast talen met een ergatief naamvalsysteem bestaan er ook een aantal talen die gebruik maken van werkwoorden met ergatieve eigenschappen. Deze werkwoorden worden ergatieve of onaccusatieve werkwoorden genoemd. Onaccusatieve werkwoorden geven geen accusatieve naamval (vandaar de naam). Ook delen dergelijke werkwoorden volgens de *Government and Binding* theorie geen externe (agent-)thèta-rol uit aan een argument in de subject-positie (SpecVP), maar geven zij slechts een interne thèta-rol aan het object in de complementpositie van het werkwoord (V) (Chomsky, 1982). Dit betekent dat onaccusatieve werkwoorden altijd intransitief zijn en dus slechts een argument nemen.

Dit argument begint dan in de objectpositie als complement van V, waar het een thèta-rol krijgt, maar geen naamval kan krijgen omdat V geen accusatieve naamval geeft. Daarom verplaatst het argument naar de SpecTP om de nominatieve naamval te krijgen van het hoofd T. Hierdoor lijken onaccusatieve werkwoorden aan de oppervlakte wel een subject te hebben, maar is dit ‘subject’ geen agent (Burzio, 1981; Cocchi, 1994). Een zin met een onaccusatief werkwoord kan namelijk niet passief gemaakt worden, omdat bij het passiviseren de agent-thèta-rol komt te vervallen (zie (1)).

- (1) a. Ik stierf. onaccusatief  
       b.\* Er werd gestorven.

Het tegenovergestelde van onaccusatieve werkwoorden zijn onergatieve werkwoorden (zie (2)), die juist alleen een externe (agent-)thèta-rol uitdelen aan het subject en dus geen object hebben (zie (3), geciteerd uit Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou, & Everaert, 2004, p. 2).

- (2) a. Ik danste. onergatief  
       b. Er werd gedanst.



## 2. DE SPLIT-ERGATIEVE NAAMVAL IN HET THULUNG RAI

Zoals hierboven uitgelegd worden in het Thulung Rai naamvalen morfologisch op nominale elementen en pronomina gemarkerd door middel van suffixen. Het heeft een split-ergatief naamvalsysteem, gebaseerd op persoon en getal. Om dit split-ergatieve naamvalsysteem goed uit te kunnen leggen is in Tabel 1 (zie pagina 27) het pronominalen systeem van het Thulung Rai weergegeven (Lahaussois, 2002, p. 59).

Zoals in Tabel 1 te zien is, maakt het Thulung Rai onderscheid tussen een duale vorm en meervoudsvorm en in de eerste persoon wordt hierbij een onderscheid gemaakt tussen een inclusieve en exclusieve vorm. Het onderscheid tussen exclusief en inclusief wordt gemaakt door of de toehoorder geïncludeerd (inclusief) of geëxcludeerd (exclusief) is in de situatie die de spreker beschrijft. Daarnaast heeft het Thulung Rai een beleefdheidsvorm in de tweede en derde persoon enkelvoud.

Tabel 1.

*Het huidige pronominale systeem van het Thulung Rai met Nederlandse vertalingen.*

\*In het Nederlands is er geen beleefdheidsform in de derde persoon.

\*\* Het Nederlands heeft geen inclusief of exclusief meervoud, maar wordt altijd wij gebruikt.

Persoon	Enkelvoud	Duaal (meervoud van twee)		Meervoud (meer dan twee)	
		Exclusief	Inclusief	Exclusief	Inclusief
Eerste	<b>go</b> <i>ik</i>	<b>gutsuku</b> <i>wij</i>	<b>gutsi</b> <i>wij</i>	<b>guku</b> <i>wij**</i>	<b>gui</b> <i>wij**</i>
		<i>tweeën**</i>	<i>tweeën**</i>		
Tweede	Informeel      Beleefdheidsform		<b>gatsi</b> <i>jullie tweeën</i>	<b>ganimim</b> <i>jullie</i>	
	<b>gana</b> <i>jij</i>	<b>gani</b> <i>u</i>			
Derde	Informeel      Beleefdheidsform		<b>gutsi</b> <i>zij tweeën</i>	<b>gumimim</b> <i>zij</i>	
	<b>gu</b> <i>hij, zij, het</i>	<b>gumi</b> <i>hij, zij, het*</i>			

De naamvalen worden in het Thulung Rai dus als suffixen aan de pronomina in Tabel 1 toegevoegd. Bij intransitieve werkwoorden is het subject altijd morfologisch ongemarkeerd voor naamval (zie (4)<sup>1</sup>). Er is dan geen overt naamvalsuffix aanwezig. Lahaussois (2002) stelt dat er kan worden aangenomen dat het subject hier een nominatieve naamval heeft die niet overt gemarkerd wordt.

- (4) a-wotsy-∅      pakha    lɔ-mri.  
 1POSS-husband outside go-3p  
 'Mijn echtgenoot ging naar buiten.'

De agent van een transitief werkwoord wordt gemarkerd met de ergatieve naamval door middel van het suffix *-ka* (zie (5)). Namen en andere nominale elementen krijgen in deze positie altijd de ergatieve naamval (zie (5)). Dit geldt niet voor pronomina, want daar heeft het Thulung Rai een split in de ergatieve naamvalmarkering. Deze split is te zien in Tabel 1 en de voorbeelden op pagina 28. De pronomina die een ergatieve naamval krijgen, zijn in Tabel 1 in het grijs gemarkerd (zie (6)) en de pronomina die de (ongemarkeerde) nominatieve naamval krijgen, wanneer zij agent zijn van een transitief werkwoord, zijn in het wit aangegeven (zie (7)).

<sup>1</sup> Voor alle glossen en Tabel 3 geldt: 1s = 1e pers. enkelvoud, 1de = 1e pers. duaal exclusief, 1di = 1e pers. duaal inclusief, 1pe = 1e pers. meervoud exclusief, 1pi = 1e pers. meervoud inclusief, 2s = 2e pers. enkelvoud, 2d = 2e pers. duaal, 2p = 2e pers. meervoud, 3s = 3e pers. enkelvoud, 3d = 3e pers. duaal, 3p = 3e pers. meervoud. PST = verleden tijd, Npst.PRT = onvoltooid deelwoord, ERG = ergatieve naamval, DAT = datieve naamval, POSS = bezittelijk voornaamwoord, OBL = markeerde v. verplichting, NOM.inf = infinitief, REL = relativizer, PURP = purposive, N. = leenwoord uit het Nepalees

- (5) jelun<sup>ŋ</sup>-**ka** thulu-lwa si-mu basi.  
 Yelung-ERG Thulung-language learn-NOM.inf OBL  
 'Yelung moet Thulung leren.'
- (6) a. ganimim-**ka** dika-m lagi oram kitab pare-mu basi.  
 2p-ERG tomorrow-REL N.sake this N.book read-NOM.inf OBL  
 'Je moet dit boek voor morgen lezen.'  
 b. gu-**ka** thulu-lwa si-mu basi.  
 3s-ERG Thulung-language learn-NOM.inf OBL  
 'Zij moet Thulung leren.'  
 c. gumimim-**ka** helolo simsi-mu basi.  
 3p-ERG every.day teach-NOM.inf OBL  
 'Zij moeten dagelijks lesgeven.'
- (7) a. go-∅ mag djo-uto.  
 1s mug drop-1s/3s.PST  
 'Ik liet de mok vallen.'  
 b. gui-∅ pe-pa **thal** swl-mu basi.  
 1pi eat-Npst.PRT N.dish wash-NOM.inf OBL  
 'Wij moeten de afwas doen.'  
 c. gatsi-∅ mam-lai krwm-**qa** lɔ-mu basi.  
 2d mother-DAT visit-PURP go-NOM.inf OBL  
 'Jullie tweeën moeten moeder gaan bezoeken.'

Zoals hierboven te zien is bevindt de ergatieve split in het Thulung Rai zich tussen de twee meervoudsvormen van de tweede persoon: tussen de tweede persoon dual en meervoud. Echter, dit is niet altijd zo geweest. Allen beschrijft in zijn grammatica uit 1975 dat de eerste en tweede persoon in het Thulung Rai ongemarkeerd zijn en dat de derde persoon, eigennamen en andere nominale elementen de ergatieve naamval krijgen. De split lijkt dus te zijn verschoven van tussen de tweede en de derde persoon naar zijn huidige positie tussen de tweede persoon dual en meervoud. Het pronominale systeem van het Thulung Rai volgens Allen (1975, p. 39) is te zien in Tabel 2. Wederom krijgen de pronomina in het grijs aangegeven de ergatieve naamval en krijgen de pronomina in het wit aangegeven de (ongemarkeerde) nominatieve naamval in de agent rol van een transitief werkwoord.

Om er achter te komen hoe de ergatieve split in het Thulung Rai precies is verschoven moet gekeken worden naar de verschillen tussen het oude en nieuwe pronominale systeem (zie Tabel 1 en 2). Wat daar als eerste opvalt, is dat er in Tabel 1 beleefdheidsvormen aanwezig zijn voor de tweede en derde persoon enkelvoud. In Tabel 2 ontbreekt daarentegen enige beleefdheidsvorm. De beleefdheidsvorm is in het Thulung Rai ontstaan door taalcontact met het Nepalees. Het Nepalees maakt namelijk onderscheid tussen drie niveaus van formaliteit (Lahaussois, 2002).

Tabel 2.

*Het pronominale systeem van het Thulung Rai volgens Allen (1975, p. 39).*

\**Het Nederlands heeft geen inclusief of exclusief meervoud. maar wordt wij altijd gebruikt.*

Persoon	Enkelvoud	Duaal (meervoud van twee)		Meervoud (meer dan twee)	
		Exclusief	Inclusief	Exclusief	Inclusief
Eerste	<b>go</b> <i>ik</i>	<b>gutsuku</b> <i>wij tweeën**</i>	<b>gutsi</b> <i>wij tweeën**</i>	<b>guku</b> <i>wij**</i>	<b>gui</b> <i>wij**</i>
Tweede	<b>gana</b> <i>jij, u</i>	<b>gatsi</b> <i>jullie tweeën</i>		<b>gani</b> <i>jullie</i>	
Derde	<b>gu</b> <i>hij, zij, het</i>	<b>gutsi</b> <i>zij tweeën</i>		<b>gumi</b> <i>zij</i>	

Echter, het Nepalees markeert split-ergativiteit door werkwoordstijd, waar de verleden tijd ergatief gemarkerd is en de tegenwoordige tijd accusatief. De verschuiving van de ergatieve split in het Thulung Rai zal daarom waarschijnlijk niets te maken hebben met de ergativiteitsmarkering in het Nepalees, maar juist met de toegevoegde beleefdheidsvormen (Lahaussois, 2002). Toen deze beleefdheidsvormen in het Thulung Rai kwamen, vonden er namelijk meerdere verschuivingen plaats in het pronominale systeem. De oude vormen voor de tweede en derde persoon enkelvoud (*gana* en *gu*) werden de informele varianten voor de tweede en derde persoon enkelvoud (zie Tabel 1 en 2). De nieuwe beleefdheidsvormen zijn de voormalige meervoudsvormen voor de tweede en derde persoon (*gani* en *gumi*, zie Tabel 1 en 2). Vervolgens moest er een nieuwe meervoudsvorm komen. Die werd gevormd door achter de oude meervoudsvormen (nu beleefdheidsvormen) het suffix *-mim* te zetten, een suffix waarmee nominale elementen in het meervoud worden geplaatst, wat resulteerde in de meervoudsvormen *ganimim* en *gumimim* (zie Tabel 1 en 2) (Lahaussois, 2002). In Tabel 3 worden kort het oude en nieuwe systeem vergeleken.

De verschuiving van de ergatieve split kan dus verklaard worden door het meervoudssuffix *-mim*. Dit suffix werd voorheen alleen aan nominale elementen gehecht. Zoals eerder gezegd krijgen nominale elementen in het Thulung Rai altijd de ergatieve naamval wanneer zij agent zijn van een transitief werkwoord. Deze nominale elementen worden dan behandeld als een derde persoon, die zowel in het oude als nieuwe systeem de ergatieve naamval krijgt. In het nieuwe systeem zijn alle elementen die de ergatieve naamval krijgen ofwel een derde persoon, ofwel een element dat een meervoudssuffix draagt wat geassocieerd wordt met nominale elementen (en daarmee met de derde persoon). De tweede persoon meervoud heeft dus eigenschappen gekregen van de derde persoon, waardoor het de ergatieve naamval kan krijgen en de ergatieve split is verschoven (Lahaussois, 2002).

Tabel 3.

Het oude en het nieuwe systeem van het Thulung Rai (Allen, 1975, p. 39; Lahaussois, 2002, p. 59).

<b>Persoon</b>	<b>1s</b>	<b>1de</b>	<b>1di</b>	<b>1pe</b>	<b>1pi</b>		
Oud systeem	go	gutsuku	gutsi	guku	gui		
<b>Persoon</b>	<b>2s. polite</b>	<b>2d</b>	<b>2p</b>	<b>3s</b>	<b>3s. polite</b>	<b>3d</b>	<b>3p</b>
Oud systeem	-	gatsi	gani	gu	-	gutsi	gumi
Nieuw systeem	<b>gani</b>	gatsi	<b>ganimim</b>	gu	<b>gumi</b>	gutsi	gumimim

### 3. DE ERGATIEVE SPLIT IN DE HULPWERKWOORDSELECTIE IN HET ITALIAANS

In tegenstelling tot het Thulung Rai heeft het Italiaans geen ergatieve naamval, maar toont het Italiaans ergativiteit door middel van onaccusatieve en onergatieve werkwoorden. Deze werkwoorden selecteren in het Italiaans allebei een ander hulpwerkwoord wanneer er een voltooid deelwoord van wordt gemaakt. Onergatieve werkwoorden (en transitieve werkwoorden) selecteren in het Italiaans *avere* (hebben) en onaccusatieve werkwoorden selecteren *essere* (zijn) (zie (8), geciteerd uit Burzio (1981, p. 149)).

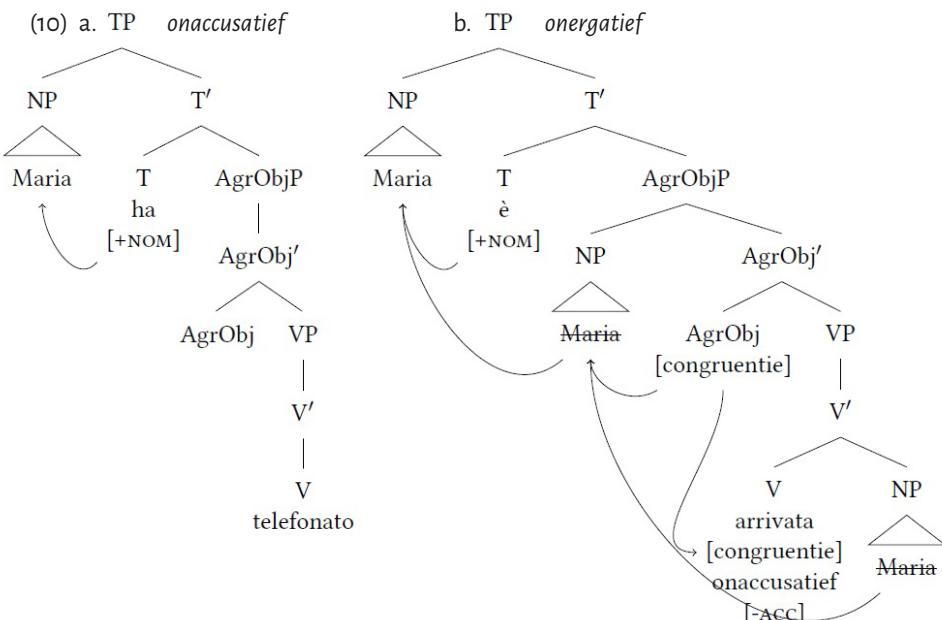
- (8) a. Maria ha telefonato *onergatief*  
           Maria has telephoned  
           'Maria heeft getelefoneerd'  
   b. Maria è arrivata *onaccusatief*  
           Maria is arrived-FEM.SG  
           'Maria is aangekomen'

Dit verschijnsel zien we bijvoorbeeld ook in het Nederlands (zie (9)).

- (9) a. Maria heeft gedanst. *onergatief*  
   b. Maria is gestorven. *onaccusatief*

Waarom talen als het Italiaans en het Nederlands deze split hebben in de hulpwerkwoord-selectie wordt wat betreft het Italiaans beschreven in Cocchi (1994). Hierin wordt gesteld dat er in het Italiaans altijd een AgrObjP positie aanwezig is, waar die in talen zoals bijvoorbeeld het Engels afwezig of inactief is bij onaccusatieve werkwoorden. In het Engels is het hulpwerkwoord namelijk altijd *to have* (hebben). Cocchi (1994) stelt een parameter voor: of wel of geen (actieve) AgrObjP bij zinnen met een onaccusatief werkwoord. Hierbij zou het Italiaans wel altijd een AgrObjP hebben en het Engels niet.

Dit resulteert in het feit dat in het Italiaans het onaccusatieve voltooid deelwoord altijd congrueert in getal en geslacht met het interne argument, dat verplaatst is naar SpecTP om daar de nominatieve naamval te krijgen (zie (8b)). Deze congruentie ontstaat volgens Cocchi (1994) namelijk doordat het interne argument in de verplaatsing naar SpecTP een tussenstop maakt in SpecAgrObjP, waar weliswaar geen naamval te halen valt, maar wel congruentie gecheckt wordt met het voltooid deelwoord door het hoofd AgrObj, zie (10a) en (10b). Er kan worden verondersteld dat deze hypothese ook opgaat voor het Nederlands. Dit zou een interessant vervolgonderzoek zijn.



Vervolgens wordt het reflexief-clitic *si* door Cocchi (1994) ook gezien als een ergatief-markeerde voor het Italiaans. Wanneer er een reflexiefconstructie plaatsvindt, is het hulpwerkwoord namelijk wederom altijd *essere* (zijn) (zie (11), geciteerd uit Cocchi, 1994, p. 88).

- (11) Maria *si è lavata*.  
 Maria SI is washed-FEM.SG  
 'Maria heeft zichzelf gewassen.'

Cocchi (1994) analyseert reflexieve zinnen in het Italiaans hetzelfde als zinnen met onaccusatieve werkwoorden. Het 'subject' begint als complement van V in de VP en *si* zit als clitic vast aan V. Door dit clitic krijgt het werkwoord onaccusativiteit en is er dus geen accusatieve naamval in AgrObjP. Het 'subject' verplaatst hier volgens Cocchi (1994) net als bij onaccusatieve werkwoorden naar SpecTP via AgrObjP, waardoor er wederom congruentie plaatsvindt tussen het 'subject' en het voltooid deelwoord (zie 11).

Het Italiaans heeft dus een split in de keuze van het hulpwerkwoord, waarbij onaccusatieve werkwoorden en reflexiefconstructies altijd *essere* (zijn) krijgen en transitieve en

onergatieve werkwoorden *avere* (hebben). Deze split is afhankelijk van syntactische en transformationele regels.

#### 4. VERGELIJKING VAN SPLIT-ERGATIVITEIT IN HET THULUNG RAI EN HET ITALIAANS

Er zijn grote verschillen tussen het Thulung Rai en het Italiaans wat betreft de split-ergativiteit. Zo drukt het Thulung Rai de ergativiteit uit door middel van naamvalen en doet het Italiaans dit door middel van het hulpwerkwoord. Wat zij wel gemeen hebben is dat er kan worden gezegd dat er in beide talen een vorm van split-ergativiteit aanwezig is. Echter, de split is in het Thulung Rai afhankelijk van persoons- en getaleigenschappen van pronomina. In het Italiaans is de hulpwerkwoordselectie juist afhankelijk van syntactische en transformationele regels. Ook gaat het in het Thulung Rai om de agent van een transitief werkwoord dat de ergativiteit uitdrukt, waar het in het Italiaans juist om een intransitief onaccusatief werkwoord gaat, waar geen agent aanwezig is. Het is daar juist het element dat in de objectpositie als complement van V begint, wat 'subject' wordt door verplaatsing. Tot slot is in het Thulung Rai de split de afgelopen jaren door taalcontact verschoven. In het Italiaans is dit niet het geval.

#### 5. CONCLUSIE

Er kan gesteld worden dat er grote verschillen zijn in de manier waarop het Thulung Rai en het Italiaans split-ergativiteit uitdrukken. In het Italiaans wordt dit namelijk uitgedrukt door middel van een split in de hulpwerkwoordselectie bij onergatieve en onaccusatieve werkwoorden. Hierbij krijgen onaccusatieve werkwoorden het hulpwerkwoord *essere* (zijn) en onergatieve werkwoorden het hulpwerkwoord *avere* (hebben). In het Thulung Rai wordt split-ergativiteit uitgedrukt door naamvalen op pronomina, waarbij de positie van de split bepaald is door persoons- en getalkenmerken. Daarnaast is de positie van de split in het Thulung Rai tussen 1975 en 2002 verschoven onder invloed van het Nepalees (Allen, 1975; Lahaussois, 2002). ■

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# The affective morphology of Japanese

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## ABSTRACT

The western linguistic tradition tends to study language as a cognitive, non-affective means of communication, meant to only carry the information that lies in its structure. As such, emotion is considered irrelevant to the processing of language. While new paradigms seem to emerge, with models including emotions within the frame of structural linguistics (such as Van Berkum's Affective Language Communication model, ALC), the traditional Japanese studies had already incorporated emotions in its linguistic analysis for more than two centuries. This is in part because Japanese, more than any Western language, has emotions embedded at the very core of its structure, in the shape of morphological elements, referred in the traditional Japanese studies as *kokoro no koe*, 'voice from the heart'. This paper reviews the literature on two such morphological elements, namely the sentence-final particles *ne* and *no*. Both particles seem to have different interpretations depending on the context. On the one hand *ne* is on turn considered to be used as a softener, driven by polite intimacy, a marker of rapport, to help consolidate common feelings towards a subject or to manifest agreement and to be characteristic of women's speech, or more generally to request emotional and social alignment from the listener. On the other hand, *no* seems to have an explanatory purpose, to imply evidentiality, manifest politeness and to be characteristic of women's speech. In general, *no* can be generalised under the broader concept of indexing harmony between the speaker and the addressee. Through the prism of the Japanese society and with the help of illustrative examples from the ALC mode, this review investigates how these interactional particles ultimately perform emotional communication.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The western linguistic tradition tends to study language as a cognitive, non-affective means of communication, meant to only carry the information that lies in its structure. As such, emotion is considered irrelevant to the processing of language. This view of linguistics has been widely adopted with the rise of structuralism in the last century, carried by Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky, and tend to study language as a logical referential tool. While many fields in social sciences related to human cognition have now incorporated emotions as a key factor in their studies, linguistics still seems not to do so, to a large extent, despite growing empirical research on language and emotions (Van Berkum, 2018).

However, it turns out that emotions have long been included in some non-western linguistic models, such as in the *kokugogaku*, the traditional Japanese language studies. As explained in Maynard (1993, p. 258) (see page 34):

During the Edo period<sup>1</sup> ... the Japanese grammarians perceived language not as mono 'thing', but as koto 'event' which requires active participants – both the speaking self and the other. And it was to overcome the rational thinking (... conceived to be represented by Chinese ways of thinking) that they introduced the concept of emotion mono-no-aware 'the pathos of nature, an aesthetic emotion' to unite the events of human life. As being symbolized by Suzuki Akira's (Suzuki, et al., 1979/1894) phrase, kokoro no koe 'voices from the heart', kokugaku 'Japanese studies' found in human emotion the answer for giving meanings to often unrelated and isolated events – including human lives.

What Maynard explains here is that conceiving language strictly as a rational and emotionless system to share information (the then Chinese and now the Chomskian and Saussurian views) did not fit the Japanese grammarians' understanding of their language, nor did it agree with their philosophy. Therefore, emotion was included as an integral part of linguistic analysis.

Unfortunately, Japanese studies have until recently been overlooked by western linguistics and very little documentation is available in English. Seiko Maynard undertook to synthesize and transmit part of the literature in her books, among which Maynard (1993), on which this paper relies, regarding the entanglement between the Japanese society and the Japanese language.

The aim of this paper is twofold. First, to study how languages can have emotions lying at the core of their structure. Two sentence-final particles, *ne* and *no* have been particularly documented in the literature. Second, it is investigated how the Affective Language Comprehension model (ALC) from Van Berkum (2018) interacts with a language such as Japanese, in which affective indicators manifest themselves in a different way than in the western languages. Van Berkum's ALC model was designed with the purpose to broaden the classical western linguistical models and implement the emotion factor in it. This review attempts to answer the following questions. What is the role of sentence-final particles *ne* and *no*? How are they used in discourse and with what underlying intent are they used?

## 2. KEY CONCEPTS OF THE JAPANESE CULTURE

Despite being among the world's most developed countries and being fully assimilated in the global economy, the Japanese society, along with its culture and psychology, is still different to western cultures, and even to other Asian cultures. In the following sections, I will discern two concepts related to the Japanese culture. First will be discussed the concept of *amae*, which can roughly translate to 'amenable'. The second concept is the one of *uchi and soto*, or 'inside/outside'. In short, they describe the importance of the group, over the individual, and seeking solidarity or autonomy, inside or outside a group. While one could point out that these concepts are not exclusively Japanese and have been studied in the discourse analysis literature (for an overview, see Bloor & Bloor, 2013), they are embedded in the Japanese society to a level that is not usually seen elsewhere. Moreover, as will be shown in this review, there are parallels between how emotionality is integrated in the Japanese society and how it is morphologically inlaid in the language.

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<sup>1</sup> The Edo period took place between 1603 to 1863.

## 2.1 AMAE

The desire for *amae*, as described in Doi (1971) (taken from the translation in Maynard, 1993, p.262), “has the function of seeking to ‘melt down’ others by *amae* and make them lose their *tanin* ‘other’ quality”. In other words, the only valuable unit in the Japanese society is the one of the group, in which the individual blends and identifies herself in. The result is an aim for psychological and emotional dependence to others (Maynard, 1993, p.262), such that the individual expresses his/her emotional state as the emotional state of the group, and vice versa, and the group exists as a single emotional entity.

## 2.2 UCHI AND SOTO

*Uchi* and *soto*, which has been used “predominantly in anthropology to elucidate various aspects of Japanese society” (Suzuki, 2006, p. 9), describe two different contexts and social frames that organise behaviour, interaction and emotional investment within a group. An *uchi* (home, insider, in-group) environment implies an emotional common-ground with reciprocal *amae*. This allows insiders to express emotions directly, almost in a rude way, confident that the addressee(s) will not be offended and always forgiving, due to their belonging to the same in-group. On the other hand, when communicating in a *soto* (outsider, out-group) frame, one must be aware and cautious about one’s ‘other’ quality and not hurt one’s feeling, by always being formally polite (Maynard, 1993, p.262).

Defining what is an in-group and what is an out-group depends on the context, and the *uchi/soto* dynamic is essentially a measure of degrees of inclusion and exclusion (Bachnik, & Charles, 1994). A foreigner is an outsider of the whole Japanese society, which then becomes an in-group, but the society itself is fragmented in a multitude of inside and outside groups (take for example the family/non-family relation, or the sports club/rest of the world relation). According to Bachnik & Charles (1994)<sup>2</sup>, “in the *uchi/soto* dynamic, the relationship between individuals and social order is mutually constitutive and contextual.” In an *uchi* frame, the speaker will tend to express his/her affects freely both positively and negatively (a behaviour also known as *ura*). In a *soto* situation however, one usually tries to not let one’s emotions show (or *omote* behaviour) and is concerned with social appearances (Dunn, 1999). However, there can be situations in which displaying an *ura* behaviour in a formal (*soto*) setting is accepted.

From an anthropological and sociological perspective, many studies pinpoint that “Japanese behave in such a way as to express great sensitivity to the surrounding context, including the participants and their views toward each other” (Maynard, 1993, p.264). Such analysis is also shared by linguists who have studied the relation between linguistic features and social norms, summarised by the iconic expression from Haga (1985), ‘harmony with others’ (*taijinteki na choowa*, in Japanese). The expression relates to how Japanese people are always “preoccupied with how others feel” (Maynard, 1993, p.264) and seek to maintain social cohesion.

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<sup>2</sup> Quoted from Ashby, 2013, p.258, since I could not get access to the original article.

### 3. MORPHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS

In order to achieve *amae* and maintain *uchi/soto* relationships, Japanese speakers seem to rely heavily on specific morphological elements. Good examples are particles, which can either perform interpersonal purposes (e.g. sentence-final *yo*, *ne*, *no*), mood (conditional *ba* shows that the speaker hopes that it will be true; conditional *tara/to* express a negative attitude or warning), strength (sentence-final *zo*, *ze*, typically associated with males) or softness (*wa*, *no*, typically associated with females; Ochs, 1990; Ochs & Schieffelin, 2009).

Ochs & Schieffelin (2009) propose that speakers use some features in language beyond communicating referential information, namely to affect others or “as a basis of for constructing their own subsequent feelings, mood, dispositions and attitudes towards some uncertain information” (p. 9).

The following sub-sections focus on two specific morphological elements: sentence-final particle *ne* and sentence-final particle *no*. The first interesting aspect of sentence-final particles is that they “do not contribute to the grammatical construction of utterances, and yet their role is closely related to the interpretation of a particular utterance” (Lee, 2007, p.1). This is illustrated in (1).

- (1) a. John ga eiga o miru.  
SUB<sup>3</sup> movie OBJ see  
*John sees movies.*
- b. John ga eiga o miru no.  
SUB movie OBJ see PART  
*John sees movies.*
- c. John ga eiga o miru ne.  
SUB movie OBJ see PART  
*John sees movies.*

The translation of the sentence remains the same in the three sentences, regardless of the sentence-final particles (here *ne* and *no*). It seems therefore that these particles carry meaning on the pragmatic and interactional levels, rather than on the semantic level.

#### 3.1 THE PARTICLE NE

As discussed above, sentence-final particles do not impact the semantic, nor the general structure of the clause. Their purpose is to add meaning to the utterance, by conveying emotion, interpersonal relation and involvement (Lee, 2007; Morita, 2012; Cook, 1990). Researchers argued that it is used as softener, driven by polite intimacy (Ikeda, 1995), a marker of rapport (McGloin, 1990), to help consolidate common feelings toward a subject (Kataoka, 1995), or to manifest agreement.

In order to unify these interpretations under a same concept, Cook's (1990) analysis of the particle *ne* proposes that it creates an “affective common ground” between the addresser

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<sup>3</sup> See notes for abbreviations.

and the addressee. In other words, *ne* works as a tool to establish “a cooperative relationship between conversation participants” (p. 42).

Regarding interactions including *ne* and the possible emotional outcomes Lebra (1976) argues the following.

The fear from deviating from Alter's<sup>4</sup> viewpoint, or the wish to maintain consensus with Alter, is further demonstrated by the frequency with which Ego<sup>5</sup> interjects his speech with the particle *ne*. [...] If properly empathetic, Alter assures and reassures Ego of his receptivity, congeniality, or agreement by frequently nodding and exclaiming, ‘I am listening, ‘That is so’ or ‘Yes’.

In order to maintain consensus and social harmony with his/her interlocutor(s), a speaker will often end sentences with the particle *ne*. The listener on the other hand will also make use of *ne* to let the speaker know that he/she is listening and agreeing. Morita (2012) describes such uses of *ne* as an explicit “interactional alignment” with the interlocutor.

Sometimes, this expression of interactional alignment can be out of place. Morita gives the example of a woman complaining on an online discussion forum about her 30-year-old boyfriend's extensive use of final-particle *ne*, such as in *kyoo wa tanoshiikatta ne* ('We had fun today, didn't we?'), which she considers childish or even feminine. This is interesting, because we here have an example of the social inferences an interlocutor can make of a speaker's uses of particles, even though, as Morita notes, men and women appear to use *ne* at equal frequencies. The women's argument seems therefore not to assess for the 'girly' speech of her boyfriend, but rather that there are 'appropriate' and 'inappropriate' instances of the use of *ne*, depending on the social context and the social identity of the speaker. In her analysis, Morita (2012) argues that the purpose of *ne* to request "alignment" is a foundation, on top of which are constructed the interpretations mentioned in the beginning of this section. In this case, social norms demand that a 30-year-old man be assertive, and do not constantly seek for his partner's approval.

Figure 1 (see page 38) is an example of such “ideology-laden interpretation” about the utterance of the boyfriend mentioned in the online forum discussion, namely *kyoo wa tanoshiikatta ne* ('We had fun today, didn't we?').

Depending on the addition, or not, of the particle *ne* at the end of the clause, the derived implication of the assessment is different. In particular, not using the particle can mean that the speaker relies less on the recipient; the utterer assesses his own opinion, and thus appears as an independent person, a character stereotypically associated with masculinity. On the other hand, making use of *ne* manifests a request for alignment with the interlocutor, that can be perceived as a way to build solidarity or even show solicitude, two features attributed to women, who are stereotypically dependent and therefore more looking for the approbation of the conversational partner.

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4 Read: the other, the interlocutor. It can even be a group, or the society in general.

5 Read: the speaker.

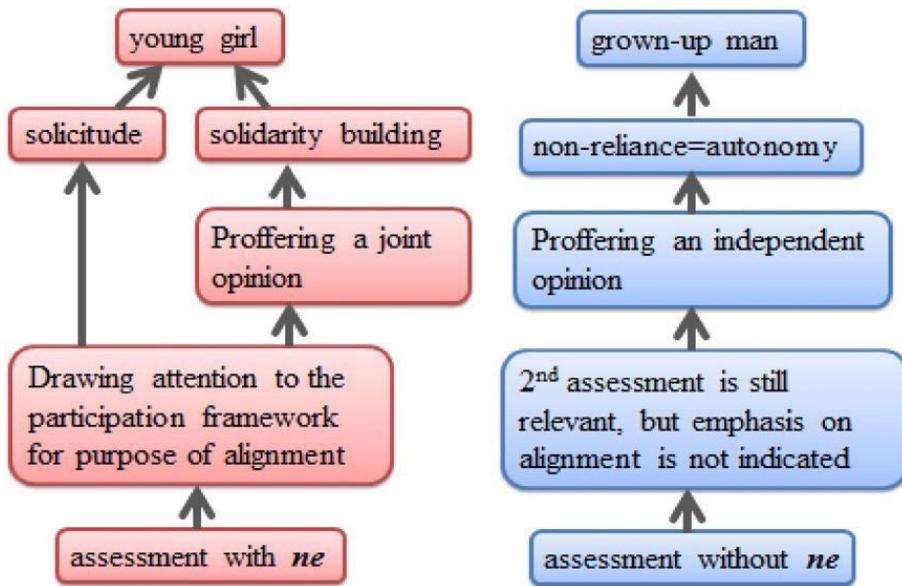


Figure 1. Derived implication for the assessment of “kyoo wa tanoshiikatta (“We had fun today ?”)” with and without *ne* (taken from Morita, 2012, Figure 1).

### 3.2 THE PARTICLE *NO*

There is a large body of literature on the sentence-particle *no*, and the conclusions about its meaning are rather different and a priori not much related. According to Kuroda (1973), the particle *no* deals with shared knowledge. For Alfonso (1966), however, it has an explanatory purpose. Kamio (1979) claims *no* implies evidentiality, while it manifests politeness, according to McGloin (2009). In McGloin (1986), lastly, it is described as characteristic of women's speech, in a similar way to the particle *wa*. This illustrates indeed the wide variety of possible uses of *no*, which makes it difficult to pinpoint a specific explanation.

In fact, it is difficult even for Japanese native speakers to explain the use of such particles, and most are unable to describe the difference between (1a) and (1b) (Cook, 1987) (see page 36). It is commonly explained Japanese classes for L2 learners that not using *no* in situations like (2) would lead the addresser to conclude that the addressee is not interested in the conversation and her/his feelings.

- (2) A: Kinoo, kazoku to resutoran ni ikita!  
*Yesterday, I went to the restorant with my family*  
 B: Eeee, doo datta **no?** Tanoshikatta **no?**  
*Wow, how was it? Was it fun?*

According to Cook (1987), all of the meanings that those studies each proposed only cover a limited range of usages, and fail to provide a satisfactory, general picture of the particle *no*. For him, all of these analyses can be put in the light of a broader indexical scope. Cook proposes indeed that the direct meaning of *no* is “the speaker's inclusion of the addressee

in the speaker's group." It "can also index harmony between the speaker and the addressee. A number of instances of *no* in Japanese conversation have this characteristic because the Japanese culture highly values interpersonal harmony" (p. 159). Furthermore, because they are socially less powerful than men, women would be more keen on seeking for harmony, explaining why they would use *no* more often. This is clearly linked to the concept of *amae* and Haga's (1985) expression *tajinteki na choowa* ('harmony with others') that was discussed in section 2.2. Here again, it is not so much the intrinsic meaning of *no* than its contextualisation at a higher, social level that gives it its polite and feminine characteristics. Nevertheless, sentence B of (2) uttered by a man can be totally acceptable and would not challenge the social conventions, whereas its use in another context (such as (3) in the next section) could imply some sort of mothering character.

### 3.3 PRESENCE AND ABSENCE OF *NE* AND *NO* IN SPEECH

Cynthia Dunn (1999) showed that Japanese speakers shifted "along a culturally-meaningful continuum from more emotionally expressive to more emotionally distanced or restrained speech styles" (pp.108-109), by altering between formal, or distal, and informal, or direct, forms of speech and their choice of sentence-final particles such as *ne*, *no*, and *yo*, which are used as "emphatic assertion of the speaker's statement" (Maynard, 1993). She studied the speech of two officers of an English speech and debate society, Ritsuko and Akiko, who were giving a report to the membership of the club. Both speakers expressed themselves in different ways. While Ritsuko used and combined the earlier mentioned linguistic features to "display affective involvement and build rapport with the audience" (p. 113), Akiko was more restrained and distanced with the goal to "encourage greater participation in club activities."

Rikuko's speech begins with a formal focus but switches to an informal focus in the second half as she "directly referred to the affective experience of her audience and exhorted them to put forth greater effort" (p.118). (3) is an example of such display of emotional involvement (Excerpt 1, 12 in Dunn, 1999).

- (3) Demo,/ nanka      sono kaikan                  tte iu    ka, suteji ni    tatsu  
 but      somehow that pleasurable-feeling QT say Q stage on stand  
 kaikan                toka    ga    wakaru    to omou no    ne./  
 pleasurable-feeling such-as SUB understand OT think NOM IP  
*But, somehow I think you'll understand that wonderful feeling, that, how can I  
 put it, things like that wonderful feeling of being onstage*

Dunn explains that the direct form *omou* ('I think') communicates "intimacy, empathy, or strong feeling". The particle *no* "frames Ritsuko's statement as shared group knowledge within the speech club". The particle *ne*, on the other hand, "asserts common affective ground with the audience, soliciting their understanding and agreement with Ritsuko's projection of their future emotional state" (p.116). Ritsuko confessed that she did not consciously choose to reduce her use of distal forms, but that she strongly felt the need to communicate to the younger members of the club.

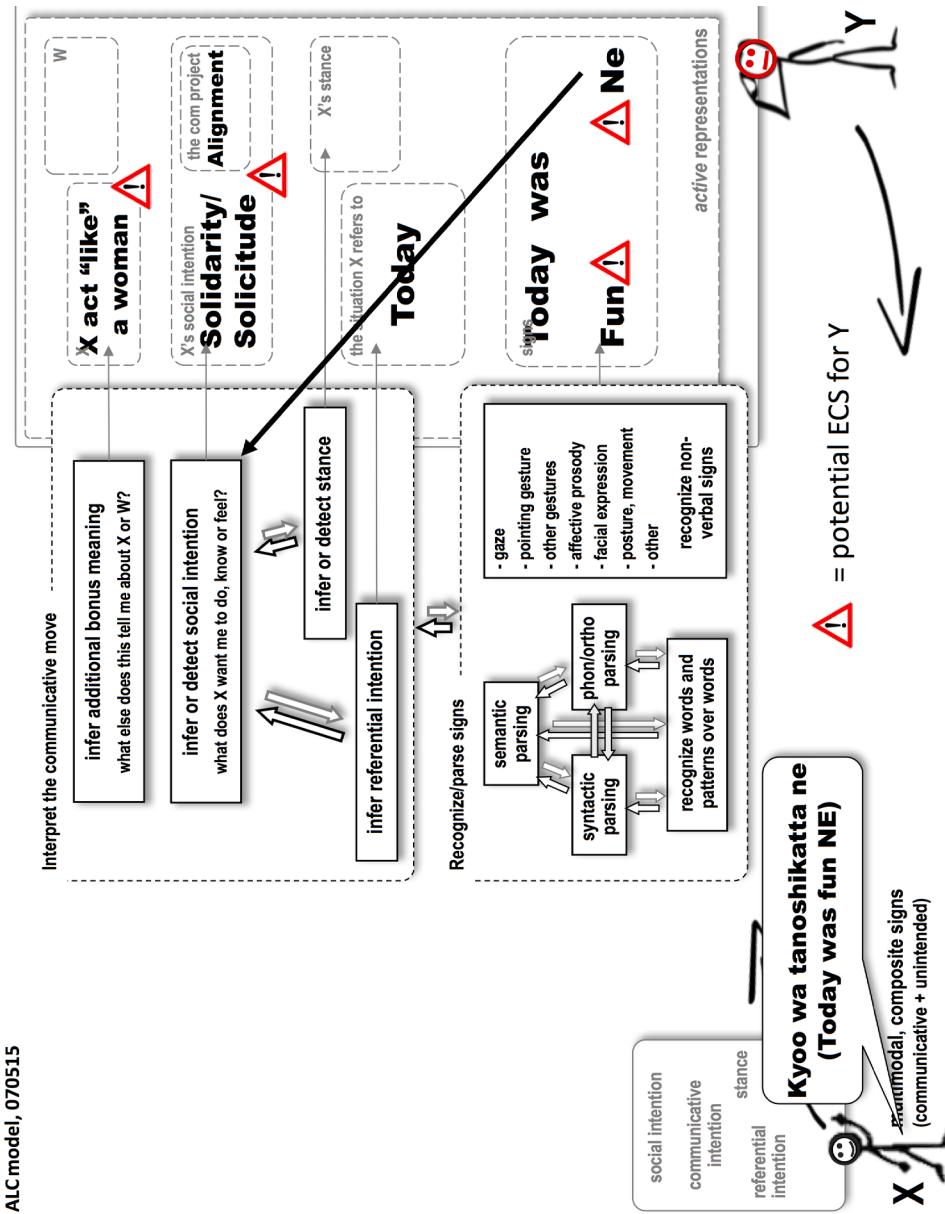


Figure 2. "Example processing in the Affective Language Comprehension model. Mental processes and the associated retrieved or computed representations are expanded for addressee Y only. Y's computational processes draw upon (and add to) long-term memory traces, and involve currently active dynamic representations that reflect what is currently retrieved from LTM, composed from elements thereof and/or inferred from context, in response to the current communicative move. Y's active representations can be conscious or unconscious. ECS = emotionally competent stimulus; com project = communicative project." (Figure 2 in Van Berkum, 2018).

On the other hand, Akiko's speech remains distant and formal, with mostly distal forms and no sentence-final particle, as we can see in (4) (Excerpt 2, 12 in Dunn, 1999):

- (4) mina-san ni,/ igi (no),/ rikai o,/ fukame-te hoshii to  
 everyone-TI from significance GEN understanding DO deepen-and want QT  
 omoi-masu./  
 think-DIST

*I hope everyone will deepen their understanding of its significance.*

Although Akiko expressed herself in a formal and distant way, Ritsuko reportedly recognised the anger in Akiko, who was disappointed by the lack of help and participation in the club. Typically, her use of polite language in a setting that did not require such level of formality is, as Dunn explains, "one conventionalized way of expressing anger in Japan" (p.122).

### 3.4 SUMMARY

Akiko and Ritsuko's speeches are clear examples of the use of sentence-final particles and the variation between distal and direct forms to perform emotional communication. The two women spoke according to their personality and following the social codes in which they live since they were born. However, the conclusions drawn principally come from the discourse analysis of the author and the reports of the speakers. It would therefore be valuable to test the use of *ne* and *no* in a more controlled and experimental setting to gather physiological data drawing a line between the use of a certain particle or form, and the emotional reactions of the listener.

Interestingly, the two women said they did not consciously choose to use (or not) the sentence-final particles. This can be linked with the earlier observation that Japanese struggle to explain the difference between (1a) and (1b), namely adding *no* at the end of the sentence. In that sense, one could argue that the use of affective particles resembles to the use of phonological cues in western languages, which can modulate sarcasm and irony, for example (e.g., Bryant & Fox Tree, 2005; Cutler, 1974; D'Imperio, Champagne-Lavau, Loevenbruck & Fouillard, 2013; Ladd, 2008). Similarly, it seems that for Japanese, social codes are so deeply registered in people's minds that the use and interpretation of these particles depend on how they follow, or do not follow social standards.

In short, the particles *ne* and *no* trigger emotional affect based on social norms and context. While the use of *ne* manifests a request for alignment that is then elaborated into solidarity and affective dependence, *no* is a way to refer to the authority (or knowledge) of the common social group to achieve harmony, thereby carrying the characteristic of caring, mother authority. Those observations are supported by anthropological research that has "demonstrated both the culturally constructed nature of emotional experience and its links to local understandings of personhood and social relationships". (Dunn, 1999, p.108)

### 4. IN PERSPECTIVE WITH THE ALC MODEL

In order to understand at which levels of linguistics those particles trigger an affective reaction, also known as Emotionally Competent Stimulus (ECS), it is important to consider a

framework that makes explicit the various levels of representation at which speakers and listeners process them. One such framework is the Affective Language Comprehension (ALC) model developed in Van Berkum (2018). The ALC model is composed of two processing modules, representing the parsing aspect of language comprehension, and the other illustrating the communicative processing of the parsed utterance. Connected to these two processing modules is a memory module, to which the information processed earlier is added to and mapped in the comprehender's long term memory (LTM). This is where the representations of the meaning of an utterance are activated, i.e. the semantic meaning of the different words a speaker X says, what they refer to, based on the context and the social intention for using them.

Let us apply two sentences taken from examples in the previous sections to the ALC model. In Figure 2 (see page 40) and 3 (see page 43), two sentences taken from examples in the previous section are used to illustrate emotional reactions that the particles *ne* and *no* elicit in a given context. Figure 2 presents the ECS that would be triggered when the girlfriend of the 30-year-old man hears him say *kyoo wa tanoshikatta ne* ('We had fun today, didn't we?').

Two elements of the utterance provoke an ECS: 'fun', which intrinsically carries a positive valence, and the sentence-final particle *ne*. *Ne* infers the social intention of alignment, which is interpreted as X's need for solidarity and solicitude. Such traits are stereotypically associated with femininity, which is why Y infers as an additional bonus meaning that X behaves like a woman. It is this last inference that annoys Y, as X is a 30-year-old man and Y expects him to behave accordingly to his social role.

Figure 3 is the representation of the sentence *Suteiji ni tatsu kaikan toka ga wakaru omou no ne* ('I think you'll understand that wonderful feeling of being on stage'), taken from (3). Here, three elements trigger an ECS, namely 'wonderful' and the particles *no* and *ne*. Similarly to 'fun', 'wonderful' entails a positive valence, from which the happy stance of X is inferred. The particle *no* expresses an aim towards an harmonisation of feelings, referring to the older member's experience (to which she belongs) of being on stage. With the particle *ne*, Ritsuko requires alignment of the younger member to ensure that they adopt and share the same 'wonderful' feeling towards being on stage. Moreover, the use of the *ne* infers solidarity while the use of *no* infers a sort of comforting authority. This altogether reminds Y of the behaviour of a mother towards her child.

## 5. DISCUSSION

This review researched in which way the Japanese language used morphological elements to convey emotions. In particular, the analysis focused on the sentence-final particles *ne* and *no*. It turns out that, in contrast to western linguistics, the traditional Japanese language studies have for long accounted emotions in its study of language. The literature shows that these particles (and others that were not in the scope of this paper) do not primarily convey emotion but have an interactional purpose. Important concepts are the ones of *amae* (suppression of the other in favour of the group), *uchi/soto* (defining different social behaviours depending of social groups). It results that Japanese are always preoccupied with how others feel, leading as an effort to be in "harmony with others".

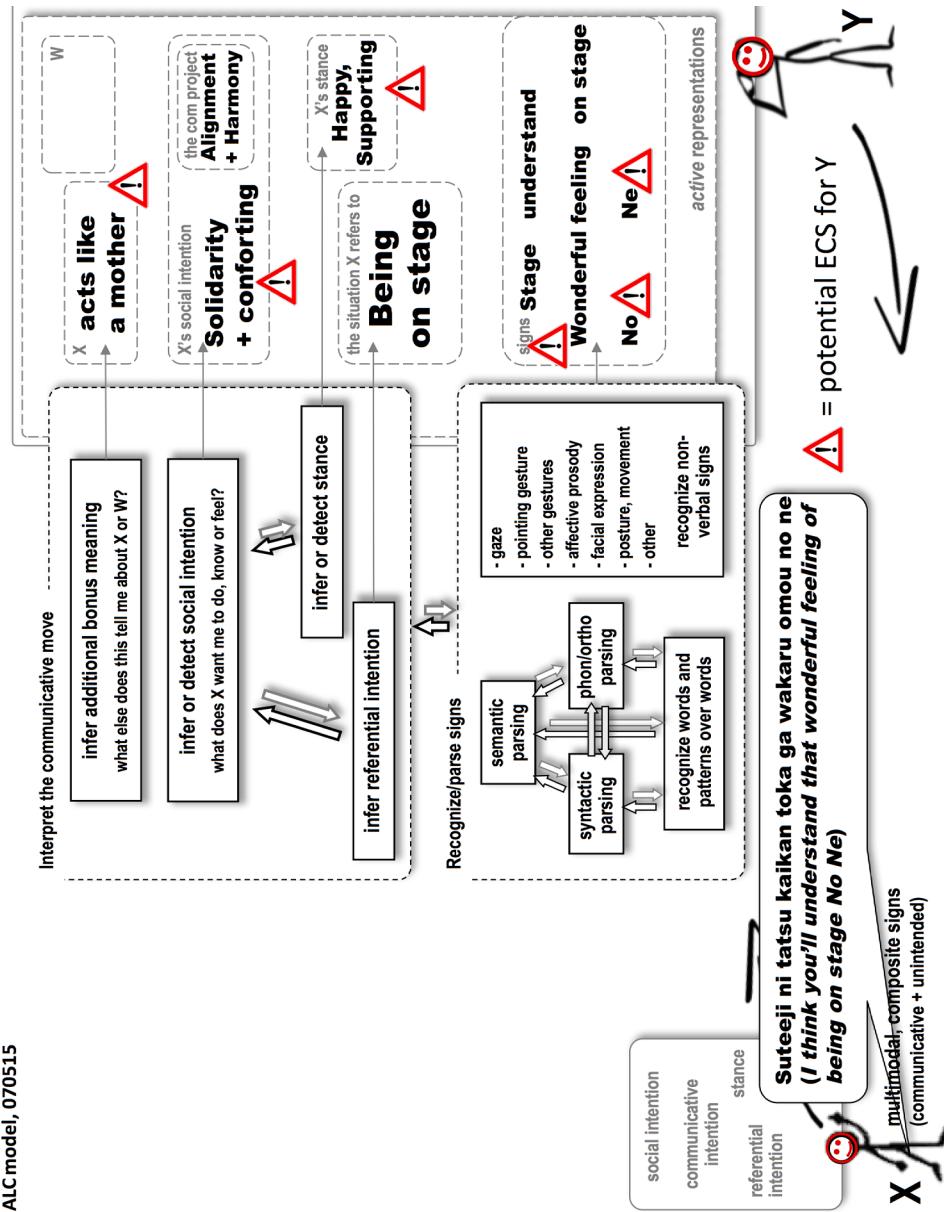


Figure 3. Similar to Figure 2, but applied to the utterance *Suteeji ni tatsu kaikan toka ga wakaru omou no ne* ('I think you'll understand that wonderful feeling of being on stage No Ne').

Furthermore, the group is valued over the individual. Based on these aspects of the Japanese society, people have elaborated upon the interactional features of *ne* and *no* to give them affective meaning. Depending on the situation, using *ne* as sentence-final particle can be perceived as a lack of autonomy from the speaker, and thereby qualified as "talking like a girl". On the other hand, *no* is typically used by mothers to impose 'soft authority' on children and is often associated with such figures.

When applying a Japanese sentence containing *ne* and/or *no* to the ALC model, it seems that the function of these particle works similarly to prosody in the western language. They tend however to be less prone to misinterpretation than prosodical features, in that prosody can be harder to control and that the use of sentence-final particles is socially normed and processed almost unconsciously by Japanese native speakers.

Nevertheless, it would be welcomed to experimentally measure the physiological effects of such morphological elements to obtain empirical evidence on their emotional impact. Most of the studies on sentence-final particles are rather old (mostly from the 70s and 80s, the Japanese literature going even further back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century), besides more recent and valuable work such as Lee (2007) and Morita (2012). Moreover, they often only provide an analysis based on conversational samples. Lastly, the Japanese language is evolving rapidly and it is possible that the existing analyses need to be adapted. ■

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## NOTES

/ Pause-Bounded Phrasal Units

Abbreviations used in glosses: DIST Distal Form; DO Direct Object Marker; GEN Genitive; IP Interactional Particle; NOM Nominalizer; QT Quotative; Q Question Marker; SUB Subject Marker; TI Title; PART Particle

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# Dutch weather: A reason to stay

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Marjolein did an internship on the valency of weather verbs at her home-base, Utrecht University.

"I can tell you that I have never been more enthusiastic about anything (and so can anyone who has spent five minutes with me over the last few months, because I just could not shut up about weather verbs)."

From the 12<sup>th</sup> of November until the 1<sup>st</sup> of February, that is, Block 2 of this academic year, I did an internship at Utrecht University under the supervision of dr. Marijana Marelj. I was introduced to her line of research when I took a course about the syntax-semantics interface taught by her last year. After this course it was clear to me that there was no point in going abroad or to another university in the Netherlands for my internship, since there is nowhere I could be working on something as cool as I could under the supervision of dr. Marelj (full disclosure, I am a bit of a syntax nerd, so "cool" is very subjective here).

Unlike most internships, where students join a larger, already existing project, I had a research project all of my own. In this project, I researched the valence of weather verbs (such as *rain*, *snow*, *hail*, et cetera) in Dutch. Valence refers to the number of arguments that the verb selects. Weather verbs in both English and Dutch (and many other languages) are often taken to be aivalent, meaning that the weather verb does not select any arguments. The subject we often observe in weather verb constructions, *it* in English and *het* in Dutch, is then analyzed as an expletive. However, a recent study by Beth Levin (2017) showed that weather verbs in English might actually have lexical subjects, making them valent. I wanted to see if a similar argument could be made for Dutch (spoiler alert: the answer is yes).

An internship is a perfect opportunity to explore your interests and learn new skills. People doing experimental work often use the internship as a way to familiarize themselves with an experimental method, such as eye-tracking or EEG. In my case, I used the internship as a way to see if I wanted to pursue an academic career in the field of the syntax-semantics interface. Before the interfaces course I took last year, I saw myself as a pure syntactician.

The syntax-semantics interface was something I never knew was even an option as a field of research. After a small identity crisis (What does it mean to be interested in this interface? Am I still a syntactician? Does this make me a semanticist?), I asked dr. Marelj to be my supervisor so I could further explore my interest in this field. Now that I have completed my internship, I can tell you that I have never been more enthusiastic about anything (and so can anyone who has spent five minutes with me over the last few months, because I just could not shut up about weather verbs).

In conclusion, you can use your internship for a lot of things, not just to learn how to work with certain experimental equipment, but also as a way to discover things about yourself and where your interests lie. And a lot of people will recommend you to go abroad for your internship, because they had a great time abroad themselves, or because they feel like that should be part of your time as a student. I am not saying you should not go abroad, but do keep in mind that your own university might also offer some really great opportunities as well, that might actually be a better fit for you. In my case, I do not think I could have learned as much as I did about myself if I had gone to another university. ■

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# A bimodal bilingual experience in a unique environment

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Anique went on exchange to the Chinese University of Hong Kong to study cross-language activation in deaf bimodal bilinguals.

"I gained more skills in Hong Kong Sign Language and more confidence in expressing myself in a 'new' sign language."

When I heard that we had to arrange an internship, I got excited: this is my chance to visit Hong Kong. I found out that I could apply for participating in the joint agreement program between Utrecht University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). After filling out MANY forms, I was enrolled in the program and they even arranged free housing on the CUHK campus. I am so thankful for this support and the opportunity to go abroad!

During my internship, I worked in the Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies (CSLDS). There, I set up an eye-tracking study to find out whether cross-language activation takes part in deaf bimodal bilinguals. Our aim was to create an experiment that is both applicable in Hong Kong and in the Netherlands. Therefore, I created stimuli for Dutch and for Sign Language of the Netherlands (NGT), while my Chinese colleague collected Cantonese and Hong Kong Sign Language (HKSL) stimuli. Meanwhile, I was taught how the eye-tracking equipment worked and I learned to build the experiment from scratch with Experiment Builder software.

Besides improving my research skills, I aimed to learn more about the participants-to-be and their unique Bimodal Bilingual (BiBi) environment. Therefore, I wanted to see and experience what a BiBi environment looks like and how it worked out on deaf BiBi people. Hence, I visited a kindergarten, a primary school and a secondary school, that all intro-

duced a so-called sign language co-enrollment program (SLCO)<sup>1</sup>. In these mainstream schools, in every grade, there is a critical mass of deaf pupils participating in a classroom together with their hearing peers. These students are taught in spoken Cantonese and in HKSL simultaneously by one (deaf) signing teacher and one (hearing) teacher who uses spoken language. Both teachers are trained in and capable of distributing the same content to the pupils in their teaching modality. In this way, the students get language input in two modalities, which enables them to become bimodal bilingual language users. During my visit to the schools, I spoke/signed with deaf teachers, hearing teachers and with students. These chats provided me with more insight into the SLCO program and into the deaf community in Hong Kong. One of the main outcomes was that all people (deaf and hearing, teachers and students) seem to benefit from the SLCO program.

Initially, when I entered the CSLDS, I was a bit overwhelmed and the communication in HKSL was not fluent from scratch. Alternatively, we all used a blend of several sign languages and spoken English to communicate, but when I got more used to the new environment, the communication became easier. During my stay, I was taught HKSL. I could apply the learned signs during meetings and in chats. By means of communicating with other people, I gained more skills in HKSL and more confidence in expressing myself in a 'new' sign language.

I liked working at the CSLDS and doing research that contributes to the philosophy of the SLCO program. They were open to my ideas and gave me the opportunity to work things out. A few days before my internship ended, I finished a template for an eye-tracking experiment that is ready to use in both Hong Kong and in the Netherlands, by adding the correct stimuli. In the future, we plan to collaborate and share data. ■

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<sup>1</sup> In the Netherlands, there is no such thing as a sign language co-enrollment program in mainstream schooling. Deaf students either attend a special school with deaf peers and are taught in Sign Language of the Netherlands (NCT), or they attend a mainstream school accompanied by a sign language interpreter who translates the spoken language of the teacher.

# Taal voor de leuk brengt Cornelisse zoals we haar kennen

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*Taal voor de leuk*

PAULIEN CORNELISSE

ISBN 9789082430233

## VOOR BEPAALDE PERSONEN

Het meest recente boek van Paulien Cornelisse is opgedragen aan ‘bepaalde personen’, hetgeen direct een goede samenvatting vormt van de doelgroep van het boek. *Taal voor de leuk* bevat interessante, scherpe observaties, die iedereen die houdt van taal of de willekeurigheid van het leven in het algemeen zullen aanspreken. Cornelisse vestigt middels korte columns de aandacht op eigenaardigheden in taal, die ze vervolgens uitwerkt aan de hand van achtergrondinformatie en voorbeelden uit eigen ervaring. Een verwonderde, positieve toon heeft het hele boek door de overhand, en de interesse in de verscheidenheid van taal(gebruik) van de auteur klinkt overal in door. Deze fascinatie voor taal van Cornelisse werkt aanstekelijk. Met een typische, levendige schrijfstijl hoor je haar de situaties schetsen, wat resulteert in een beeldende leeservaring.

## NIET RELEVANT, WEL LEUK

Interesse in taal is dan ook de belangrijkste voorwaarde voor het kunnen waarderen van dit boek: kennis van taalwetenschappelijk jargon is geenszins een vereiste. De observaties van Cornelisse zijn weliswaar interessant, maar zijn veelal te ad hoc om op taalwetenschappelijk niveau echt relevant zijn. Gelukkig is dat niet erg: *Taal voor de leuk* is op zichzelf al vermakelijk genoeg om in relevantie niet uit te hoeven blinken.

### EN DAN NOG IETS

De columns in *Taal voor de leuk* zijn grotendeels eerder verschenen in het NRC Handelsblad en nrc.next. Als gevolg hiervan spelen de columns regelmatig in op actuele ontwikkelingen, wat dit boek wel wat tijdgevoelig maakt. Kennis van het nieuws van het afgelopen jaar is dan ook handig bij het lezen van sommige stukjes, maar niet vereist. In principe vormt dat geen obstakel, maar het zal er wel voor zorgen dat niet alle anekdotes het eeuwige leven gegund is: het al dan niet bestaan van de Twitter-volgers van zanger Dotan was op het wereldtoneel al nauwelijks relevant (maar wel vermakelijk), en zal dat over tien jaar zeker niet meer zijn. Een deel van de columns is dus enkel te waarderen binnen de huidige (of al voorbij) tijdsgeest. Gelukkig is de inhoud van *Taal voor de leuk* erg divers, en dus ook interessant wanneer je onverhooppt enige tijd onder een steen hebt geleefd. Deze afwisseling van thema's is prettig, maar zorgt er tegelijkertijd voor dat dit niet een boek is om in één ruk uit te lezen: na zo'n tien afzonderlijke columns leg ik, voldoende vermaakt voor dat moment, het boek weer even weg. *Taal voor de leuk* is dan ook bij uitstek geschikt om hier en daar wat in te lezen, weg te leggen, en het later op een willekeurig moment weer tevoorschijn te halen. De tekeningen van de hand van Cornelisse, tot slot, prijken naast enkele columns en weten zo de toon van het boek goed te vangen: ultiem ironisch en met een scherpe blik.

In vergelijking met de eerdere boeken van dit kaliber van Cornelisse (bestsellers *Taal is zeg maar echt mijn ding* en *En dan nog iets*) brengt *Taal voor de leuk* weinig vernieuwing. Het bevat nieuwe observaties, maar over het geheel genomen valt het boek in dezelfde lijn als haar voorgangers. Dit maakt *Taal voor de leuk* minder uniek, maar doet voor de liefhebber niets af aan het leesplezier. Als je van de eerdere boeken van Cornelisse genoten hebt, zul je dat van deze ook zeker doen. ■

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Paulien Cornelisse studeerde een blauwe maandag Taalwetenschap, maar rondde uiteindelijk de studie Psychologie af aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam. Cornelisse schrijft onder andere wekelijks voor het NRC en maandelijks voor tijdschrift JAN; bovendien heeft ze inmiddels vier boeken uitgebracht. Daarnaast maakt ze theater, televisie, podcasts én speelt ze momenteel haar vierde cabaretvoorstelling: *Om mij moverende redenen*. Werken van Cornelisse hebben verschillende prijzen gewonnen en hebben veelal geleid tot lovende recensies.

# Het menselijk taalvermogen: interviews met specialisten over hun vak

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*Het vermogen te verlangen [9 letters] : Gesprekken over taal en het menselijk brein*

LIESBETH KOENEN

ISBN 9025421520

Wie besluit Nederlands te gaan studeren in Utrecht, buigt zich het eerste jaar verplicht over *Wat iedereen van het Nederlands moet weten en waarom* (onder redactie van Van der Sijs, Stroop en Weerman, red.), wat overigens geen straf is. *Het vermogen te verlangen*, in feite het equivalent voor de taalwetenschap, omvat interviews met gerenommeerde taalkundigen en/of taalspecialisten over zeer uiteenlopende onderwerpen. Het boek van Liesbeth Koenen is niet alleen hierom al een feest voor de lezer, maar tevens vanwege haar rijke, bijna proza-achtige taalgebruik. Koenen krijgt leek en expert mee in de wereld van de taal en het menselijk brein.

## EEN VEELHEID AAN ONDERWERPEN

Toontaal, oertaal, computertaal, gebarentaal: in Koenens boek staat taal centraal, in de breedste zin van het woord. Haar boek (1997, 2<sup>e</sup> editie) bestaat volledig uit interviews met taalspecialisten; vijfendertig om precies te zijn. Het boek vangt aan met de theoretische taalkunde en gaat via psycholinguïstiek naar vertalen en eindigt met de esthetische kant van taal.

Vrijwel alles wat denkbaar is rondom taal passeert de revue: van taalevolutie tot split-brainpatiënten en van het onvermogen diepzinnig te kunnen praten over pindakaas tot taalvermenging. Het boek is een brede kennismaking met alle takken die de taalwetenschap raakt. (Klassieke) vragen die centraal staan, zijn: 'Is taal aangeboren of aangeleerd?' 'Staat het taalvermogen los van andere vermogens, en gaat er systematisch schuil achter

ons dagelijks gepraat?' Deze vragen worden gesteld en beantwoord door taalspecialisten. Koenens vertolking hiervan is bedoeld voor een breed publiek, maar bevat redelijke diepgang in de taalkundige onderwerpen die aan bod komen.

#### EEN KIJKJE IN HET ONDERZOEK VAN BEVLOGEN WETENSCHAPPERS

Zijn er bekenden onder de geïnterviewden? Jazeker, de meesten zullen de bachelor- of (onderzoeks)masterstudent taalwetenschap bekend zijn. *Het vermogen te verlangen* begint – hoe kan het ook anders – met de vader van de taalwetenschap, Noam Chomsky, waarna vele andere invloedrijke taalkundigen volgen, zoals Frans Zwarts (over de betekenis van ontkenningen), Lila Gleitman (over syntactisch onderzoek bij blinde kinderen), Ken Wexler (over kindertaal) en Derek Bickerton (over creooltalen).

Liesbeth Koenen geeft een inkijkje in het onderzoek van deze en andere bevlogen wetenschappers. Daarmee maak je niet alleen kennis met de taalspecialisten, waar nog niet bekend, maar ook met de verschillende paradigmata en onderzoeksmethoden om taal en het taalvermogen te onderzoeken.

#### GERICHT OP WAT DE TOEKOMST BRENGEN KAN

Over elk vakgebied, of het nu formele semantiek of 'taalkunst' betreft, lijkt Koenen minstens zo enthousiast als de wetenschappers die hun verhaal doen. Dit blijkt ook uit haar introductie op het boek: "Er is nog altijd zo verschrikkelijk veel méér."

Naar dat 'meer' wordt vaak gerefereerd, zowel door Koenen als door de taalspecialisten. De een is positiever gestemd over de toekomst dan de ander, maar een vooruitblik wordt door vrijwel allen gegeven. In de tweede herziene druk zijn dan ook naschriften toegevoegd, waarin wetenschappers over de huidige staat van hun onderzoek vertellen, alsmede ontwikkelingen in het vakgebied. Daarbij geeft Koenen regelmatig aanbevelingen voor boeken met een (weliswaar summiere) beschrijving ervan. In 2009 verscheen de derde versie van *Het vermogen te verlangen* (e-book), aangevuld met onder andere William Labov (over sociolinguïstiek), Katrien Colman (over taal en de ziekte van Parkinson) en Leonie Cornips (over dialect en verandering).

#### EEN VERSCHEIDENHEID AAN PERSPECTIEVEN

*Het vermogen te verlangen* is een toegankelijk, inleidend en interessant boek. Of je nu richt op één specifieke tak of je breed oriënteert, het boek blijft boeien door de verscheidenheid aan onderwerpen en perspectieven en de prettige verslaglegging. Het zijn daarbij niet allemaal succesverhalen: de weerbarstige werkelijkheid van de wetenschap komt bijvoorbeeld naar voren bij het project Rosita, binnen de computationele linguïstiek. Hierdoor doet het boek realistisch aan: hard werken is een noodzaak, maar geen garantie voor succes. Het is de waarheidsgetroouwe afspiegeling die je als lezer aanzet tot nadenken over onderzoek naar taal en wellicht de wetenschap in het algemeen.

Een kanttekening vormt het jaar van uitgave van de tweede, herziene druk, 1997, die bovendien is uitverkocht. De derde herziene editie is beschikbaar als e-book sinds 2009, die nog meer interviews bevat. Maar de ontwikkelingen in het vakgebied gaan razend-

snel, waardoor hedendaagse invloedrijke taalkundigen kunnen ontbreken, en daarmee ook nieuwe inzichten en taaltheorieën. Wat mij betreft mag Koenen eeuwig doorgaan met het interviewen van binnen- en buitenlandse taalspecialisten over hun vak.

Tot slot moet genoemd worden dat het boek gericht is op een breed publiek: voor iedereen die van taal houdt. De (onderzoeks)student in dit vakgebied zal hierdoor bekend zijn met het gros van de onderwerpen. Desalniettemin kan het boek ook voor een expert de moeite waard zijn: het is en blijft een reeks aan prachtige portretten die inspireren en enthousiasmeren. Wanneer je geen lambda-calculus of bindingsregels verwacht: lees dan vooral op een vrije middag dit boek. ■

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Liesbeth Koenen (taalkundige, wetenschapsjournalist, gastdocent, redacteur en auteur) behaalde haar doctoraalexamen aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam in de Algemene Taalwetenschap met een specialisatie in theoretische syntaxis. Tal van columns, interviews, boeken en boekbijdragen zijn inmiddels van haar verschenen, waaronder *Gebarentaal, de taal van doven in Nederland* (1993/1998) en *Taalgids voor Opperland* (2015). Bovendien ontving Koenen meerdere prijzen, waaronder de tweejaarlijkse KIJK/Wetenschapsweekprijs voor het beste populair-wetenschappelijke boek.





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