



Left and right dislocations in French and English: A case study.

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Left and right dislocations in French and English: A bilingual case study

5-7th December 2012
ELA, Université Lumière – Lyon 2

Cross-linguistic influence in BFLA



- Interaction between two language systems
- Conditions for this phenomenon:
 - interface
 - overlap
 - language dominance
 - input

Input and Cross-linguistic influence



3

The **routine processing** of overt pronominal subjects as co-referential with a subject antecedent in **English** increases the likelihood that overt pronouns will be **processed in the same way in Italian** in what might be considered as **an instance of cross-linguistic priming**.

Serratrice (2007: 235)



Why Dislocation constructions?

- Interface phenomenon
- Partial overlap across French and English
- Functionally important discourse function



Dislocations and interface

(1) *Le lion, il court.* (2) *Il court, le lion.*
The lion, it/he is running. It/he is running, the lion.

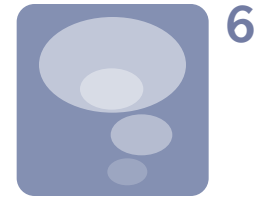
Syntactically:

- definite Noun Phrase
- resumptive pronoun within the sentence

Pragmatically:

- topic-announcing
- >*Brand-new referents may not occur in them.*

(Lambrecht 1994: 188)



Pragmatic functions for LDs

-Establish a referent

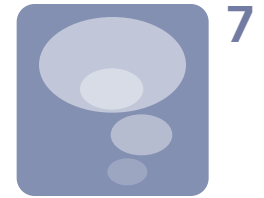
(3) *Le hat*, où est *le hat*? (Anne 2;05.04)

-Maintain a referent

(4) *Bébé*, *il* pleure (Anne 2;06.23)

-Switch/re-establish a referent

(5) *The soup*, mix *it* now. (Anne 2;08.25)



Pragmatic functions for LDs

-Create a topical contrast

(6) *That one*, Thomas do *it* (Anne 2;07.24)

-Make an emphasis on a referent

(7) *You*, what *you* doing? (Anne 2;06.23)

-Add information about a referent

(8) *Le hat*, (*i*)*l* est chaud (Anne 2;05.04)



Pragmatic functions for RDs

- In French: same pragmatic functions as for LDs except creating a topical contrast.
- Different in English:
 - Afterthought function
(9) I was with Mummy and *O* come here, *Father Christmas*
(Anne 2;08.25)
 - Pointer role
(10) I like *it, that* (Anne 2;08.25)

(Notley et al 2007)



Frequency of dislocations

- Dislocations account for:

- **25%** of data in spoken **French**

(De Cat 2007)

- only **1%** in spoken **English**

(Snider and Zaenen 2006)



Research question

- Examine to what extent the **regular use** of two languages may lead to **systematic cross-linguistic** influence from French to English in the use of dislocation.
- Investigate the **role of input** the bilingual's production of dislocation.



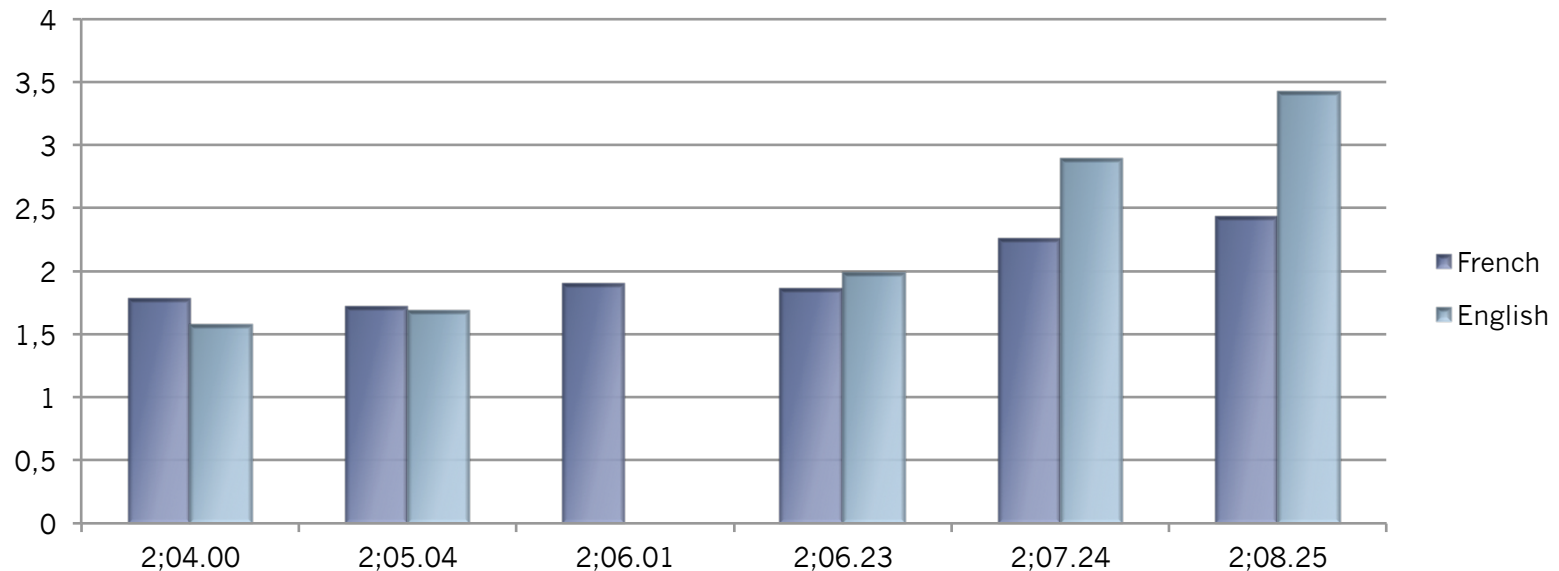
Data: the child

- Longitudinal corpus: Anne (2;4.0-2;8.24)
 - French-English bilingual
 - London
 - Exposure to English 0.65 (Krott et al. 2011)
 - 1hr/month in French and in English
 - First 6 months of recordings

Data: the child

Anne: dominant in English

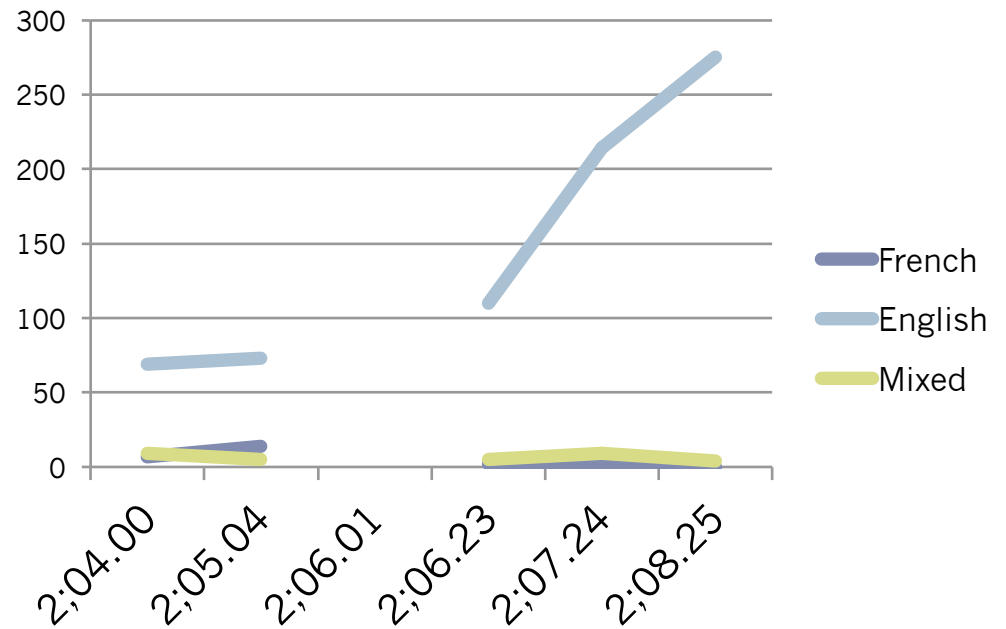
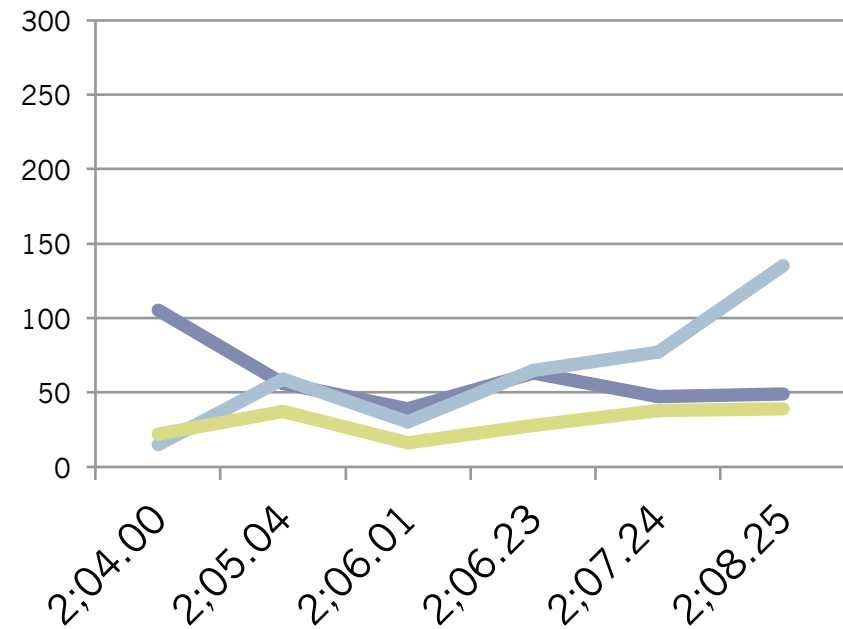
- Number of French utterances ↘
 - First sample: 74/143 French utterances
 - 6th sample: 43/223
 - Anne's mlu in French and English sessions



Anne's use of her languages

- French sessions

- English sessions



— French
— English
— Mixed



Data: analysed sample

Anne's data

- French sessions: 920 utterances
- English sessions: 799 utterances

Mother's data

- Sample* of 200 utterances

Nanny's data

- Sample* of 200 utterances

*Sample: first 2 files and last 2 files were separately **merged**. 100 utterances per merged file were **randomly sample with replacement** using the R software (<http://www.R-project.org>)

Coding scheme based on De Cat (2002)



Analysed and coded **all utterances** containing a **topic** but **excluded verbless** utterances and direct **repetition**

- Direction of dislocation (i.e. left or right)
- Dislocated element
 - Syntactic category (i.e. NP, pronoun...)
 - Old vs. new status
 - Pragmatic function (i.e. contrast, switch referent...)
- Resumptive element
 - Syntactic category (i.e. clitic, \emptyset ...)
 - Its syntactic role (subject, object ...)



Results: Dislocations in the Data

Anne produced 66 dislocations in 1719 sentences containing a topic (3,84%)

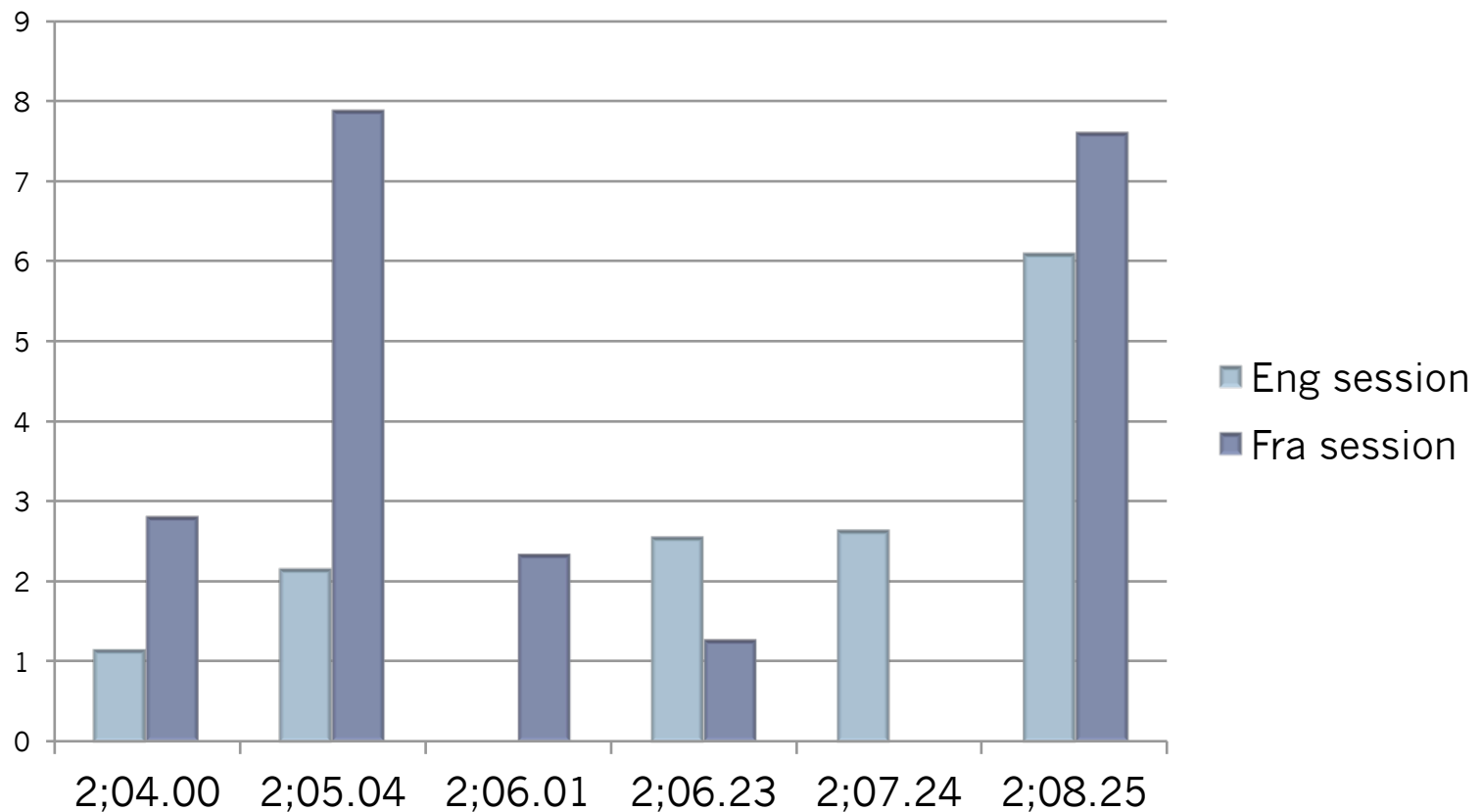
	Anne's dis	Input
English sessions	3,62%	0%
French sessions	4,02%	28%

Anne	French dis	English dis	Mixed dis
English sessions	3,85%	3,5%	0%
French sessions	3,9%	2,62%	7,2%

Anne's production of dislocations in the French vs. the English session



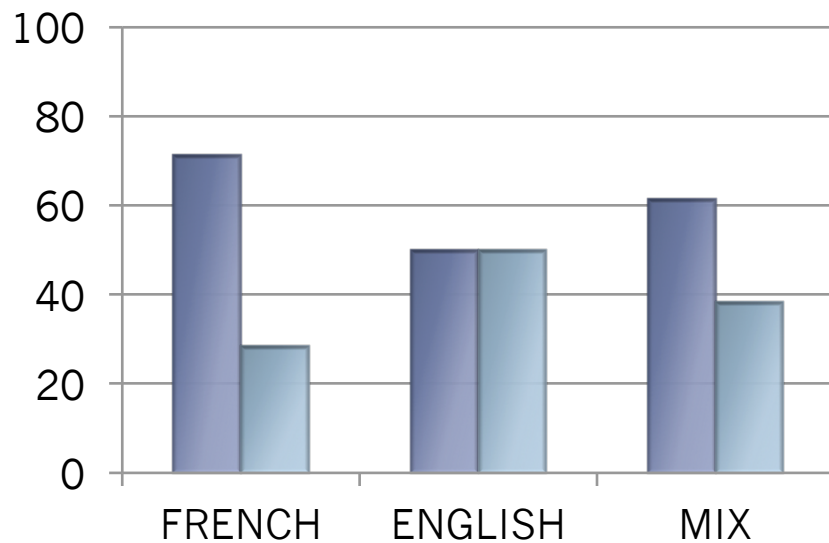
- Percentage of Anne's production of dislocation in French vs. English session



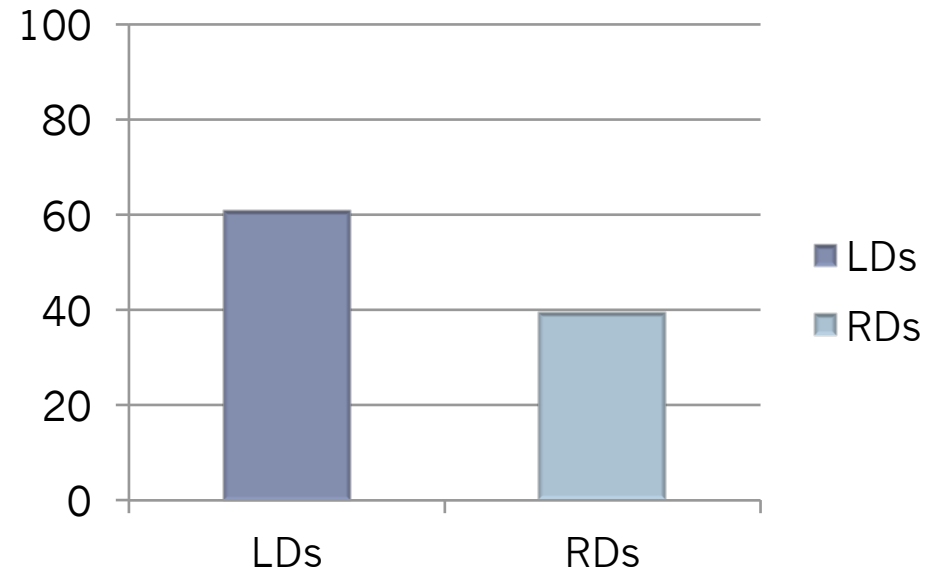
Anne's and her mother's total production of dislocations across languages



- Anne's production of LDs and RDs (%)



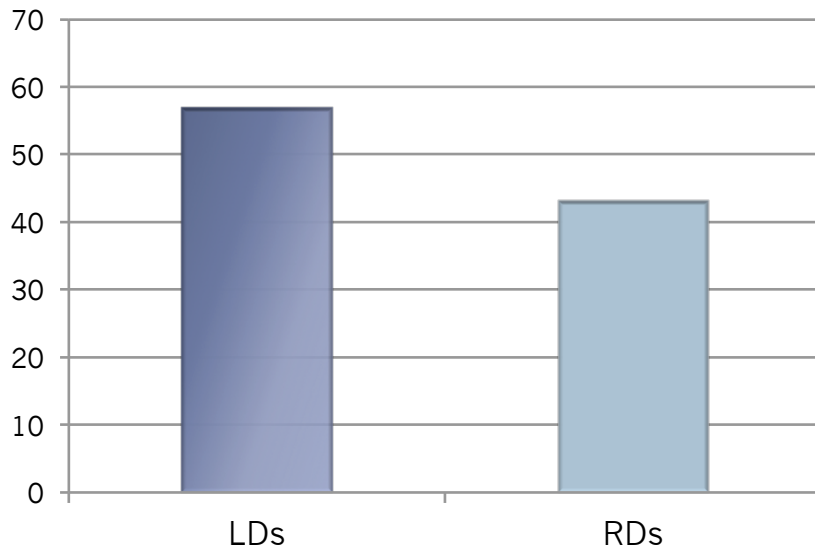
- Mother's production of LDs and RDs (%)



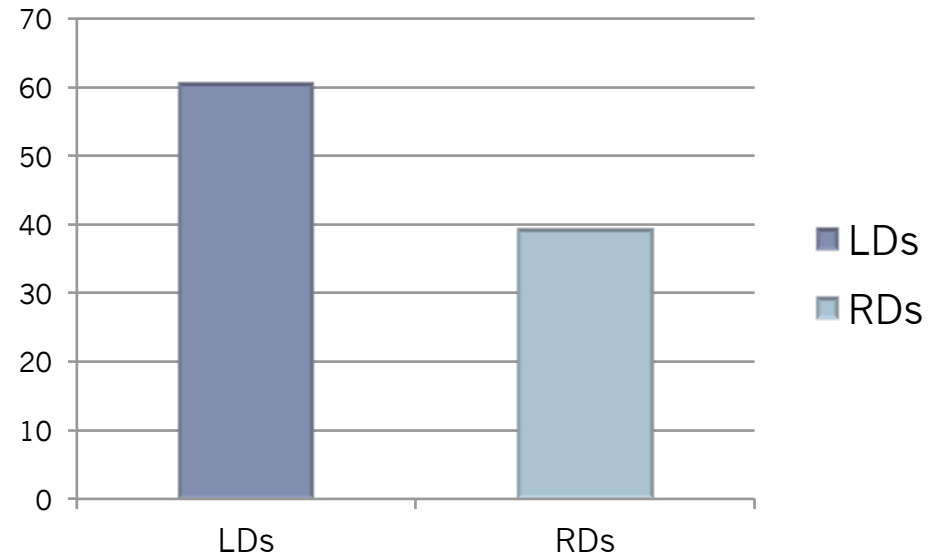
Anne's and her mother's total production of dislocations



Anne's total production of LDs and RDs (%)



Mother's production of LDs and RDs (%)





General trend in Anne's dislocations

- Cross-linguistic influence from French to English for topichood for a whole construction
- Higher production of dislocation in French contexts
- Similar proportion of LDs and RDs in output and input

Pragmatic functions in LDs

	contrast	establish	maintain	switch	pointer	explain	emphasis	clarify
French	0	11,1	0	11,1	55,6	22,2	0	0
English	5,3	31,6	5,3	5,3	10,5	5,3	36,8	0
Mix	0	12,5	0	12,5	25	12,5	37,5	0
Anne	2,8	22,2	2,8	8,3	25	11,1	27,8	0
Mother	21,2	3	9,1	9,1	15,2	9,1	33,3	0

■ *frequency %

Pragmatic functions in RDs

	contrast	establish	maintain	switch	pointer	explain	emphasis	clarify
French	0	0	50,0	0	25,0	0	25,0	0
English	0	0	21,05	0	10,5	5,3	21,05	42,1
Mix	0	0	20,0	0	20,0	0	0	60,0
Anne	0	0	25,0	0	14,3	3,6	17,8	39,3
Mother	0	9,1	40,9	9,1	18,2	9,1	13,6	0

■ *frequency %

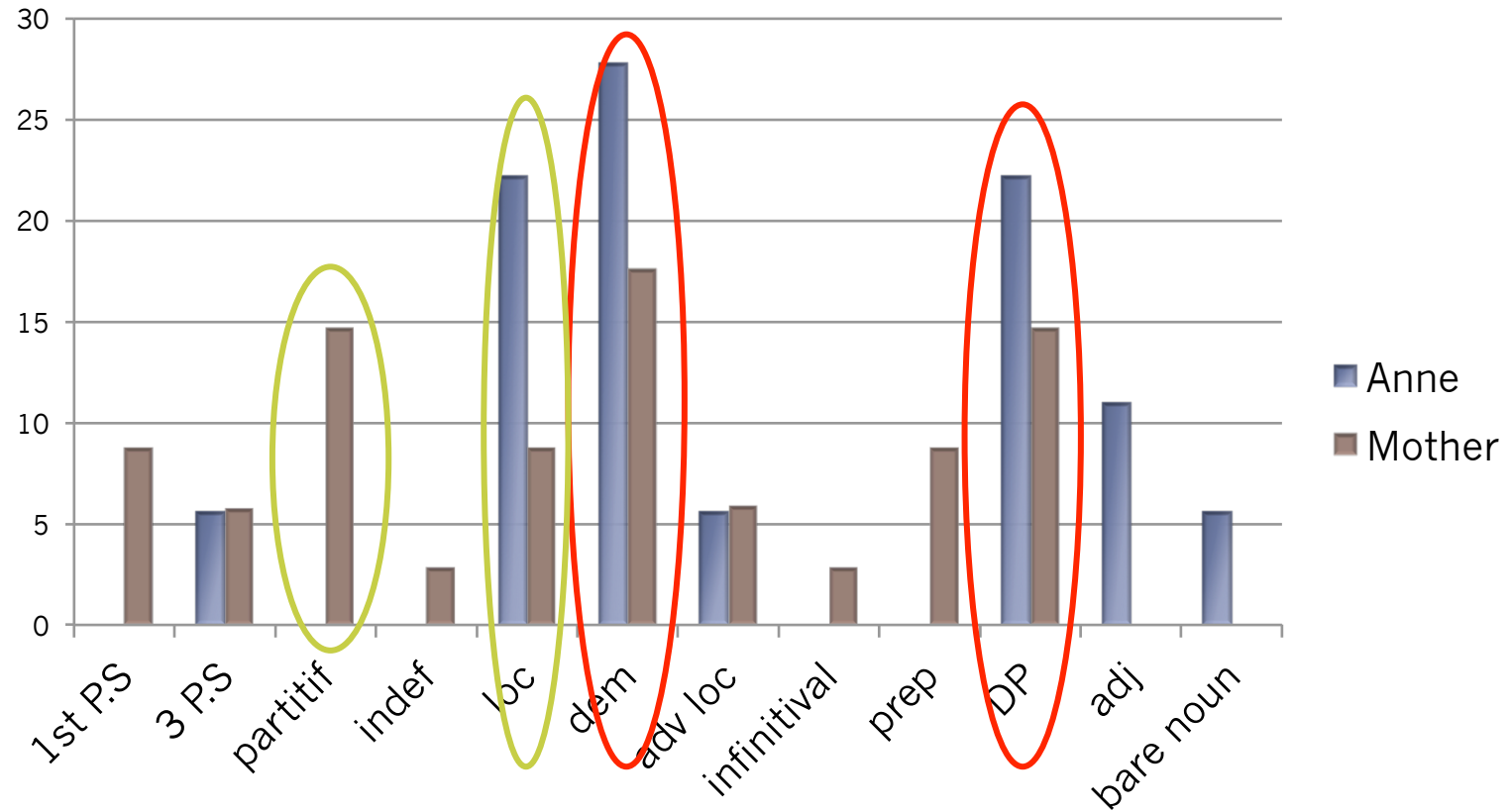


General trend for pragmatics

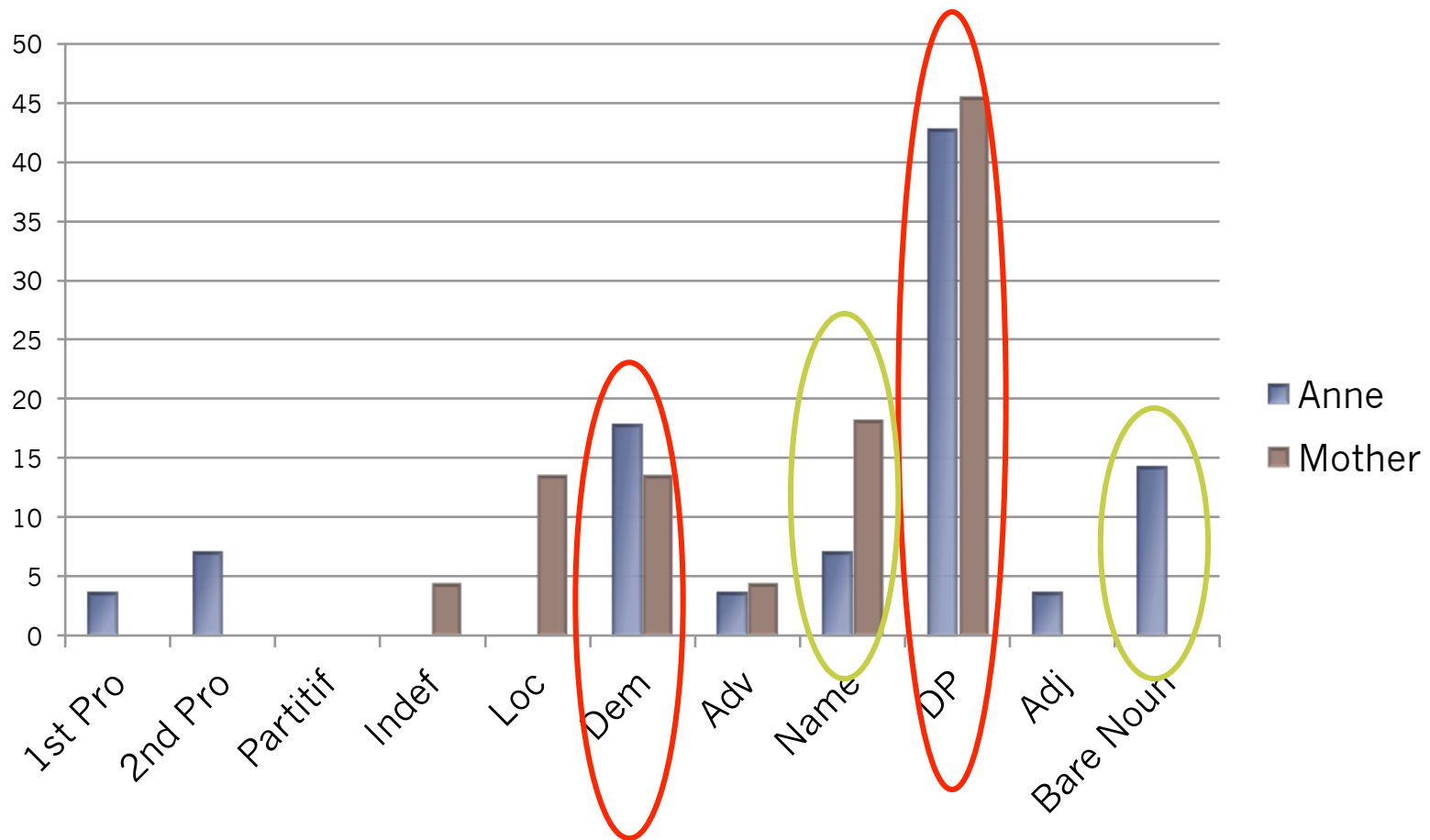
- Mother and Child use LDs in **similar pragmatic** context with the **exception** of **topical contrast**
 - Few productions in French
 - In English, topical contrast marked with SV
- Similar for RDs with the **exception** of the **afterthought function** (clarifying the referent)
 - Not appropriately encoding the referent OR
 - Influence from English



Nature of dislocated element in LDs



Nature of dislocated element in RDs





General trend in resumptive Elt

- Left-dislocation:
 - Anne: locative, DP, demonstrative
(11) *at my house*, you eat
 - Mother: demonstrative, DP
(12) *Ca, les craies, ça* va pas là-dedans

- Right-dislocation:
 - Anne: DP, demonstrative
(13) Il est où, *my dog*?
 - Mother: DP, demonstrative, proper name
(14) Il est là, *Thomas*.



Input vs. output

- High number of similarities:
 - Syntactic level (nb of LDs and RDs, nature of dislocated element)
 - Pragmatic level

- Few differences can be explained by pragmatic differences between French and English in the use of dislocation.



Conclusion

- Cross-linguistic influence occur for topichood at the level of a whole construction and not only at the level of individual referential expressions (e.g. pronouns for topic shift) (Serratrice et al. 2011).
- Further evidence on strong relationship between input and output.



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Merci
Thank you