

# Annual report 2016 of ACLC research group: Cognitive Approaches to Second Language Acquisition (CASLA)

---

*Coordinator:* Sible Andringa

*Web page:* [CASLA](#)

*Participants in 2016:*

*ACLC-staff*

- Sible Andringa
- Jan Hulstijn
- Folkert Kuiken
- Alla Peeters-Podgaevskaja
- Ineke Vedder

*ACLC PhD candidates*

- Maja Curcic
- Aartje van Dijk
- Klaartje Duijm
- Pauline Koeleman
- Carmen Lie-Lahuerta
- Elisabetta Materassi
- Hanneke Pot
- Patrick Schetters
- Tessa Spätgens
- Margarita Steinel
- Lissan Taal-Apelqvist
- Mirjam Trapman
- Camille Welie
- Wilma van der Westen
- Roos van der Zwaard

*PhD candidate UvA Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Developmental Psychology*

- Leona Niheyra

*External staff*

- Rob Schoonen

*Description of the research group:*

The CASLA research group studies the acquisition and use of a second language with respect to the interplay between (1) the representation and processing of information in various

linguistic domains, (2) relevant human attributes (such as proficiency in the first language, age, level of education, and working memory capacity), and (3) task constraints (e.g., in pedagogic tasks).

*Research highlights in 2016:*

- In January 2016, **Sible Andringa** was one of the keynote speakers at the MiLL network event in Sheffield on implicit and explicit learning in SLA research.
- In 2016 **Folkert Kuiken** and **Ineke Vedder** published a rating scale for assessing functional adequacy in L2 writing. By means of this scale, comprising four different subscales, functional adequacy in L2 writing can be reliably measured.
- During the workshop on “Pragmatica interculturale e didattica delle lingue”, Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici in Rome, 10 September 2016, **Elisabetta Materassi** spoke about ‘Metaphor and second language learning’. In her speech she stressed the importance of metaphor awareness for the second language learners. Metaphor is pervasive in language, especially in fixed linguistic forms such as collocations and idioms. It is therefore important to give to metaphor and other types of figurative language a more prominent place in second language learning through awareness raising activities.
- At the annual conference on child language acquisition and bilingualism in St. Petersburg (Russia) **Alla Peeters-Podgaevskaja** analyzed the observed problems of Russian-XL bilingual children with case and gender acquisition, compared to their peers in other Slavic languages and suggested how to improve the learning process guided not only by revised teaching materials and pedagogical approaches, but also by changing the parental communicative strategies.
- Comparing monolingual and bilingual minority children, **Tessa Spätgens** found no significant differences in reading comprehension, vocabulary size and semantic priming related to language background, suggesting that within the lower SES stratum, these two language groups perform similarly.
- In an in-depth study of multiple word association behavior in monolingual and bilingual minority children, **Tessa Spätgens** found that initial associations are qualitatively different from second and third associations, reflecting differences between primary and secondary semantic links in the network structure of the mental lexicon.
- **Ineke Vedder** participated as invited speaker in a colloquium on the assessment of L2 writing (University of Udine, Italy). The colloquium was organized by a number of European countries, and part of a joint European project on L2 writing (WRILAB2), in different minority languages.
- **Ineke Vedder** co-edited a book on the acquisition of pragmatics in Italian by non-native speakers of Italian, a topic on which so far little research has been conducted.
- In 2016, **Camille Welie** found evidence for the assumption that not all readers benefit equally from their knowledge of connectives to improve their expository text

comprehension. Only eighth graders with high knowledge about reading strategies and text structure (metacognitive knowledge) did benefit from their knowledge of connectives.

*Societal relevance:*

- At the annual meeting of the association for teachers of Dutch as a second language, **Sible Andringa** analyzed the existing problems with the Dutch "Inburgeringsexamen" for reading on the basis recent theories of reading and suggested how construction can be improved as well as how candidates can be better prepared.
- **Alla Peeters-Podgaevskaja** participated in a series of workshops on bilingual acquisition for Russian Saturday schools that were held in Eindhoven (The Netherlands), Leuven and Gent (Belgium).
- Together with **Niki Moeken and Camille Welie, Folkert Kuiken** published materials on CRISS: Collaborative Reading In Secondary Schools, including a teacher manual, student materials, work sheets and instructional videos.
- **Folkert Kuiken** gave several interviews: for Vrij Nederland on interaction with expats, for NRC on academic language proficiency of university students and for Nieuwsshows (NPO Radio 1 ) on the need for refugees to learn Dutch.
- At a meeting on reading and second language acquisition organized by the Werkverband Amsterdamse Psycholinguïsten (WAP) which aims to bring together psycholinguists from academia and the professional field, **Tessa Spätgens** gave an invited talk focusing on potential causes for the observed lack of differences in vocabulary and comprehension between young monolingual and bilingual minority learners in her research.