ProSeg: A comparative corpus of spoken L2 French
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1. Introduction

Advantages of speech corpora in L2 acquisition studies [2]

- They represent the oral dimension in L2 in an ecological way (i.e. with spontaneous speech);
- They put in perspective several explanatory factors affecting the L2 acquisition process and competence, such as L1 transfer, speech style (reading vs. spontaneous speech), age of acquisition. [5, 6]
- They can be used for cross-comparisons between language pairs, especially when using the same recording protocol [6]
- Given these advantages, many current studies are based on speech corpora. But different procedures may be used for data collection, each having its advantages [3]
  - Experimental data targeting specific linguistic phenomena;
  - Naturalistic speech from an oral corpus. ProSeg (Prosody Segments) combines the two procedures.

2. Main features of ProSeg

General features

The ProSeg Corpus has been designed to allow for:
- prosodic and segmental descriptions of L2 French
- comparison of potential effects of L1 transfer
- contrastive analyses of the oral productions in L1 and L2 with a comparable set of data
- analyses of task effects

Procedure

1. Background questionnaire
2. Placement test
   (DIALANG, yes-no vocabulary task, [1])
3. Reading tasks in L2 French
   (several texts including a dialogue)
4. Picture description task
5. Free speech (summary: book/movie)
6. Reading task in the L1

Participants

- 65 participants (so far)
- Recorded both in L2 French and in their L1
- All learners are university students


(Non-native) gemination in L2 French

- Analysis of <CC> vs. <C> spelling, e.g., immigrés, (immigrated) vs ‘imiter’ (imitate)
- Results: Italians produce geminate consonants in L2 French due to L1 transfer and, specifically, of L1 orthography [4]

Foreign Accent Rating

- Two sentences extracted from read texts with no self-repairs or hesitations
- Judgments by native and non-native speakers of French (including teachers of French) in terms of
  - (i) accent strength
  - (ii) accent source (L1)

Prosodic phrasing and rhythm

- Prosodic analysis of the segmentation, durational and tonal patterns in accentual phrases (APs)
- Data taken from the long text and the monologues. Comparison of L1 German, L1 Swedish, L1 Italian and L1 French speakers.
- Hypothesis: L1 Swedish learners have advantages in producing e APs in L2 French due to the existence of a tonal accent in Swedish.

REFERENCES