

Formal grammar and bilingualism:
Language dominance, interlinguistic influence and code-switching
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Language dominance and crosslinguistic influence are two core issues in bilingual acquisition research and in research on the interaction between languages in a language contact situation. Using the tools provided by linguistic theory and experimental psycholinguistics we formulate a series of learnability questions and use spontaneous and experimental data to investigate how the differences and similarities between languages (with respect to specific formal features) shape language dominance and how those features allow us to identify the locus and directionality of crosslinguistic influence.

The specific constructions that we will analyze to answer the various learnability questions are: (i) code-switched English-Spanish Determiner Phrases and code-switched Subject-Verb sequences interpreted and produced by simultaneous and sequential bilinguals; (ii) overt and null copula 'be' in monolingual English and English-Spanish simultaneous bilingual speech; and (iii) N-N Spanish compounds with diminutives affixes interpreted and produced by adult L1 Spanish speakers and adult L1 English speakers.

Both the learnability issues and the interpretation of the data will be addressed using Turing's (1950) "imitation game" metaphor. Namely we will adapt the *Turing test*—a test of a machine's ability to exhibit intelligent behavior equivalent to, or indistinguishable from, that of a human—to the language behavior exhibited by bilinguals in the different experimental tasks.