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The (near) absence of English in Flemish dinner table conversations

Abstract: This paper studies the low frequency of English insertions in child-directed speech in eight Flemish families, which is striking considering the strong position of English in other domains in Flanders. Crossing usage-based approaches to language acquisition and language socialization research, we scrutinize our corpus of dinner table conversations that consist of over 25,000 utterances, complemented by sociolinguistic interviews with the caregivers of each family. After mining our corpus for English insertions, we present a quantitative exploration that reveals how less than 1% of the utterances per family contain English insertions. Assessing whether this result can be interpreted as parents' attempts to socialize their children towards Dutch, and what this reveals about their language regards, we analyze selected fragments through multimodal discourse analysis. After discussing possible implications of these findings for the position of English in Flanders, we additionally discuss them against the theoretical background of developmental sociolinguistics, and against the methodological background of working with small samples and negative evidence in a usage-based approach (see e.g. negative entrenchment.

Keywords: child-directed speech, socialization, language contact, Dutch, negative evidence

1 Introduction

In Flanders, as in the rest of Western Europe, English is the ultimate *lingua franca*, and a prime source for contact-induced variation and change (see

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Zenner et al. 2012, Zenner et al. 2013 for research in the Flemish context, and compare e.g.; Jenkins et al. 2018; Gerritsen et al. 2007 for a European perspective). Flemish primary school children (whose L1 is Dutch) are also notably subject to the English language: research by De Wilde, Brysbaert and Eyckmans (2018, and see; De Wilde and Eyckmans 2017 for outcomes of their pilot study) reveals that Flemish 11-year olds have implicitly acquired a substantial amount of English vocabulary prior to the start of English tuition in schools. In their study, De Wilde et al. measured English proficiency levels for 867 children from 38 different classes in the final year of primary school, viz. one to two years before the start of L2 English classroom instruction. Children were subject to four tests (measuring receptive vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing). For the receptive vocabulary test, a median score of 78 out of 120 test items was achieved across the participants, with 33 words from the standard vocabulary test acquired by more than 90% of the children.

Following a usage-based approach to language acquisition (Langacker 1987; Tomasello 2003) and contact linguistics (Backus 2014; Zenner et al. forthcoming), this knowledge of English should be derived from language use, constructed bottom-up through the interaction of input and cognition. Hence, a standing question is where this input for these young Flemish learners comes from. In this respect, this paper specifically studies the role of primary caretakers in children's acquisition of the English language in Flanders. Focusing on the social function of child-directed speech in preschool children (Roberts and Labov 1995; Kerswill and Williams 2005; Foulkes et al. 2005; Smith et al. 2007, 2013; Chevrot et al. 2011), our analysis will not only provide us with an empirical answer to the question whether the studied Flemish caregivers provide their young children with English input, it will as such also provide us with a map of caregivers' language regards concerning the position of English and Dutch in Flanders (Preston 2013). Indeed, caregivers' "[c]ultural knowledge guides their selection of form in their speech as caregivers to their young children" (Preston 2013: 96) as they aim to socialize their children towards the community norms of language and language variation they perceive to be important (Ochs and Schieffelin 1984). Caregiver speech can as such be considered a locus for deriving language regards (see also Zenner and Van De Mieroop forthcoming).

Against this background, this paper studies the occurrence of English insertions[1] in a corpus of over 25,000 utterances from dinner table conversations in

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1 As will be motivated in Section 4, no explicit distinction is made between borrowing and codeswitching in this synchronous analysis.

eight Flemish families, complemented with analyses of relevant fragments from sociolinguistic interviews with the primary caregivers in the families. The specificities of the data collection will be presented in Section 3, after which Section 4 proceeds to a quantitative exploration of the amount of English insertions found in the data, revealing that no more than 1% of the utterances per family contain English insertions. Through multimodal discourse analysis, which combines multimodal conversation analysis (see e.g. Mondada 2016) and discourse analysis (see e.g. Holmes et al. 2011), Section 5 will address two questions resulting from the low number of English in the dinner table interactions. The first question is why we find so little English insertions, contrasting two hypotheses: (1) parents explicitly socialize their children towards the use of Dutch, away from English (see Ochs and Schieffelin 2014); and (2) English-prone semantic/pragmatic domains (e.g. IT, swearing; see Zenner et al. 2013; Dewaele 2016, 2017) are not typically present in dinner table conversations, meaning that parents simply have little opportunity to include English insertions in their child-directed speech. The second question is where children pick up on English, if not in the family home. Here we will briefly discuss the role of (1) secondary socialization in school contexts; and (2) the contested influence of the media on language variation and change (see Tagliamonte 2014). The final section will then discuss these findings against the theoretical background of the role of child-directed speech in developmental sociolinguistics (Smith et al. 2007; De Vogelaer and Katerbow 2017; Van De Mieroop et al. 2016). Additionally, we will focus on the methodological issue of dealing with negative evidence in a usage-based approach (see e.g. the notion of negative entrenchment; Stefanowitsch 2008), and we will explore the potential implications of our findings for the position of English in Flanders and chart the steps needed in future research to further corroborate our findings. To ensure an optimal understanding of what follows, Section 2 will firstly present the reader with a basic introduction to the English-Dutch contact setting.

2 A note on English-Dutch contact

Having more than one national variety, Dutch can be classified as a pluricentric language (Clyne 1992; Geeraerts and Van de Velde 2013). Mostly disregarding the use of English in Netherlandic Dutch, this paper studies the use of English insertions in child-directed speech in Belgian Dutch, the national variety of Dutch spoken in Flanders, the northern part of Belgium. The other official languages in Belgium are French (spoken in the South of the country)

and German (geographically limited to a small area in the East). This multilingual nature of Belgium led to a relatively complex standardization process for Belgian Dutch: the strong presence of French in the public sphere caused a strong delay in the standardization of Belgian Dutch (Geeraerts and Grondelaers 2000). When standardization eventually took place, the decision was made to adopt the then long established Netherlandic Dutch norm, aiming for a unified Standard Dutch (Geeraerts 2003). Strong language planning efforts were made to encourage the Belgian Dutch speakers to acquire this exogenous norm, leading to what some would call a deep "standard language ideology" (Delarue 2013). For one thing, this ideology involved a strong rejection of French loanwords, as the proportion of French in the Standard (Netherlandic) Dutch lexicon was far lower than in the Belgian Dutch dialects: "the struggle for recognition of Dutch as the official language in Belgium often materialized as a competition with the French standard" (Geeraerts and Grondelaers 2000: 53). This negative attitude towards French was further fueled by the national political debate on the language border, which Flemish nationalists wanted fixed as a means to prevent French from spreading out on Flemish territory. One standing question is whether this negative attitude towards French spread out to other foreign languages.

So far, there are no clear indications for this scenario. Particularly the incidence of English insertions and the spread of English as a *lingua franca* is highly similar in Belgian Dutch and Netherlandic Dutch, as is demonstrated for specific domains such as product advertising (Gerritsen et al. 2007)[2], job advertising (Zenner et al. 2013) and newspaper language (Zenner et al. 2012), and for specific semantic fields such as swearwords and expressive language (Van Sterkenburg 2000; Zenner et al. 2014, Zenner et al. 2017b). Moreover, De Decker and Vandekerckhove (2012) discuss the penetration of English in the computer-mediated communication of Belgian Dutch teenagers, showing how more than 13% of all utterances contain at least one English insertion.

One exception, where the penetration of the English language is notably different in Flanders and the Netherlands, is education. For higher education, the ranking of European countries according to the amount of English-taught programs by Wächter and Maiworm (2014) puts the Netherlands in first and Belgium only in seventeenth position. This perhaps surprisingly low rank for

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2 For some of the comparisons made in Gerritsen et al. (2007), significant differences between Dutch-speaking Belgium and the Netherlands were attested, but then in the sense that *more* English was used in Belgian Dutch product advertising than in Netherlandic Dutch advertising.

Belgian higher education results from the strict laws and regulations concerning the use of foreign languages in higher education ensuing the revolution of the 1960s, where students marched the streets of Leuven to protest against the use of French at Leuven university. Turning to foreign language tuition in primary and secondary school, we again see a less prominent position of English in Flanders, again related to French. Where English is the first foreign language offered in the Netherlands (as of primary school), it is French that takes this position in Flanders, starting in the fifth year of primary school (for children at the age of ten). English is typically only offered in Flanders as of the second year of secondary school (for children at the age of thirteen). Nevertheless, as was discussed in the introduction, primary school children have incidentally already acquired a substantial amount of English vocabulary before the start of EFL in school contexts (De Wilde and Ecykmans 2017; De Wilde et al. 2018).

   This paper aims to scrutinize the role of the family home in this incidental acquisition of the English language. Three research questions are put forward: (RQ1) how frequently do we find English insertions in Flemish parents' caregiver speech; (RQ2) how can we explain the answer to RQ 1? For RQ2, we focus explicitly on the extent to which Flemish caregivers socialize their children towards the use of English insertions in Dutch and what this can reveal about their language regards (Preston 2013), further exploring how – if not in the family home – children might be socialized towards using English insertions (RQ3). In the next section, we present the data collected for this endeavor.

3 Data

Our analysis of the use of English in Flemish households with young children is based on two types of data collected for eight families.[3] First, we obtained authentic interactions at the dinner table for each family. In order to avoid traditional 'observer's paradox' issues as much as possible, we work with self-recordings: the primary caregivers of each family were asked to set up a camera (typically smartphone cameras) during dinner table conversations, recording a minimal of four and a maximum of six hours of data in a two-week period.

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3 These families are selected from a larger database of dinner table interactions in Flemish households, see Van De Mieroop et al. (2016) and Zenner and Van De Mieroop (forthcoming).

Parents were told the data would be used for research on language acquisition in young Flemish children, which means that they were not aware of the fact that we were primarily interested in their own language use. Extensive debriefing was organized after the recordings took place, at which point parents were informed of our research design and were also interviewed. During these sociolinguistic interviews, open-ended questions were used to gauge caregivers' language regards on the Flemish linguascape in general, without specifically targeting the position of English in Flanders.[4]

The choice for dinner table conversations[5] was not only guided by the practical benefit that during these interactions family members are gathered at the same place in the house for a relatively lengthy period, but also by the interactional wealth seen in this discursive context. Particularly, given "the built-in tension between dinner as an activity and dinner as a social, conversational event" (Blum-Kulka 1997: 35), different frames ('layers of talk') can be distinguished in the discourse. Typically, a transactional frame relating to "the instrumental business talk of having dinner" is "superimposed by other, more open-ended, conversational layers of talk", which can be referred to as the relational frame (Blum-Kulka 1997: 9).

In terms of the socio-demographics of the eight families, as many features as possible were kept stable. First, all parents live in the Brabantic dialect area and have done so at least since moving in together. Second, all parents are between 31 and 39 years old. Third, all children in the family are seven or younger (mean age 3;8), which means that we focus on families with children who have not completed their early acquisition process. Former research has revealed that this is the period by excellence in which parents are focused on presenting children with what they consider the 'best' varieties (typically the standard language) (Roberts and Labov 1995; Kerswill and Williams 2005; Foulkes et al. 2005; Smith et al. 2007, 2013; Chevrot et al. 2011), and hence the period by excellence where language regards are steering caregiver input (compare Preston 2013).

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4 There are two reasons why rather general questions were asked in the interviews. (1) The data discussed in this paper result from a project not specifically addressing the use of English in Flemish homes, but more broadly targeting language variation and caregiver language regards in Flanders. Hence, the questions addressed in the interviews were typically quite broad. (2) We wanted to steer parents as little as possible, to also gauge which topics they themselves considered sufficiently salient to address in a conversation on caregiver speech. As we will see below, quite a number of comments target the influence of English on Dutch.

5 Even though the vast majority of the data consists of interactions while the family members have dinner, sometimes occasional pre- or post-dinner activities are also recorded (see e.g. extract 4).

Table 1 provides an overview of the families included in our study. All utterances were transcribed using the CHAT-conventions of the CHILDES project. For the multimodal discursive analysis presented in this paper, the Jeffersonian

Table 1: Overview of collected data.

Family	Speakers	Utterances	Total utterances
Family 1	Mother (age 34)	1560	4356
	Father (age 36)	998	
	Child1 (boy; age 4)	1300	
	Child2 (boy; age 2)	498	
Family 2	Mother (age 32)	1193	3035
	Father (age 31)	720	
	Child1 (girl; age 4)	765	
	Child2 (girl; age 2)	357	
Family 3	Mother (age 34)	663	2673
	Father (age 34)	899	
	Child1 (boy; age 6)	219	
	Child2 (boy; age 4)	485	
	Child3 (boy; age 3)	407	
Family 4	Mother (age 33)	1213	3156
	Father (age 33)	939	
	Child1 (girl; age 3)	950	
	Child2 (girl; age 1)	54	
Family 5	Mother (age 35)	952	3247
	Father (age 39)	951	
	Child1 (boy; age 7)	349	
	Child2 (boy; age 5)	499	
	Child3 (boy; age 4)	496	
	Child4 (boy; age 1)	0	
Family 6	Mother (age 35)	940	1906
	Father (age 32)	299	
	Child1 (boy; age 3)	667	
	Child2 (boy; age 0;6)	0	
Family 7	Mother (age 34)	1346	3462
	Father (age 38)	940	
	Child1 (girl; age 6)	1176	
Family 8	Mother (age 32)	1031	3571
	Father (age 36)	880	
	Child1 (girl; age 6)	772	
	Child2 (girl; age 5)	888	
	TOTAL		25,406

transcription system (Jefferson 2004) was used, complemented with symbols to code the multimodal details as developed by Mondada (no date). Additionally, bold font will be used to highlight English insertions. The fragments from the sociolinguistic interviews discussed in this paper will all be presented in English translation.

4 Quantitative exploration

As a first step in our analysis, we mine the corpus for English insertions. We use the word "insertion" here, as we make no explicit distinction between borrowing and codeswitching in this synchronous analysis, following Backus (2014) and Matras (2009: 113–114)'s conception of borrowing and codeswitching as two outer poles on a continuum (and see Zenner and Van De Mieroop 2017). In practice, however, nearly all insertions found in our corpus would classify as loanwords or loan phrases in more traditional approaches.

Even when avoiding the distinction between loanword and switch, a decision has to be made on what we consider to be "English". As noted in the introduction, we follow Preston (2013: 96) that caregivers are guided by cultural knowledge and beliefs in their selection of linguistic variants. This statement can be interpreted in two ways, one leading to a rather inclusive definition of "English", one leading to a more restrictive definition. In a first interpretation, we should only include items that would be recognized by caregivers as "English": ''the non-Dutch character of a word can only exert influence on the language user's behavior when the expression at issue is identifiable as a non-Dutch word'' (Geeraerts and Grondelaers 2000: 56). Following this conviction, we need a proxy of what makes language users identify a word as English, disregarding its degree of conventionalization or entrenchment (see in this respect also Backus and Verschik 2012). To this end, we rely on two parameters. First, we consider words or phrases as structurally recognizable as English when ''they largely retain their English graphemic–phonemic correspondence'' (Onysko 2007: 10): the English loanword *film* is not considered, as a naïve Dutch pronunciation is very close to English/fɪlm/, where *cornflakes* is retained as an English insertion: mapping the graphemes to the phonemes following a naïve Dutch pronunciation would lead to something like/ˈkɔrnflɑːkəs/. Second, we include those items that contain non-Dutch chargrams (sequences of n characters that occur within words) (see Andersen 2005, Andersen 2012), such as the word-initial *c* in *cornflakes*. In this more inclusive interpretation, unclear cases such as *pyjama* (an English

loan according to lexicography) were given the benefit of the doubt and were included as English insertions in the analyses.[6] Table 2 contains an overview of the amount of identified English insertions per family for three types of utterances: caregivers' child-directed speech, caregivers' adult-directed speech and children's utterances. Additionally, the table contains the total number of types of English insertions in the family as a whole, complemented with the top 3 English types (only including those types with a token frequency over 1).

With this first approach, we perhaps cast too wide a net, incorporating highly conventionalized "unavoidable" loanwords. In a second interpretation of Preston's statement, we instead more explicitly emphasize the fact that caregivers make a *selection* of forms through their cultural knowledge: if selection is what we are studying, our definition of English insertions needs to be narrowed down further, only including those English insertions that can be "avoided" by the speaker (referred to as "non-catachrestic loanwords" by Onysko and Winter-Froemel 2011, and see; Zenner et al. 2012 on the importance of an onomasiological approach in a usage-based study of lexical borrowing). This means that English insertions such as *cornflakes* are included, as the alternative lexicalization *ontbijtgranen* exists. Insertions such as *computer* are excluded, as no alternative can be used instead. To determine which insertions have an alternative available, a lexicographical approach was followed, looking for synonyms in two descriptive dictionaries of Dutch (see Zenner et al. 2012) and via Google Translate.[7] Table 3 contains the results for this more restrictive analysis, following the same three-way distinction as used for Table 2.

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6 Of course, these diagnostic criteria should be considered as proxies of the underlying variable "perceived Englishness of the insertion". We have no perception data available for the parents in our dataset concerning the words classified as English insertion in our approach. A clear recommendation for future research is to take speaker judgements into account for making this type of classification.

7 The comment listed in footnote 6 equally holds here. This assessment concerning the potential occurrence of alternative lexicalizations was made at the community level, not at the level of individual parents' language use. This forms a potential drawback to our study, as we cannot rest assured that the parents in our database are familiar with these alternatives. At the same time, this does not greatly jeopardize our results. If anything, items still left in the "restricted" count in Table 3 might even also have to be excluded, which would only entail even lower numbers of English insertions in our data, further supporting the conclusion that only very low numbers of English insertions can be found in the caregiver speech under scrutiny.

Table 2: Exploration of the use of English insertions following an inclusive approach.

Family	CDS (child-directed speech)			ADS (adult-directed speech)			children's utterances			English types overall	top 3 English types (token frequency > 1)
	Eng	total	%	Eng	total	%	Eng	total	%		
F1	61	2177	2.80%	8	381	2.10%	59	1798	3.28%	32	ketchup (n=29); sandwich (n=14); cool (n=12)
F2	31	1515	2.05%	6	398	1.51%	21	1122	1.87%	19	pyjama (n=10); cornflakes (n=9); pudding (n=9)
F3	28	1048	2.67%	14	514	2.72%	11	1111	0.99%	32	ketchup (n=7); fishstick (n=7); Mickey Mouse (n=5)
F4	23	1548	1.49%	8	604	1.32%	17	1004	1.69%	20	baby (n=14); pudding (n=6); sorry (n=5)
F5	29	1418	2.05%	12	485	2.47%	45	1344	3.35%	24	ketchup (n=32); baby (n=16); Mega Mindy (n=11)
F6	27	903	2.99%	14	336	4.17%	10	667	1.50%	24	cornflakes (n=9); computer (n=7); baby (n=5)
F7	8	918	0.87%	26	1368	1.90%	28	1176	2.38%	27	cocktailsaus (n=10); sorry (n=9); baby (n=6)
F8	12	1438	0.83%	9	473	1.90%	11	1660	0.66%	21	volleybal (n=6); chips (n=3); mail (n=3)

Table 3: Exploration of the use of English insertions following restrictive approach.

Family	CDS (child-directed speech)			ADS (adult-directed speech)			children's utterances			English types overall	top 3 English types (token frequency > 1)
	Eng	total	%	Eng	total	%	Eng	total	%		
F1	11	2177	0.51%	1	381	0.26%	19	1798	1.06%	10	cool (n=12); goal (n=4); toast (n=4)
F2	11	1515	0.73%	3	398	0.75%	3	1122	0.27%	7	cornflakes (n=9); buggy (n=2); living (n=2)
F3	4	1048	0.38%	7	514	1.36%	2	1111	0.18%	12	racen (n=2)
F4	9	1548	0.58%	4	604	0.66%	1	1004	0.10%	7	sorry (n=5); buggy (n=2)
F5	10	1418	0.71%	5	485	1.03%	5	1344	0.37%	11	teamwork (n=7); soft (n=5); body (n=3)
F6	9	903	1.00%	4	336	1.19%	6	667	0.90%	7	cornflakes (n=9); carwash (n=5)
F7	2	918	0.22%	11	1368	0.80%	12	1176	1.02%	11	sorry (n=9); fulltime (n=5); please (n=3)
F8	1	1438	0.07%	0	473	0.00%	1	1660	0.06%	2	NA

Both tables reveal that despite the obvious penetration of the English language in various domains of "adult life" in Flanders (with e.g. over 50% of job ad titles containing English insertions; Zenner et al. 2013, and see Section 2), English at the dinner table in Flemish family homes is virtually absent. In all three utterance types, typically no more than 1% of the utterances in Flemish households contain English insertions when following the more restrictive approach (Table 3). For our albeit limited database, the answer to our first research question (concerning the frequency of English insertions in Flemish caregiver speech) is "very low".

Given these low numbers, any further quantitative variationist analysis would be relatively pointless, even when resorting to inferential statistical techniques tailored to these types of "small n, large p"-issues (see e.g. Tagliamonte and Baayen 2012). Instead, multimodal discursive analyses will be presented in the next section, to help us address two questions that emerge from this quantitative exploration.

5 Discursive analyses

This section addresses research questions (2) and (3), which ensue from our findings in the previous section. First of all, we scrutinized the observational data as well as the sociolinguistic interviews to answer the question *why* there is no English in families' language use at the dinnertable (RQ2). In addressing this question, we start off from the basic insight that children might not be familiar with English words, or that parents might not expect them to be familiar with them. Crucially, this point can lead to two outcomes. Children learn through caregiver input, so of course caregiver input will contain elements the caregiver knows the child is not familiar with (yet). Following a socialization perspective (see Ochs and Schieffelin 2014; Preston 2013), caregivers will prioritize items, codes and varieties they feel their child should acquire. If parents consider English as a crucial language for communication in later life, and as a crucial source domain for insertions (borrowing and switching) with positive connotations (social meaning), then parents would help children acquire this language or socialize them to use such insertions *despite* the fact that the children might not be familiar with them. This is not

what we find in our data: parents barely use English insertions when addressing their children. Two possible explanations will be discussed: (1) parents explicitly socialize their children towards the use of Dutch, away from English; (2) English-prone semantic and discursive domains (e.g. IT, swearing; see Zenner et al. 2017b; Dewaele 2016, Dewaele 2017; see Section 2) are simply not typically part of dinner table conversations, and hence the link to ideology and socialization needs to be relaxed. Secondly, answering RQ3, we look for hints in our data that help account for the fact that children do acquire English before tuition in school contexts starts (De Wilde and Eyckman's 2017), in spite of it being absent in our family contexts. We in turn discuss (1) the role of secondary socialization in school contexts; (2) the contested influence of the media on language variation and change (see Tagliamonte 2014).

Both research questions will be tackled by drawing on multimodal discourse analysis, which aims to take into account the sequential and discursive features of the verbal part of the interaction, as well as the non-verbal features. As such, a holistic understanding of the verbal and the non-verbal processes of meaning-making is aimed for, maximally accounting for the role of the individual in language variation and change.

5.1 Question 1: What explains the near-absence of English in the Flemish family home?

Analyzing the data qualitatively firstly reveals how parents do intend to socialize the children towards using Dutch. A very clear case in point are the parents in Family 3, whose language use reflects their ideological perspective on the role of English in Flemish society. When studying the actual language use in this family, we noticed that in this family, English is very particularly used as a secret code from which children are excluded. Whenever information that needs to be withheld from the children is being transferred from one parent to the other, the parents briefly switch to English (cf. the directive function of codeswitching as discussed in Appel and Muysken 1987). We can observe an example of this in the following extract, which occurs at the end of the dinner activity.

Extract 1a: the end of a dinner activity in family 3

```
1      FAT           cha-
2      CH2           rlie
3      FAT           #ja
                      yes
       ch3           #moves chair away from the table % and leaves-->
       fig                                              %fig 1
```



```
CH1       FAT          CH3 MOT
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Figure 1: child 3 starts moving his chair away from the table (in the right hand corner of the screenshot)

```
4      CH2           en naar de tandjes=
                      and to the little teeth=
5      FAT           µ=mag hij al weg mama=
                      =can he go away already mommy=
       fat           µgrabs ch3's chair with his hand-->
6      CH2           =($ [            ) ook al        ge]weest#=
                     =(   [            )also already be]en
       ch3 mot          $ch3 and mot give each other a kiss-->
       ch3                                                -->#
7      FAT              [hij heeft toch (  ) opgegete (  )]
                       [he has nevertheless (    ) finished (  )]
8      FAT    →        =there are some euh straw%berries he$
                       =there are some erm strawberries hey
       ch3 mot                                           -->$
       fig                           %fig 2
```



```
CH1       FAT          CH3-MOT
```
Figure 2: father holds child 3's chair and child 3 and mother give each other a kiss (in the right hand corner of the screenshot)

During a conversation about the afternoon's activities, child 3 starts pushing his chair away from the table (see Figure 1), thus wordlessly initiating his removal from the dinner activity. This non-verbal activity prompts the father to probe for the mother's permission of child 3's unsolicited activity (line 5: 'can he go away already mommy'). At the same time, the father grabs the child's chair (see Figure 2), thus anticipating on a potential negative answer by the mother. However, the mother at that point gazes at the child as the latter moves towards her and gives her a kiss (see Figure 2). Parallel with this, the father answers his own question of line 5 by stating that the child has 'nevertheless finished' his meal sufficiently (line 7), thus implicitly providing an approval of child 3's removal from the table.

Subsequently, he initiates another, yet related topic, namely that there is still a potential dessert. Crucially, this utterance is formulated in English (line 8: 'there are some strawberries'). Even though it is formulated as a factual statement, the addition of the typically Flemish tag 'he', which tends to function as a response invitation, shows that the utterance should be understood as a first pair part of a sequence, rather than a mere statement that does not require a response. So by means of this utterance in English followed by a tag, the father invites the mother – and due to the codeswitch to English, the mother *only* – to respond.

This is logical for a number of reasons: first, if there are no strawberries, it is not possible to produce them for dessert. This is unproblematic from an adult's perspective, yet when children merely hear the word 'strawberries', they may start getting their hopes up and may cause drama when it turns out there are no strawberries after all. So thanks to the use of English as a secret language here, the father avoids this potential dramatic result. Secondly, next to probing for the presence or absence of strawberries, this utterance also implicitly probes for the mother's approval for strawberries as dessert, or any dessert at all. Again, this is a topic that, once mentioned, may cause a high involvement from the children, who tend to perceive desserts as a matter of life and death. Thus, this switch to English allows for a preliminary inter-adult discussion of this matter, while preventing potential drama in several ways. Finally, it may also be a reason to prevent child 3 from leaving the table, as he may be asked to linger a while longer in his seat while waiting for dessert, which would be enforced easily due the father's hand on child 3's chair (see Figure 2).

Importantly, the mother has thus far not produced any reaction to the father's utterances. The video footage clearly shows that she has been gazing at and kissing child 3 during the father's talk, thus marking her interactional unavailability to the father. Yet, this changes in line 10, when

she produces the acknowledgment token 'hmm::', which indicates some form of agreement with the father's suggested course of action in terms of desserts, but which is vague as to which of the potential aspects of 'strawberries for dessert' may have implications for child 3's removal from the table.

Yet, in the meantime, child 2's incessant talk (from line 2 onwards), grows more insistent, as the explicit terms of address oriented at the father ('daddy') in the initial lines of the following extract indicate.

Extract 1b: the end of a dinner activity in family 3

```
9     CH2        papa
                 daddy
10    MOT        hmm::µ
      fat           -->µ
11    CH2        papa
                 daddy
12    FAT        ja
                 yes
13    CH2        (we zijn +ook naar den ten%nis geweest (       ))+
                 (we have also been to the tennis (court) (    ))
      ch1              +gets up and leaves the table          +
      fig                           %fig 3
```



```
CH1              FAT              MOT
```
Figure 3: child 1 gets up and starts leaving the table (in the left hand corner of the screenshot)

In line 12, the father finally answers these calls for attention ('yes'), after which child 2 obtains the floor. However, meanwhile, child 1 mirrors child 3's earlier activity: he starts leaving the table without having obtained explicit permission from his parents (see Figure 3). In contrast with child 3 however, his plate has not been emptied sufficiently, as the father's instruction to finish the vegetables (line 14) in the following extract indicates.

Extract 1c: the end of a dinner activity in family 3 (pseudonym: CH1 = Johnny)

```
14    FAT          johnny ete gij nog twee (    ) komkommer
                   johnny do you still eat two (    ) cucumbers
15    CH1          hm*
      ch1            *shakes head no-->
16    FAT          asjeblieft
                   please
17    CH1          hmm*%
      ch1          -->*shakes head no, crosses arms and walks away-->
      fig               %fig 4
```
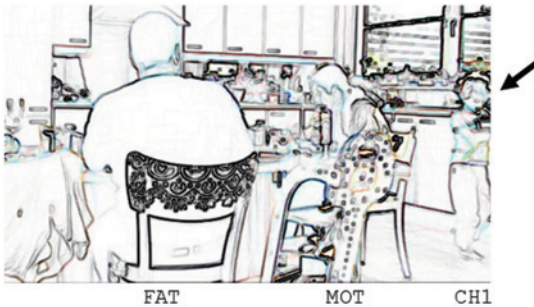


```
          FAT              MOT          CH1
```
Figure 4: child 1 crosses his arms and walks away (in the right hand
corner of the screenshot)

```
18    FAT          dan krijgde geen aardbeien
                   then you don't get any strawberries
19                 (.)*
      ch1          -->*starts walking back to his chair-->>>
20    FAT          ge eet nog twee van die komkommers
                   you still eat two of those cucumbers
21                 en geeft da ander dan maar aan mij
                   and give that other one then yet to me
```

From line 15 onwards, a negotiation regarding this food item starts, which the father seems to be losing as child 1 removes himself further and further from the table, while marking his resistance increasingly explicitly, as the shaking of his head is gradually complemented by the crossing of his arms (see Figure 4). Importantly, the turning point in this discussion is line 18, where the father states that in case of further resistance, the child will not get any strawberries. Hence, the factual statement that the father uttered before in English (see line 8) is now being recycled as an argument to blackmail the child into finishing some of his vegetables before leaving the table, this time in Dutch. This turns out to be

successful, as the child at once starts returning to the table (see line 19) and the negotiation continues (lines 20–21). Thus, the use of English in line 8, however brief it was and despite the vague response by the mother, turns out to be useful almost immediately, as it is recycled only 10 lines afterwards, when it is used as a turning point argument in the food negotiation with child 1.

Thus, in this fragment, we observed a typical family dinner table interaction, which can be characterized as a multi-activity consisting of various frames which are subsequently, but sometimes also simultaneously, in operation (see also Zenner and Van De Mieroop forthcoming, and see Section 3). While finishing their own meals and maintaining a social conversation with their fellow dinner participants (in particular with child 2 in this case), the parents also monitor the children's progress with the diverse food items on their plates, while at the same time strategically and collaboratively deciding on the course of action regarding the next step in the dinner activity, viz., dessert. So next to it being characterized by respectively a social/relational frame and a transactional frame that includes all the dinner participants (Van De Mieroop et al. 2016), this dinner activity also has a strategic activity-planning frame which is an exclusively inter-adult frame. In this case, it concerns dessert, but one may imagine that also potential plans for daytrips or playdates can be strategically discussed in the co-presence of children in this way (as is also seen in other interactions in this family). Moreover, also other types of exclusively inter-adult frames – such as the discussion of certain sensitive topics – may be uttered by using English. This is explicitly acknowledged by the father during the sociolinguistic interview, who says:

> '*yes sometime- sometimes we switch to French or English erm when we want to say something that the children are not allowed to- where they are present but that they actually are not allowed to understand*'

Importantly, what this interaction clearly shows, is that the children perfectly understand that this frame is not oriented at them. This is clear not only because none of the children respond to the father's utterance, but also because of the discussion with child 1. In this negotiation, the 'strawberries for dessert'-argument is clearly a new element, as it prompts the child to alter his course of action significantly (viz., he returns to the table).

Interestingly, this use of English as a code of exclusion for the children is likely to reflect the mother's ideological perspective on Dutch as the only permissible language for communication in Flanders, as she articulates in the sociolinguistics interview. She initiates the topic of English usage in Flanders

herself when answering a more general question about the language varieties she uses, as we can see in the following fragment:

'IE: [...] I try as much as possible [...] to avoid English [...]
IR: and why do you do that
IE: e:::::rm because I think that is important that Dutch is indeed preserved hey because much so much- so it is very much flooded by English'

As we can see, when probed for the reason behind her attempts to avoid English, the mother refers to more general discourses of Dutch being threatened by English and to the metaphor of English 'flooding' other languages. So this shows the mother's language regard vis-à-vis English in Flanders, which also explains this family's use of English as a non-permissible code for the children.

An important note is that this use of English as a secret code only occurs in one of our eight families. Overall, Tables 2 and 3 reveal highly similar usage of English in child-directed or adult-directed speech at the Flemish dinner table; hence there might be something particular to family interactions that accounts for the infrequency of English insertions in our corpus and that may be less related to socialization or parent ideology. This brings us to the second part of our answer to Question 1: we argue that the frames that tend to be found in family interactions typically do not contain semantic fields that are prone to elicit a lot of English. Topics that easily lend themselves to using a lot of English, such as IT-related discussions (see Zenner et al. 2013), hardly ever occur when parents have dinner with small children. This is because such children require a lot of attention in the eating-related transactional frame, as is also seen in the abundance of food-related items in the list of most frequent types of English insertions in Tables 2 and 3. This leaves relatively limited space for extensive adult-to-adult speech within the social/relational frame. The latter frame, when it occurs, tends to be filled with conversations *with* the children focusing on their experiences which – at the ages of the children in our database – rarely revolve around English-prone semantic fields (though see Section 5.2 concerning the role of the media). As a result, we only see a few instances of English occurring in the relatively rare snippets of social/relational adult-to-adult speech. An example can be seen in the following fragment, in which the children are quietly eating, leaving interactional space for an inter-adult discussion about the type of smartphone the mother might be buying. As this is an English-prone semantic domain, we see an exceptional amount of English occurring in this fragment, although it concerns – in all but two instances (line 14: *one-way* – compare with the Dutch similar alternative *tweeweg* in line 7 – and line 18: *default*) – the type of 'necessary' loanwords not included in Table 3.

Extract 2: inter-adult smartphone discussion during dinner in family 6

```
1    FAT        van google (     ) installeren op uwe computer
                install of google (     ) on your computer
2    MOT        ↑mm
3    FAT        en da kijkt lokaal in uwen outlook (.)
                and that looks locally in your outlook (.)
4               en dan moete uw emailadres en uw paswoord
                and then you have to give your email address and
5               geven van gmail en dan duwt dieje da derin
                your password of gmail and then it pushes that in
6    MOT        ↑mm
7    FAT        ge kunt kiezen ge kunt euh tweeweg (.)
                you can choose you can erm two-way (.)
8               synchroniseren
                synchronize (it)
9    MOT        ↑hmhm
10   FAT        dat den gmail ook in uwen outlook (.)
                that the gmail also in your outlook (.)
11   MOT        ↓mm=
12   FAT        =mor da wilde ni (.)
                =but you don't want that (.)
13   MOT        ↓neuh
                ↓no
14   FAT        want das privé (.) dus one-way vanuit outlook
                because that's private (.) so one-way from outlook
15              nor gmail
                to gmail
16   MOT        ↑ja (.) mm
                ↑yes (.) mm
17   FAT        >t enige spijtige ge kunt ni kiezen
                >the only sorry thing you cannot choose
18              in welke kalender< (.) allee (.) t is uwen default
                in which calender< (.) well (.) it is your default
19              (.) kalender
                (.) calender
20   MOT        ↓ja (.)↓ja (.)↓ja (.) o↓ké
                ↓yes (.)↓yes (.)↓yes (.) o↓kay
21   FAT        ge snapt wa'k bedoel he
                you get what i mean hey
22   MOT        ↑ja
                ↑yes
23   (7.9)
24   MOT        hoe is t jongen
                how is it going boy
25   CH1        (         )
```

Next to the striking amount of English in this interaction, this conversation is also exceptionally calm in comparison to the other dinnertable interactions in our data (see e.g. child 2's incessant attempts to obtain the floor in extract 1a–b), in the sense that there are numerous pauses (indicated by (.)) and there is a complete absence of

overlaps or interruptions. After the closure of the smartphone topic (line 22), there is even a very lengthy pause of almost 8 seconds, during which the dinner participants eat in silence. Afterwards, the mother asks her son a very topically open-ended question, thus displaying her attempt to initiate an interaction with him (line 24). In this rare interactional space available for inter-adult social talk, we immediately see a turn to a specific inter-adult domain that is prone to English (although the overall frequency of English insertions in the adult-to-adult speech in this family is still quite rare, see Tables 2 and 3). Given the technical nature of this interaction, one may additionally hypothesize that the co-present children are not actively listening as they recognize this as an inter-adult interactional frame regarding which their participation status can be described as that of an overhearer (Goffman 1981). Hence, even though English is used here, one may expect that the children's exposure to it is relatively limited due to their low-involvement status in this interaction.

Another English-prone semantic/pragmatic field that occurs at the dinner table and that comes with very clear opinions of our caregivers, is swearing (see Zenner et al. 2017b; Dewaele 2016, Dewaele 2017, and see Matras 1998 on the high borrowability of discourse markers). Although swearwords occasionally occur in the data, they are only very rarely found in utterances of the parents. In terms of socialization, parents tend to be concerned with teaching their children "good manners", which includes teaching them to refrain from swearing. This is explicitly mentioned in some of the sociolinguistic interviews, for example the father of family 3 says: *'yes of course swearwords and and things you try to avoid as much as possible'*.

Concluding our discussion of the RQ2, namely why we find so few English insertions in our data, we put forward two hypotheses, namely that (1) at least some parents explicitly socialize their children away from English towards Dutch; (2) several English-prone semantic/pragmatic domains are only marginally relevant to the frames of discourse observed in dinner table conversations – either because these domains are irrelevant (viz., IT-topics, see extract 2) for the children and thus there is limited interactional space for these discussions, or because they are considered improper for children (such as swearing). One standing question is then: where do children pick up on the English they seem to have acquired before the start of formal tuition (see De Wilde and Ecykmans 2017), if not in the context of the family home (RQ3)? As we will see in the following section, our data in this respect contains at least some clear hints.

5.2 Question 2: Where might children pick up on English terms?

First of all, there are some hints in our data that demonstrate that children pick up on English terms in school, thus through a process of secondary socialization

(Baquedano-López and Kattan 2008). It is of course hard, if not impossible, to pinpoint where a child picked up a particular term, but the case of swearwords, discussed above, proves an exception to this argument for our corpus. This is because at the family home, there is a clear lack of input of (English) swearwords given the parents' attempts, as attested in the sociolinguistic interviews, not to use swearwords in the co-presence of their children. Parents provide children with negative feedback,[8] further supporting the fact that (English) swearwords should not be used. Extract 3 illustrates this negative feedback in the parents' language use. It starts with the mother's reaction to child 1's use of the Dutch swearwords *pis* ('piss') and *kaka* ('shit') prior to this fragment.

Extract 3:   mother-son discussion of the meaning of shit in family 1[9]

```
1     MOT              vindegij da nu bel[eefd
                       do you think that is po[lite now
2     CH1                               [moeke wete wa-
                                        [mommy do you know what-
3                      wa shit: betekent
                       what shit: means
4     MOT              nee zeg het 'ns
                       no tell me
5     CH1              kaka
                       shit
6     MOT              °ah°
7     CH1              en wete wa kaka betekent
                       and do you know what shit means
8     MOT              °°zeg het 'ns°°
                       °°tell me°°
9     CH1              sh:it
10                     μ(2.1)μ
      mot              μnods μ
11    MOT              das heel slim van u
                       that is very smart of you
12                     (1.9)
13    MOT              maar da zijn nu toch geen woorden
                       but those are nevertheless no words
14                     da ge dan den helen tijd gebruikt
                       that you use the whole time
```

---

8 See e.g. Bohannon and Stanowicz (1988) for the traditional opposition between negative evidence and negative feedback in the context of syntactic and phonological acquisition, which we here apply to a language socialization context.

9 The phrase 'zeg het 'ns' (line 4 and 8) could literally be translated as *say it once*, but that translation would suggest an emphasis on only saying it one time, while the original Dutch phrase is a common way to encourage recipients to tell something in general. Hence we decided to translate this phrase slightly more loosely.

During the mother's attempt to socialize her son into the norms of polite behavior (line 1), the son overlaps with a question addressed to his mother that topicalizes the meaning of an English swearword ('do you know what *shit* means'). By means of this question, the child presents himself as more knowledgeable than his mother, upon whom he projects the role of unknowing recipient of this information. This suggests that there has been limited input of such English swearwords at the family home, as the son takes up the role of teacher here. The mother plays along, as she responds negatively and invites her son the tell her (line 4). After the response (line 5), the mother utters the news receipt marker 'ah' (Heritage 1984) which marks her change of state from unknowledgeable to knowledgeable regarding this matter. Then in the next few lines, a similar sequence unfolds, but this time the Dutch swearword *kaka*'s translation into English is topicalized. Again, this is followed by the mother's acknowledgement of the translation, this time through nodding (line 10). Finally, the sequence is closed first by an – arguably double-voiced – positive evaluation of the child's intelligence (line 11) and then by a negative evaluation of the ubiquitous use of this type of words (lines 13–14).

Thus in this sequence that is uttered in a rather ambivalent play-frame, the mother plays the part of unknowledgeable recipient of information two times, pretending not to be aware of the meaning of this swearword and at the same time orienting to them as outside of the home-domain. She persists quite long in this pretense, as it is only in lines 13–14 that she reprimands her son for using these words, thus being consistent in her role of unknowledgeable information-recipient. This interactional orientation of both participants to the swearword's meaning as 'new information' thus constructs it as not belonging to the semantic/pragmatic domains of the home, but to domains outside of the home where the child acquired this meaning and which make it thus relevant to share in the home.

This acquisition of English swearwords outside of the home is acknowledged by various parents in the sociolinguistic interviews, who tend to link their children's use of these terms to secondary socialization in school contexts. For example, when asked the broad question which incorrect words or constructions her children bring home from school, the mother of family 3 immediately replies that her son '*came home once with English swearwords*'. Also the mother of family 5 refers to this socialization in the class-context, and she even emphasizes this before and after using the swearword itself – viz., she says that one of her sons '*comes home now with- but that is class-related, with fuck you, but hey, but that is class-related*'. So many parents refer in this respect to the tension between their own language input and the input that the children receive in school contexts.

Secondly, although the sociolinguistic debate on the role of the media in language variation and change is far from closed (see Tagliamonte 2014), the data also indicate that children may also pick up English via the media, and in particular via cartoons and child-oriented TV-programs. Our corpus contains many references to figures like Mickey Mouse and Mega Mindy, as can be seen in the list of frequently occurring types in Table 2. In the next extract, we can observe a reference to the Hulk.

Extract 4: mother-son interaction while playing with play-doh in family 1

```
1     MOT              WO%::::::: i%k ben vreselijk sterk
                       WO::::::: i am terribly strong
      fig                 %fig 7    %fig 8
```



```
          CH2   CH1              MOT
      Figure 7: mother grunts
```



```
                  CH2     CH1              MOT
               Figure 8: mother talks normally
```

```
2     CH1              zo sterk als een ↑hulk
                       as strong as a ↑hulk
3     MOT              nee niet als den hulk he
                       no not as the hulk hey
4                      want ik ben wel een meisje eh
                       because i am nevertheless a girl hey
5     CH1              en ons vake wel eh
                       and our daddy is hey
```

In the first line of the extract, the mother utters a loud grunt while attempting to flatten the play-doh. As we can see in Figure 7, especially in comparison with Figure 8, she embodies this grunt, as she throws her head back and opens her mouth widely. Then she continues to explicitly comment on her strength, which she boosts (line 1: 'terribly') and prosodically emphasizes (hence the underlining in line 1). Child 1 continues this line of commenting on his mother's strength by comparing her to 'a hulk', thus initiating an English word from the semantic domain of fictional characters. The mother then refutes this on the grounds of being 'a girl' (line 4) and the child concedes in line 5 and attributes the comparison to 'a hulk' then to his father.

So we observed that in this example, it is the child who first uses English, and that he is also able to negotiate the hulk-comparison with his mother. Hence this is clearly a semantic domain to which the children have been exposed sufficiently enough to creatively make use of themselves. Of course, follow-up research is needed to further scrutinize the influence of the media on children's language acquisition (see in this respect also De Wilde et al. 2018, and see Zenner et al. 2017a). The same holds for the role of secondary socialization on the acquisition of English, particularly in the sense that more research is needed to see how and when children learn English words at school outside of formal tuition contexts. At the very least, in tackling Question 2, our corpus has supported the need for further exploration of these two research avenues.

6 Discussion and conclusion

This paper addresses three research questions concerning the use of English insertions in the dinner table discourse in eight Flemish families with children under the age of 8: (RQ1) how frequently do we find English insertions in Flemish parents' caregiver speech; (RQ2) how can we explain the answer to RQ 1, and (RQ3) if not in the family home, where do children learn to use English insertions then?

Adopting both a more inclusive and a more restrictive definition of "English", we mined a corpus of over 25,000 utterances for English insertions. Results revealed that in caregivers' child-directed speech, caregiver's adult-directed speech, and children's utterances alike, a very low number of English insertions was found (RQ1).

Through multimodal discursive analyses, two hypotheses were presented that can help explain this lack of English (RQ2). The first hypothesis fits in with research on developmental linguistics (Smith et al. 2007; De Vogelaer and Katerbow 2017; Van De Mieroop et al. 2016) and language socialization research (Ochs and Schieffelin 2014): we suggest that the lack of English insertions in the data may reflect the parents' mental conception of and attitudes towards the variants and codes they have available in their repertoire. Put differently, in not using English, they socialize their children towards the use of Dutch. Against this background, our findings could be used as a marker of the vitality of Dutch in Flanders as the language by excellence for expressing identity, restricting English at best to a tool that is convenient in specific domains such as IT and higher education (compare House 2003; Polzenhagen and Dirven 2008 for the opposition between language as identity and language as a tool in the context of

Englishization). This interpretation could also help settle the debate on the position of Flanders in Kachru's (1985) (contested, see e.g. Modiano 1999; Yano 2001) concentric circles model for the spread of English in three diaspora: where most Western European countries are typically located in the "Expanding Circle" (comprising countries where English is a foreign 'norm-dependent' language with no official status), scholars such as Booij (2001), Gerritsen and Nickerson (2004) argue for a repositioning of the Netherlands to an "in-between" status, moving the Netherlands closer to the "Outer Circle" (norm-developing countries, where typically former colonized areas are located). The arguments used by these authors can be expanded to the Flemish situation, raising the question whether Flanders can still be considered an "Expanding Circle"-country. For the Netherlands, Gerritsen et al. (2016) provide systematic arguments against this categorization, restricting the Netherlands to the "Expanding Circle" after all. Our data provides similar arguments for the "Expanding Circle"-status of Flanders, despite the predominance of English in other domains: parents still socialize their children towards the use of Dutch, and Dutch only.

This strong statement might however be oversimplifying matters for the following reasons. Even leaving aside the limited number of families in our study, it first could equally well be that parents do not use English in dinner table interactions in the family home merely because the semantic fields typically prone towards English are absent in those contexts (see discussion above), promoting secondary socialization and the media to the foreground for English input (see RQ3). In this scenario, our socialization hypothesis makes – despite the support from our interactional data and sociolinguistic interviews – far less sense. Second, we cannot ignore the problematic status of negative evidence in corpus-based research. As Glynn (2010: 13) notes: "[n]o corpus, irrespective of its size, can possibly represent a language, let alone tell us whether a given expression or use of an expression is impossible". Our corpus consists of only 25,000 utterances for eight families. Expanding on the number of utterances for the given families or studying a broader sample of families might shed quite a different light on our question (see Tomasello and Stahl 2004 on strategies for sampling spontaneous speech when studying low-frequent phenomena). This lack of "hard" negative evidence is further supported by the fact that our corpus barely provides us with instances of negative feedback: although our caregivers refrain from using English themselves ("negative evidence"), they barely explicitly correct their children' use of English (except in the context of swearing; see extract 3) ("negative feedback"). When embracing a usage-based approach this need for "hard" negative evidence however disappears. In contrast to the mentalist rule-driven accounts of language acquisition (see Marcus 1993), usage-based accounts depart from the notion of entrenchment: what is more

frequent, becomes more entrenched – and vice versa.[10] In this context, Stefanowitsch (2008) discusses the intriguing notion of "negative entrenchment", viz. the absence of particular combinations of linguistic units, which learners rely on to prevent overgeneralization errors in grammar (and see Ambridge et al. 2009, and see also; Suttle and Goldberg 2011).

As our paper does not study grammatical combinations of linguistic units but rather (the social meaning of) the absence of a particular code in the family home, our study can perhaps be considered as an attempt to introduce this idea of "negative entrenchment" into the field of Cognitive Sociolinguistics, which aims to account for linguistic variation in social settings with a cognitive explanatory framework (Geeraerts, Kristiansen and Peirsman 2010). In this shift from the acquisition of grammatical patterns to the acquisition of social meaning, the methods introduced by Stefanowitsch (2008) to study negative entrenchment can however not simply be assumed. Instead, in studying the social meaning of the absence of a code, we foreground multimodal discursive analyses as a way to study how individuals create meaning *in situ* in those rare cases where English insertions are found.

In terms of future research, our corpus has revealed some clear hints towards the parameters that help explain the fact that children do acquire English prior to EFL tuition in the classroom context, despite the near-absence of English in their family home. These hints pave the way for future research, revealing how both the media and the playground might be a relevant point of departure. As another suggestion for future research, we obviously highly recommend replications of this study with more families and denser sampling (see Tomasello and Stahl 2004), with families with older children, closer to the age range under scrutiny in the studies by De Wilde (De Wilde and Ecykmans 2017; De Wilde et al. 2018), which possibly also expand on the sociolinguistic interviews, thus gaining a more extensive insight into the parents' socialization aims in relation to English. Additionally, it might be very revealing to complement the interactional data with English proficiency tests for the different members of the family (e.g. relying on the methods used in De Wilde et al. 2018) or with perception tests gauging which items are recognized as English by caregivers. So far, we however hope to have provided a number of interesting insights into the (near) absence of English in Flemish dinner table conversations from the intersecting perspectives of developmental linguistics and language socialization research.

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10 Though see Schmid (2010)'s account on the problematic nature of the equation of frequency and entrenchment.

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Bionotes

Eline Zenner

Eline Zenner is assistant professor of Dutch proficiency at KU Leuven (Brussels), where she works on variational linguistics and contact linguistics within the context of the research group Quantitative Lexicology and Variational Linguistics (QLVL). Before this, she held a FWO fellowship, followed by an FWO postdoc. In March 2013, she defended her PhD thesis, titled "Cognitive Contact Linguistics. The macro, meso, and micro influence of English on Dutch", which has been awarded with the title of best PhD in linguistics by KANTL (2017).

Eline's main research interests pertain to the dynamic forcefield of the Dutch linguascape, with three cornerstones: (1) Eline aims to uncover the structure of the variation between Colloquial Belgian Dutch and Standard Dutch as a means to contribute to our understanding of the social meaning of these varieties; (2) in her focus on Dutch-English contact, Eline emphasizes the opportunities that ensue from cross-fertilizing usage-based Cognitive Linguistics and contact linguistics. More particularly, she pays special attention to the methodological challenges that occur when aiming to measure the impact of lexical gaps and prestige on borrowability by combining research on production, perception and attitudes; (3) in both domains, Eline has recently started up research focusing on the acquisition of social meaning by children.

Dorien Van De Mieroop

Dorien Van De Mieroop is a tenured associate professor of Dutch linguistics, proficiency and business communication at KU Leuven (Leuven), where she works in the research group Multimodality, Interaction and Discourse (MIDI). Before this, she held a post-doc position at KU Leuven (Antwerp) and a Teaching/research assistant position at the University of Antwerp (UA). She defended her PhD on identity construction in informative speeches in 2005 at UA.

Dorien's main research interests lie in the study of identity and the social meaning of language, which she studies in three different research domains. (1) Within the field of interactional sociolinguistics, she scrutinizes the local interactional contexts of the variation between Colloquial Belgian Dutch, Standard Dutch as well as other language variants as a means to understand how the social meaning of these varieties is locally negotiated. (2) Within the field of (multimodal) discourse analysis, she studies the way people construct their professional identities – and negotiate these with their other identities – in a variety of workplace-related genres, such as performance appraisal interviews, job interviews and meetings. In relation to this research domain, she spent a four month research visit at the University of Warwick, UK, with Stephanie Schnurr (2012), two short research visits at the UNC, Córdoba, Argentina with Isolda Carranza (in 2016 and 2018) thanks to a bilateral research project that she coordinated between the UNC and KU Leuven, and a two month research visit at the Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, with Janet Holmes and Meredith Marra (2018). Furthermore, she recently obtained a grant (€ 100 000) for an interdisciplinary research project (with social psychology) about the identity dilemmas of upwardly mobile migrants in relation to the workplace. (3) Within the field of linguistic narrative analysis, Dorien focuses on how people construct their identities in relation to larger societal Discourses when telling stories. In relation to this, she spent a two month research visit at King's College, London, UK, with Alexandra Georgakopoulou (2012) and several short research visits (in France, Austria and India). In 2016, she obtained a research grant (€ 203 000) for a PhD-project on World War II-narratives. She is also co-editor of the international, peer-reviewed journal *Narrative Inquiry*.

Dorien has published a co-authored book (in 2016, with Jonathan Clifton (University of Valenciennes, France)), several co-edited books (e.g. in 2017, with Stephanie Schnurr (University of Warwick, UK)) and more than 30 articles in international peer-reviewed journals such as *Journal of Pragmatics, Discourse & Society*, and *Journal of Sociolinguistics*.