

ACQUIRING THE SOCIAL IN THE MEANING OF LINGUISTIC VARIATION

AN EXPERIMENTAL EXPLORATION



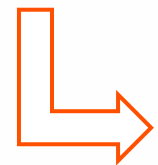
1. Theoretical background
2. Research aims
3. Design & method: training phase
4. Design & method: test phase

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

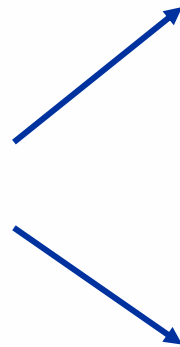
ACQUISITION

SOCIOLINGUISTICS:

- map out variation & its diffusion
- variation = **socially meaningful**



acquisition?



input characteristics

learner characteristics



conditions

1. Theoretical background
2. Research aims
3. Design & method: training phase
4. Design & method: test phase

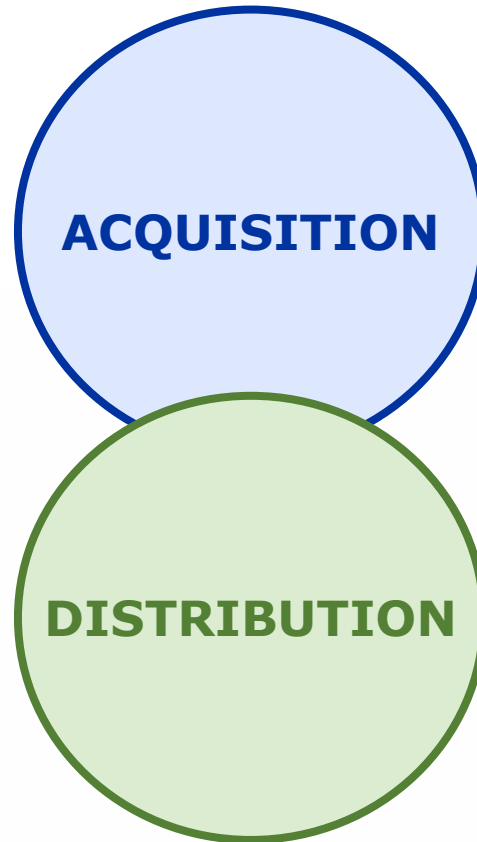
RESEARCH AIMS

SPEECH PERCEPTION



RESEARCH AIMS

SPEECH PERCEPTION



RESEARCH AIMS

PROBABILISTIC DISTRIBUTIONS

INPUT:

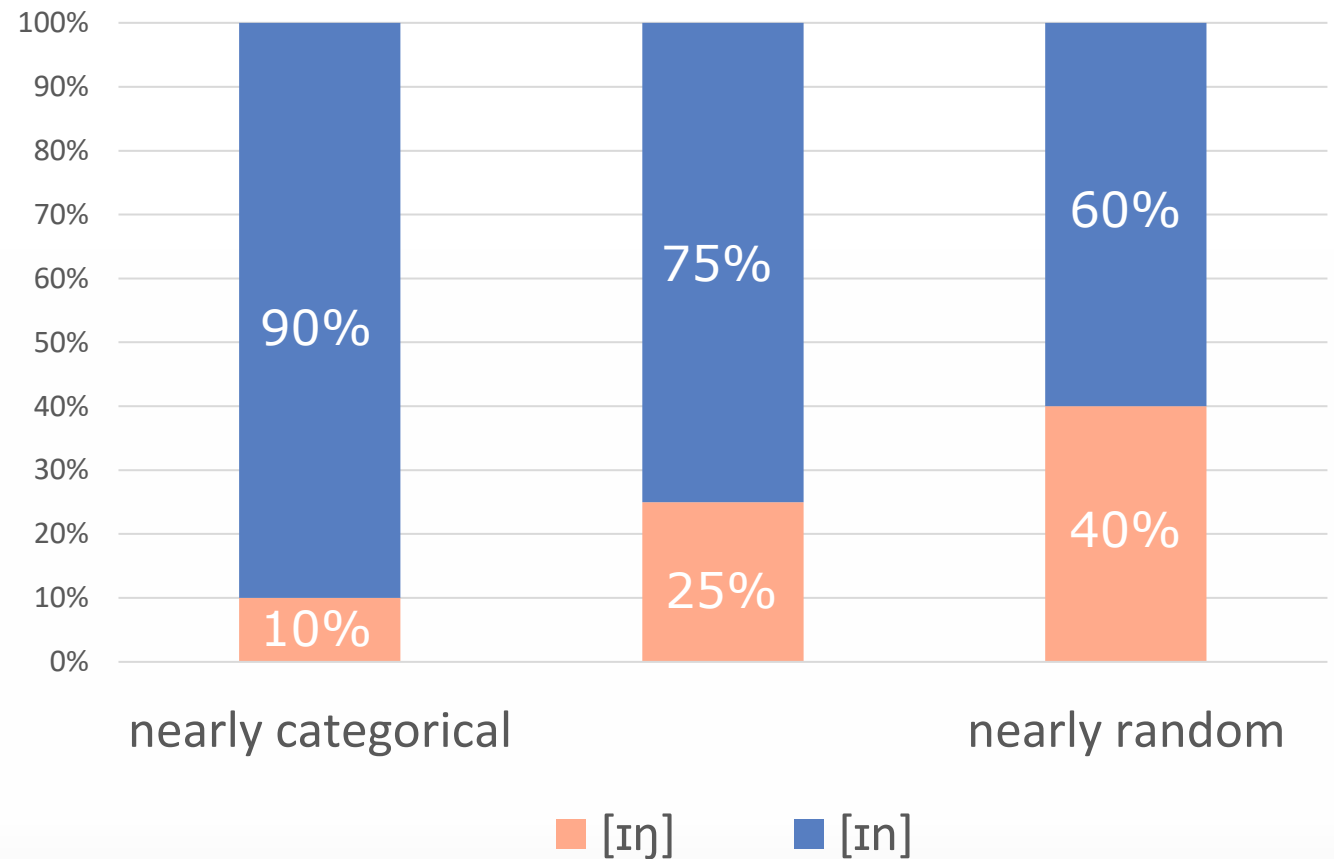
linguistic variant



how often?

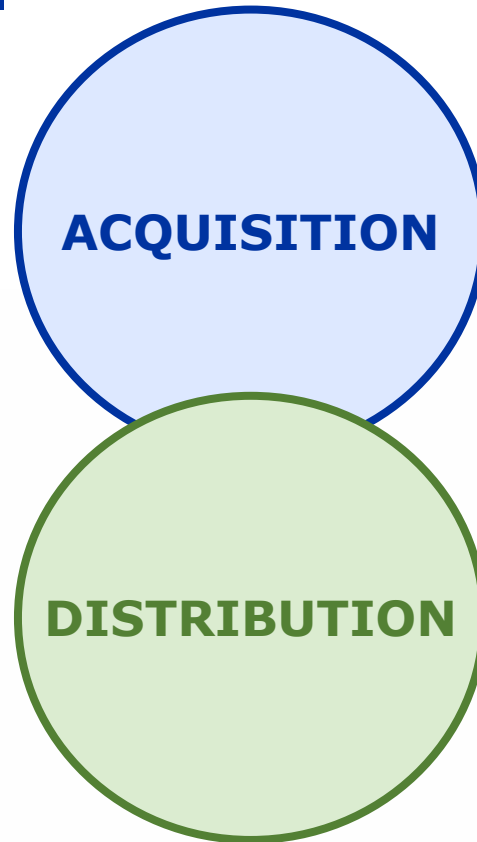
social attribute

Example of a probabilistic distribution



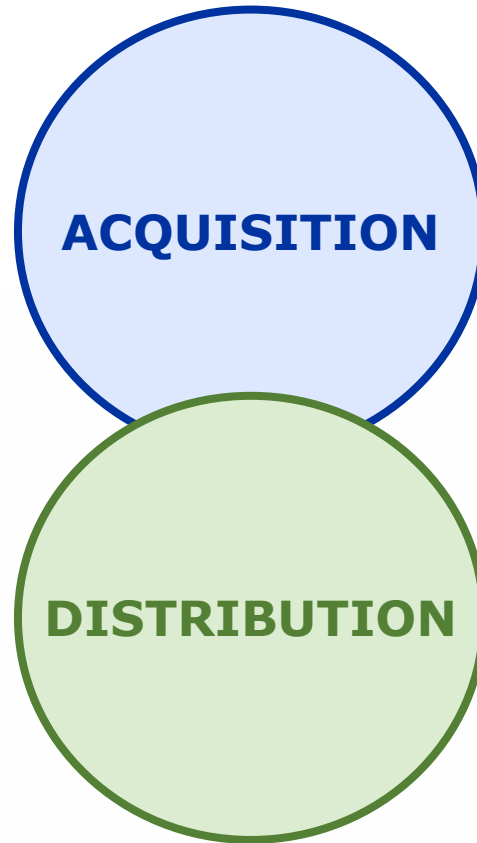
RESEARCH AIMS

PROBABILISTIC DISTRIBUTIONS



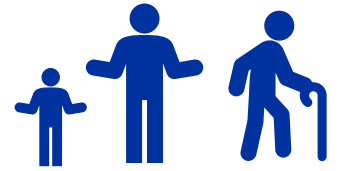
RESEARCH AIMS

HEARER AGE



Hearer age

Strength of probabilistic link

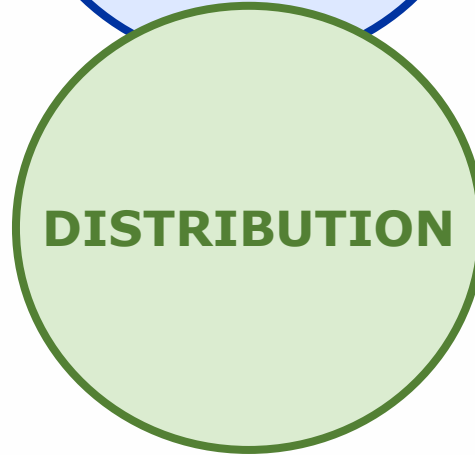
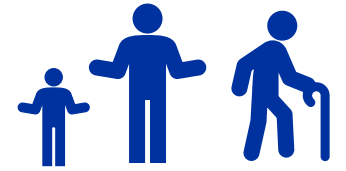


RESEARCH AIMS

TYPE OF LINGUISTIC FEATURE

Hearer age

Strength of probabilistic link



Feature

Levels of linguistic structure

[ɪŋ]

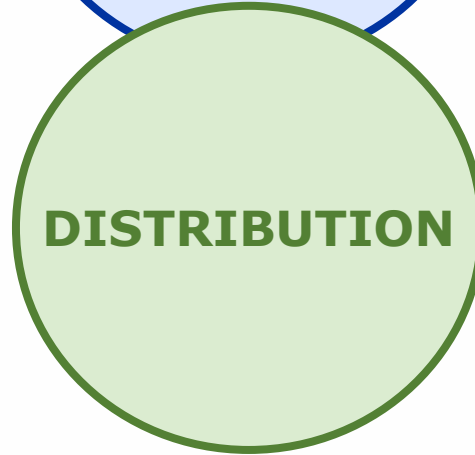
RESEARCH AIMS

LEVELS OF INDEXICALITY

[Iη]

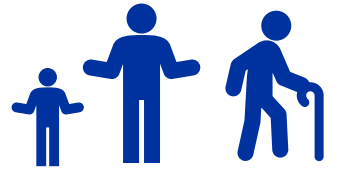
Feature

Levels of linguistic structure



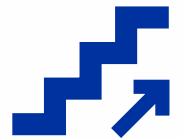
Hearer age

Strength of probabilistic link



Indexicality

First-order to higher-order



RESEARCH AIMS

SEMI-ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

SEMI-ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGE:

- **isolation** of specific aspects of the acquisition process
- **no associations** with existing variation
- **cognitive processing** similar to natural languages
- longstanding **precedent** in language acquisition research

RESEARCH AIMS

SEMI-ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

SEMI-ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGE

new type of variation



existing social category

association to be learned

1. Theoretical background
2. Research aims
3. Design & method: training phase
4. Design & method: test phase

DESIGN & METHODS

TRAINING PHASE

I see a **lobat**. → voicing

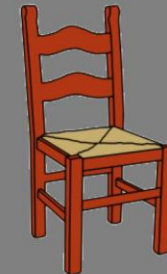
I see a **lopat**. → devoicing

I see a **soret**. → filler

COMPOSITION:

consonant-vowel-consonant-vowel-consonant

+

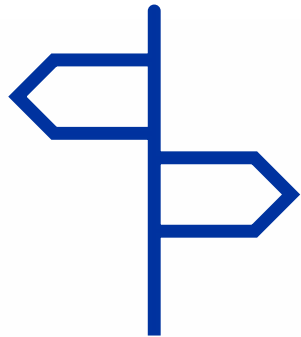


1. Theoretical background
2. Research aims
3. Design & method: training phase
4. Design & method: test phase

DESIGN & METHODS

TEST PHASE

ASSESSMENT:



Explicit

forced-choice
categorization task

What is the speaker most likely to say?

Word 1

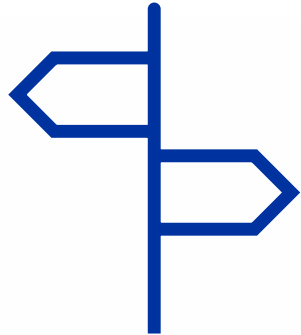
Word 2

Continue

DESIGN & METHODS

TEST PHASE

ASSESSMENT:



Explicit

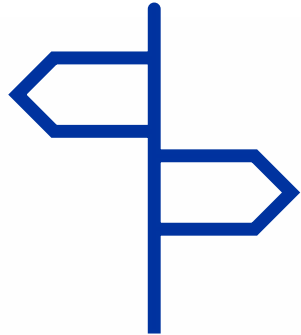
forced-choice
categorization task



Automatic

reaction time based
categorization task

ASSESSMENT:



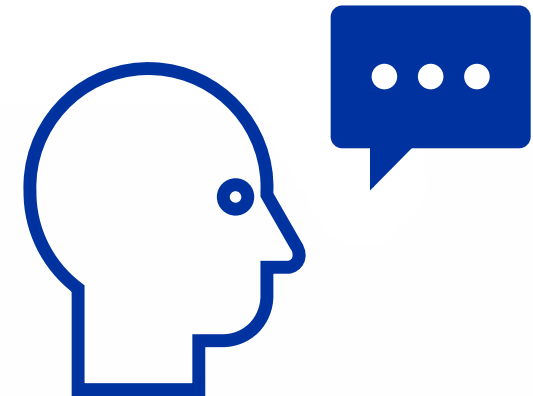
Explicit

forced-choice
categorization task



Automatic

reaction time based
categorization task



Awareness

verbalization task

DESIGN & METHODS

RETENTION OF SOCIAL MEANINGS

RETENTION

Measurement 1 **Measurement 2**

Measurement 3

+2 days

+8 days



exposure

test: explicit

test: explicit

test: explicit

test: automatic

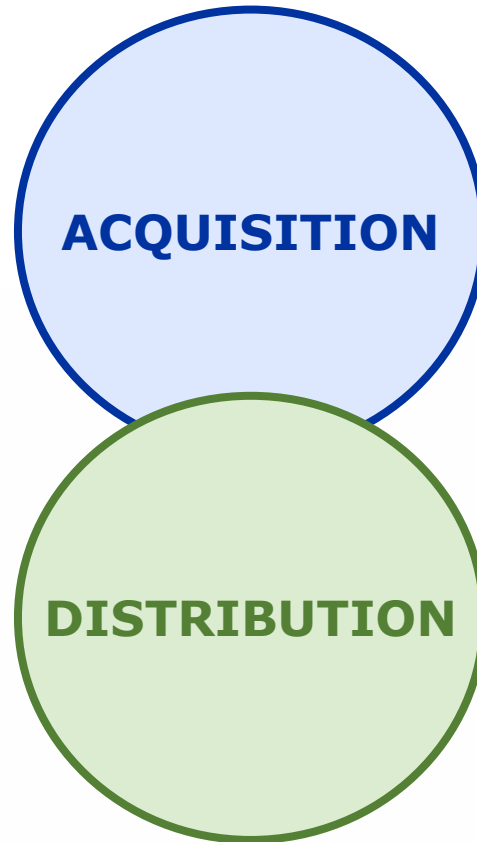
test: automatic

test: automatic

test: awareness

RESEARCH AIMS

SPEECH PERCEPTION



THANK YOU!

REFERENCES

Campbell-Kibler, K. (2007). Accent, (ING), and the social logic of listener perceptions. *American Speech*, 82(1): 32-64.

Campbell-Kibler, K. (2009). The nature of sociolinguistic perception. *Language Variation and Change*, 21(1): 135-56.

Day, R. R. (1980). The development of linguistic attitudes & preferences. *TESOL Quarterly*, 14(1): 27-37.

Docherty, G., Langstrof, C. & Foulkes, P. (2013). Listener evaluation of sociophonetic variability: probing constraints and capabilities. *Linguistics*, 51(2): 355-80.

Eckert, P. (2008). Variation and the indexical field. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 12(4): 453-76.

Ettlinger, M., Morgan-Short, K., Faretta-Stutenberg, M. & Wong, P. C. M. (2015). The relationship between artificial and second language learning. *Cognitive Science*, 40: 822-47.

Foulkes, P. (2010). Exploring social-indexical knowledge: A long past but a short history. *Laboratory Phonology*, 1(1): 5-39.

Foulkes, P. & Docherty, G. (2006). The social life of phonetics and phonology. *Journal of Phonetics*, 34(4): 409-38.

Kinzler, K. D. & DeJesus, J. M. (2012). Northern=smart and Southern=nice: The development of accent attitudes in the US. *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 66(6): 1146-58.

REFERENCES

Labov, W. (1963). The Social Motivation of a Sound Change. *Word*, 19(3): 273-309.

Labov, W. (1993). *The unobservability of structure and its linguistic consequences*. [Conference paper]. New Ways of Analyzing Variation 22, Ottawa, Canada.

Labov, W. (2001). *Principles of Linguistic Change: Vol. 2: Social Factors*. Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell.

Labov, W., Ash, S., Baranowski, M., Nagy, N., Ravindranath, M. & Weldon, T. (2006). Listeners' Sensitivity to the Frequency of Sociolinguistic Variables. *Pennsylvania Working Papers in Linguistics*, 12(2): Article 10.

Levon, E. & Buchstaller, I. (2015). Perception, cognition, and linguistic structure: The effect of linguistic modularity and cognitive style on sociolinguistic processing. *LVC* 27(3): 319-48.

Rácz, P., Hay, J. B. & Pierrehumbert, J. B. (2017). Social Salience Discriminates Learnability of Contextual Cues in an Artificial Language. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8: Article 51.

Silverstein, M. (2003). Indexical order and the dialectics of sociolinguistic life. *Language & Communication*, 23: 193-229.

Smith, J., Durham, M. & Fortune, L. (2007). Community, caregiver and child in the acquisition of variation in a Scottish dialect. *LVC*, 19(1): 63-99.

REFERENCES

Smith, J., Durham, M. & Richards, H. (2013). The social and linguistic in the acquisition of sociolinguistic norms: caregivers, children and variation. *Linguistics*, 51(2): 285-324.

Sneller, B. & Roberts, G. (2018). Why some behaviors spread while others don't: A laboratory simulation of dialect contact. *Cognition*, 170: 298-311.

Walker, A., García, C., Cortés, Y. & Campbell-Kibler, K. (2014). Comparing social meanings across listener and speaker groups: The indexical field of Spanish /s/. *LVC*, 26(2): 169-189.

Wonnacott, E., Newport, E. L. & Tanenhaus, M. K. (2008). Acquiring and processing verb argument structure: Distributional learning in a miniature language. *Cognitive Psychology*, 56(3): 165-209.

Zenner, E., Mertens, N., Rosseel, L. & Geeraerts, D. (2017). The acquisition of loanword prestige: An exploration. In R. Giora & M. Haugh (Eds.), *Doing Pragmatics Interculturally. Cognitive, Philosophical, and Sociopragmatic Perspectives* (pp. 121-34). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

DESIGN & METHODS

PRE- & POSTTESTS

PRETESTS

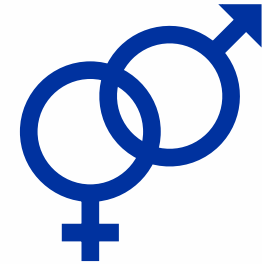


Working memory test

POSTTESTS



Interview



**Gender stereotypes
survey**

RESEARCH AIMS

TYPE OF LINGUISTIC FEATURE

[ɪŋ]

Feature

Levels of linguistic structure



PHONETIC

lo**p**at

vs.

lo**b**at

MORPHOSYNTACTIC

lopata**ba**

vs.

lopato**to**

LEXICAL

lo**p**at

vs.

mi**t**op

RESEARCH AIMS

LEVELS OF INDEXICALITY

HIGHER-ORDER INDEXICAL MEANINGS

Task 1

variant 1 → female speaker 

variant 2 → male speaker 

Task 2

variant 1 → considerate speaker 

variant 2 → competent speaker 

QUESTIONS