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Paper 4: Wim Gombert, Merel Keijzer, & Marjolijn Verspoor

J'AIMe le français

L2 French written proficiency after six years.



Symposium AAAL 2018

Explicit versus implicit? Long-term interventions and free response oral and written data.



Explicit versus implicit?

Norris & Ortega 2000

Spada & Tomita 2010

brief treatments

constrained discrete focus tasks



DeKeyser (2003)

~~brief treatments~~

~~constrained discrete focus tasks~~

long-term interventions
with free response tasks



Research question

- › Is explicit instruction more effective than implicit instruction on free written response language after 6 years on the following measures?
 - General proficiency (human raters)
 - Direkt Profil (aggregated morpho-syntactic complexity scores)
 - Analytical scores
 - Complexity (Sentence length, Guiraud, Tense use)
 - Accuracy (S-V and D-N agreement)
 - Fluency: Text length
- › Hypothesis: explicit more effective in all measures



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Methodology



Participants

62 Dutch learners of L2 French,

Two naturally occurring groups

explicit N=29

implicit N = 33

pre-university education (similar aptitude)

Age at beginning 12; at end of study 18 (six years of instruction)

Same teacher in last 3 years

Explicit

Traditional course book

- grammar knowledge and lexical knowledge
- Focus on reading, writing and listening activities

Last two years: 7 video documentaries with writing assignments

Implicit

Communicative method

- authentic input in online learning systems (videos/ texts)
- Focus on speaking activities

Last two years: 7 video documentaries with writing assignments



Free response tasks

Both groups studied, read about and wrote about 7 topics

For writing exams, students had choice between two topics

For this study, two last writing exams

Four topics in total, equally distributed in two conditions

Data:

119 essays



Holistic rating

Training

- Researcher selects 10 essays of various levels

- 9 expert teachers and trainer

- Raters rank the 10 essays

- Raters score essays from 1-4

- Rubric made with essays as benchmarks

Rating

- Groups of 3 raters work individually on 24 essays

- Scores compared and discussed if necessary

- Final score is average of the three scores



Direkt Profil (DP) profiling (Lund university, Sweden)

Model of six morphosyntactic stages of development
(Bartning & Schlyter, 2004)

Direkt Profil, a computer program for morphosyntactic analysis of
written French

(Granfeldt, J. Nugues, P et al., 2005)

DP analysis done by three different Algorithms: C4.5, SVM and LMT
(Grandfeldt et al., 2006)

High degree of correlation between Direkt Profil and experienced
teachers ($r^2=0.735$)

(Granfeldt and Agren, 2014)



Results



Results on general proficiency (human raters)

Interrater agreement: .893 (sig.=.000)

	Explicit N=55	Implicit N=64	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
General proficiency (1-4)	2.26 (0.85)	2.48 (0.85)	d=0.26

Results on Direkt Profil (software)

(average three aggregated morpho-syntactic complexity scores)

Agreement between three algorithms: .772 (sig.=.000)

	Explicit N=55	Implicit N=64	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
Direkt Profil (1-6)	3.69 (1.09)	4.00 (1.10)	d=0.28



Results on complexity

	Explicit N=55	Implicit N=64	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
Sentence length	13.9 (3.42)	16.9 (3.21) *	d=0.90
<u>Guiraud</u>	8.53 (1.10)	8.57 (0.94)	d=0.04
Tense use	2.40 (1.61)	2.63 (1.26)	d=0.16



Results on accuracy

	Explicit (N=55)	Implicit (N=64)	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
S-V agreement	7.44 (1.64)	7.73 (1.52)	d=0.18
D-N agreement	8.92 (0.86)	8.76 (0.94)	d=0.18



Results on fluency

	Explicit (N=55)	Implicit (N=64)	
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
Text length	249 (65.89)	312 (119.2) *	d=0.65



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Discussion



Research question

- › Is explicit instruction more effective than implicit instruction on free written response language after 6 years on the following measures?
 - General proficiency (human raters) ✗
 - Direkt Profil (aggregated morpho-syntactic complexity scores) ✗
 - Analytical scores ✗
 - Complexity: Sentence length, Guiraud, Tense use)
 - Accuracy: S-V and D-N agreement)
 - Fluency: Text length
- › Hypothesis: explicit more effective in all measures ✗



Research question

- › Is explicit instruction more effective than implicit instruction on free written response language after 6 years on the following measures?
 - General proficiency (human raters) ✗
 - Direkt Profil (aggregated morpho-syntactic complexity scores) ✗
 - Analytical scores ✗
 - Complexity ([Sentence length](#), Guiraud, Tense use)
 - Accuracy (S-V and D-N agreement)
 - Fluency: [Text length](#)
- › Hypothesis: explicit more effective in all measures ✗



Why

- › Enough exposure to meaningful language enables learners to deduct recurring patterns in the language.
- › An adequate amount of exposure is sufficient to recognize the recurring patterns.
 - After six years no difference in accuracy!
- › Relatively more exposure leads to greater fluency.



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Conclusion



Limitations

- › Longitudinal classroom studies inherently messy!
- › Same instructor, but different amounts of L2 exposure because of methods
- › Findings may be due to other factors than implicit versus explicit
- › However, explicit is not needed to learn grammar!



Explicit versus implicit?

- › No conclusions until we have more longitudinal studies with free response data



Thank you!

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