

Symposium

Pushing for precision on initial input processing: Are we speaking the same language?

18-19 Mai 2017

Université de Paris 8

The primary objective of this symposium is to address input processing at the initial stages of second+/foreign language acquisition and the interface with second+/foreign language teaching.¹ As such, we wish to urge colleagues to focus on precision in their definitions and operationalizations of “input processing” as well as related notions, such as automatic and controlled processing, non-declarative and declarative knowledge, implicit and explicit learning, and meaning- or form-focused teaching. The definitions adopted by different researchers are largely influenced by their theoretical stance on how language is acquired and represented in our minds.

Building on the richness of theories in SLA, rather than eschewing it, we wish to discuss input processing from different perspectives with a view to identifying overlap in our research questions, theories, methodologies and/or findings. One objective may be to work towards finding a common terminology. For instance, some researchers may not refer to “input processing” if this is taken to mean something different from “processing input”. Some researchers refer to “input” as external to the mental system (the linguistic input of the environment), whereas others equate “input” with an internal system in which one processor produces output that serves as input to another processor.

We therefore wish to discuss questions, such as: How is language represented in our minds? What are the cognitive processes involved in input processing? What is the relation between input processing, intake and acquisition? What are implications of our research and theoretical frameworks for questions of implicit and explicit learning? How do these implications extend to questions of language teaching?

The symposium will conclude with a roundtable designed to identify common themes, work to build consensus and lay out directions for future research.

This symposium is organized by Marzena Watorek (Université Paris 8) and Rebekah Rast (American University of Paris) in collaboration with Aline Godfroid and Bill VanPatten (Michigan State University).

Invited speakers

Giuliano Bernini (Università degli Studi di Bergamo, Italy), *The sound pattern of initial learner varieties*

Aline Godfroid (Michigan State University, U.S.), *Initial processing of new syntax: Linking eye movements and emerging knowledge representations*

¹ This includes second, third and additional language learning and teaching contexts within and outside a country where the target language in question is spoken.

Alex Housen and Hannelore Simoens (Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium), *What the eyes don't see (and the ears don't hear) the mind won't learn: Investigating the role of salience in the initial processing of inflectional morphology in second language acquisition*

Barbara Köpke (Université de Toulouse, France), *The role of input in language attrition*

Kara Morgan-Short (University of Illinois at Chicago, U.S.), *Electrophysiological signatures of initial processing of second language input: Insights into underlying cognitive processes*

Michael Sharwood Smith (Heriot-Watt University and University of Edinburgh, Scotland), *Modelling the relationship between processing and acquisition*

Bill VanPatten (Michigan State University, U.S.), *Form as Part of Lexicon: Why Initial Processing is not Form Focused*

Invited Round Table organizers:

- Heather Hilton (Université Lyon 2, France)
- Daniel Véronique (Université Aix-Marseille, France)