



---

# A TOOL TO EVALUATE FRENCH GRAMMATICAL SPELLING SKILLS FOR NATIVE ADULTS

---

Trang LUONG

UMR 7114 MoDyCo – CNRS – Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense - FRANCE

10th IAIMTE PRE-CONFERENCE

June 2nd 2015



# A TOOL TO EVALUATE FRENCH GRAMMATICAL SPELLING SKILLS FOR NATIVE ADULTS

---

## INTRODUCTION

---

French morphology leads to most of spelling mistakes. The point of my study is to understand why we make them.

- ▶ Aim of the dissertation is to conceive a tool that would enhance efficiency in remediation classes of French Literacy for adults (typically students at university)
- ▶ Results also allow linguistic skills description

## PRESENTATION OUTLINE

---

- I. **Defining the object**
  1. French inflectional morphology
  2. Grammatical spelling
  
- II. **What kind of task?**
  1. Combination of tests
  2. What about the other kinds of data?
  
- III. **Linguistic control of the items**
  1. Control of the agreement receiver's features
  2. Control of the linguistic context

- I. DEFINING THE OBJECT (1/2)
- II. WHAT KIND OF TASK?
- III. LINGUISTIC CONTROL OF THE ITEMS

---

## FRENCH INFLECTIONAL MORPHOLOGY

---

« describes form variations of words according to their number, gender, person, etc. » (Riegel, Pellat, Rioul, 2014 : 38)

Ex.

NOUN: *devoir* (singular) / *devoirs* (plural) - *duty/duties*

ADJECTIVE: *joli* (masculin) / *jolie* (feminin) - *pretty*

VERB: *chante* (1st and 3rd person singular) / *chantes* (2nd person singular) - *sing*

- ▶ causes most of spelling errors (Lucci, Millet, 1994)
- ▶ mostly silent: morphograms (Dubois, 1965 ; Catach, 1986)
- ▶ more specifically: grammatical morphograms (Catach, 1986)

- I. DEFINING THE OBJECT (2/2)
- II. WHAT KIND OF TASK?
- III. LINGUISTIC CONTROL OF THE ITEMS

---

## GRAMMATICAL SPELLING = AGREEMENT

---

« transfer of those traits in the context of a sentence » (Gauvin, 2011 : 57)

Ex. *La marée haute monte rapidement / The high tide rises quickly*

The NOUN « marée » gives a gender trait to the ADJECTIVE « haute »  
The VERB « monte » receives the person and the number traits from  
the SUBJECT « marée »

- ▶ dynamic aspect of spelling
- ▶ involves a word that gives the agreement traits and words that receive them
- ▶ follows a set list of well defined rules



---

# WHAT KIND OF TASK?

---

1. Combination of tests
2. What about the other kinds of data?

- I. DEFINING THE OBJECT
- II. WHAT KIND OF TASK? (1/2)
- III. LINGUISTIC CONTROL OF THE ITEMS

---

## COMBINATION OF TESTS

---

- ✓ Linguistic control of the items
- ✓ Data comparability
- ✓ Induce automatism errors with cognitive load
- ✓ Specifically target of the knowledge deficiency and procedure mistakes

### 6 tasks:

- ▶ Recall of a whole sentence (Fayol, Largy, 1992)
- ▶ Secondary task paradigm (Fayol, Got, 1991)
- ▶ Revision task (mistake detection)
- ▶ Grammatical analysis (label functions and categories)
- ▶ Link between the words that give and receive the agreement
- ▶ Mistake reproduction (Gaux, Gombert, 1999)

- I. DEFINING THE OBJECT
- II. WHAT KIND OF TASK? (2/2)
- III. LINGUISTIC CONTROL OF THE ITEMS

---

## WHAT ABOUT OTHER KINDS OF DATA?

---

### Authentic productions corpora?

- ✓ Analysis the performances in real conditions
- ✓ Variety of types of text and writing situations
- ✳ What causes the error?
  - Declarative knowledge deficiency? (metalinguage, rule...)
  - Procedural mistake?
- ✳ Limited control of the linguistic items
- ✳ Data comparability?

### Verbalisations?

- ✓ Procedure used, explaining declarative knowledge
- ✳ Limits of the metacognition: automatic procedures are not conscious





---

# LINGUISTIC CONTROL OF THE ITEMS

---

1. Control of the agreement receiver's features
2. Control of the linguistic context

- I. DEFINING THE OBJECT
- II. WHAT KIND OF TASK?
- III. LINGUISTIC CONTROL OF THE ITEMS (1/2)

---

## CONTROL OF THE AGREEMENT RECEIVER'S FEATURES

---

- ▶ 6 grammatical categories of the receiver
  - ▶ NOUN
  - ▶ ADJECTIVE
  - ▶ VERB - simple form
  - ▶ PAST PARTICIPLE
  - ▶ ADVERB and INFINITIVE VERB: inhibition of the agreement
- ▶ Homophony
  - yes vs. no (Largy, Fayol, 1996)
  - NOUN / VERB and ADJECTIVE / ADVERB
- ▶ Frequency of other inflected form > Frequency of the target item using Lexique Corpora (New, Pallier, Ferrand, Matos, 2001)
- ▶ Highest Frequency (Lusson, 2013)

- I. DEFINING THE OBJECT
- II. WHAT KIND OF TASK?
- III. LINGUISTIC CONTROL OF THE ITEMS (2/2)

---

## CONTROL OF THE LINGUISTIC CONTEXT

---

### Agreement contexts:

- ▶ distance between words giving and receiving agreement traits
- ▶ inversion of their order
- ▶ « screen » word semantically likely to give the agreement traits (Fayol, Got, 1991)
- ▶ « screen » that would induce another grammatical interpretation of homophone : « les » + verb homophone with noun (Fayol, Pacton, 2005)
- ▶ optimal configuration: adjacent words
- ▶ PAST PARTICIPLE agreement: inhibition of the AUXILIARY as a pivot (Jaffré, Bessonnat, 1993)

N.B. Length of sentences < 40 syllables (Fillenbaum 1966 ; Sachs 1967)



---

# PRELIMINARY RESULTS

---

Let's meet again during the poster session!

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!***

## I. Defining the object

I. French inflectional morphology

II. Grammatical spelling

## II. What kind of task?

1. Combination of tests

2. What about the other kinds of data?

## III. Linguistic control of the items

1. Control of the agreement receiver's features

2. Control of the linguistic context

---

## REFERENCES

---

CATACH N., 1986, *L'orthographe française*, Paris, Nathan.

DUBOIS J., 1965, *Grammaire structurale du Français : Nom et pronom*, Paris : Larousse.

FAYOL M., GOT C., 1991, « Automatisation et contrôle dans la production écrite : les erreurs d'accord sujet verbe chez l'enfant et l'adulte », *L'année psychologique*, vol. 91, n°2, p. 187-205.

FAYOL M., LARGY P., 1992, « Une approche fonctionnelle de l'orthographe grammaticale », *Langue française*, vol. 95, p.80-98.

FAYOL M., PACTON S., 2005, « L'accord du participe passé : entre compétition de procédures et récupération en mémoire », *Langue française*, vol. 151, pp. 59-73.

FILLENBAUM S., 1966, « Memory for gist: Some relevant variables », *Language and Speech*, 9, p. 217-227

GAUVIN I., 2011, *Interactions didactiques en classe de français : enseignement / apprentissage de l'accord du verbe en première secondaire*, 268 p., thèse en Sciences de l'éducation soutenue à l'Université de Montréal sous la direction de Boivin M.-C.

GAUX C., GOMBERT J.-E., 1999, « La conscience syntaxique chez les préadolescents : question de méthodes », *L'année psychologique*, vol. 99, n°1, p. 45-74.

JAFFRE, J.-P., BESSONNAT D., 1993, « Accord ou pas d'accord ? Les chaînes morphologiques », *Pratiques*, 77, 25-42

LARGY P., 2001, « La révision des accords nominal et verbal chez l'enfant », *L'année psychologie*, vol. 101, n°2, p.221-245.

LARGY P., FAYOL M., LEMAIRE P., 1996, « The Homophone Effect in Written French : The Case of Verb - Noun Inflection Errors », *Language and Cognitive Process*, 11 (3), p. 217-225.

LUCCI V., MILLET A., 1994, « L'orthographe de tous les jours : enquête sur les pratiques orthographiques des français, Paris : Honoré Champion.

LUSSON C., 2013, *Influence des facteurs non syntaxiques sur l'accord en nombre : approche développementale*, thèse soutenue en Psychologie à l'université de Nice Sophia Antipolis sous la direction de Chanquoy L. et Negro I.

NEW, B., PALLIER C., FERRAND L., MATOS R., 2001, « Une base de données lexicales du français contemporain sur internet : LEXIQUE », *L'Année psychologique*, vol. 101, p. 447-462.

RIEGEL M., PELLAT J.-C., RIOUL R., 2014, *Grammaire méthodique du français*, Paris : Presses Universitaires de France PUF.

SACHS J. S., 1967, « Recognition memory for syntactic and semantic aspects of connected discourse », *Perception and Psychophysics*, 2, p. 437-442.