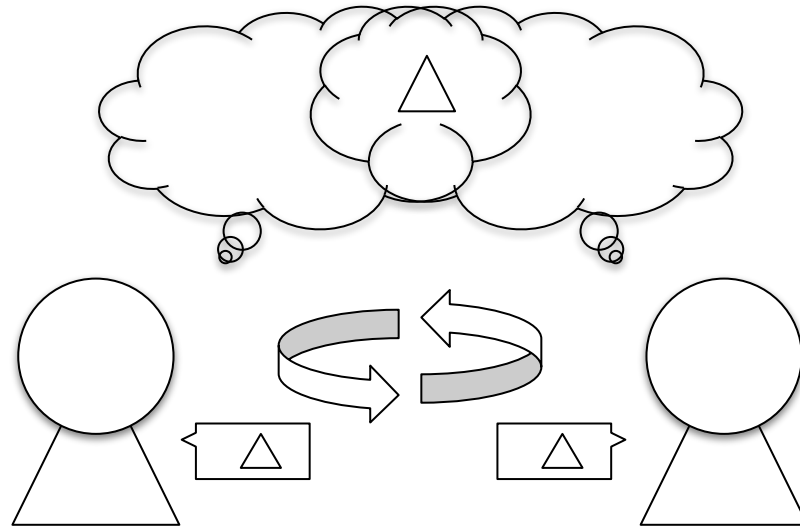# UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Construction Coordination in First and Second Language Acquisition
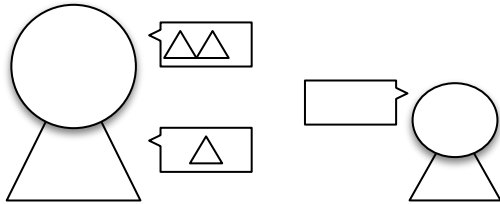
Arabella J. Sinclair & Raquel Fernández

1

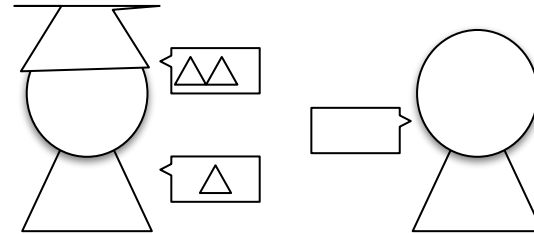# Alignment in Dialogue

Language Acquisition & Alignment

First (L1) Language Acquisition

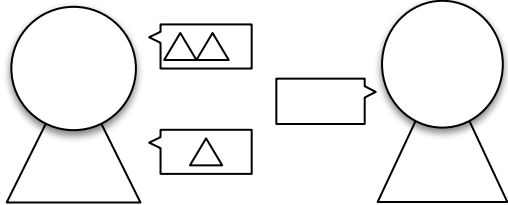**Second (L2) Language Acquisition**
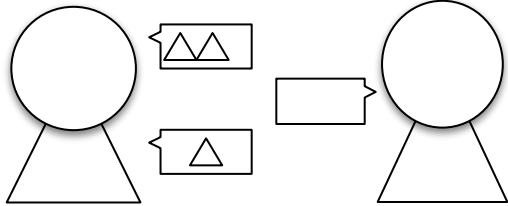
Adult

Child

Tutor

Student

Language Acquisition & Alignment

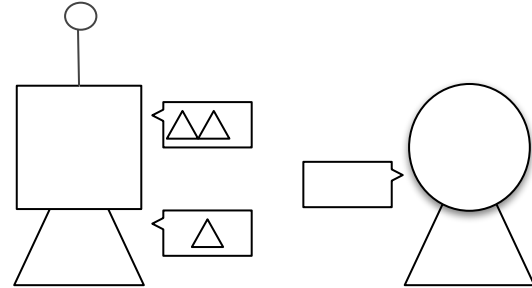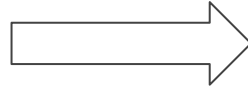**Human Language Acquisition**

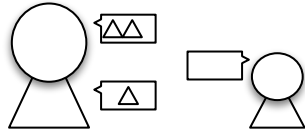# Language Acquisition & Alignment

Human Language Acquisition

Automatic Language Tutoring

Language Acquisition & Alignment

First Language (L1)

-    Mental and social immaturity of learner

Second Language (L2)

-    Self awareness of learning process
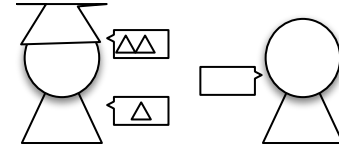-   Full knowledge of first language
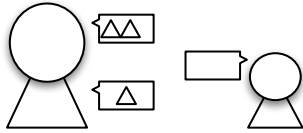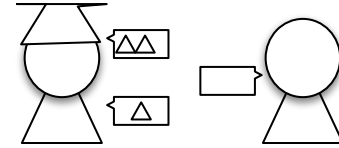
Language Acquisition & Alignment

First Language (L1)

- Mental and social immaturity of learner

Second Language (L2)

- Self awareness of learning process
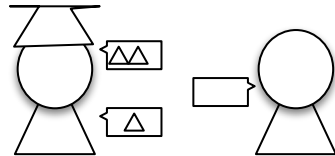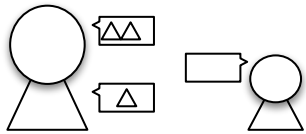- Full knowledge of first language

Both L1 and L2

- Similar learning stages, particular structures being learnt in a relatively fixed order
- Use of formulaic speech

Corpora

Child-Adult
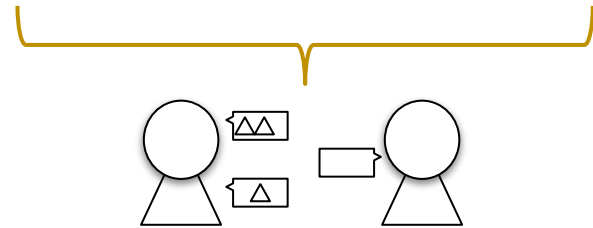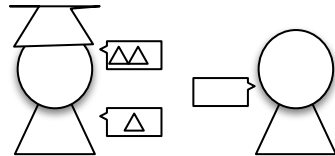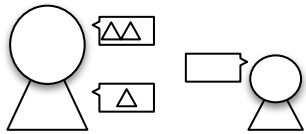(Childes)

Student-Tutor
(BELC)

Corpora

Child-Adult
(Childes)

Student-Tutor
(BELC)

Adult- Task based
(MapTask)
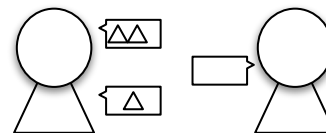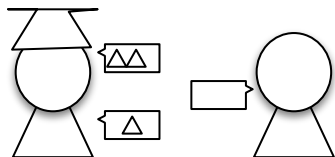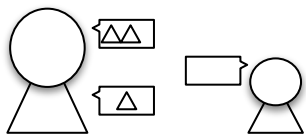
Adult- Conversational
(Switchboard)

Corpora

Asymmetric speaker roles
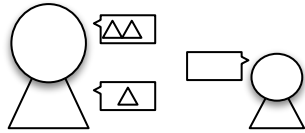
Child-Adult
(Childes)

Student-Tutor
(BELC)

Adult- Task based
(MapTask)

Adult- Conversational
(Switchboard)

Shared linguistic constructions

Morphosyntactic Vs Lexical constructions

First Language (L1)

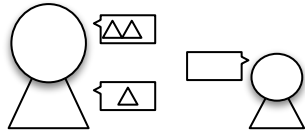Adult: it had lollipops in it
Child: what's in it
Adult: it doesn't open it just a whosejigger ...
Child: a lollipops is in it

Shared linguistic constructions

Morphosyntactic Vs **Lexical** constructions

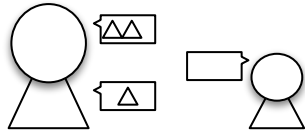First Language (L1)

Adult: it had lollipops **in it**
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Shared linguistic constructions

Morphosyntactic Vs **Lexical** constructions

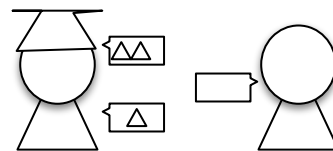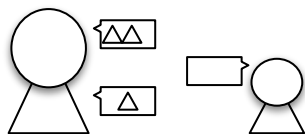First Language (L1)

Adult: it had lollipops **in it**
Child: what's **in it**
Adult: it doesn't open it just a whosejigger ...
Child: a lollipops is **in it**

Multi-word shared constructions

Morphosyntactic Vs **Lexical** constructions

First Language (L1)

Adult: it had lollipops **in it**
Child: what's **in it**
Adult: it doesn't open it just <u>a whosejigger</u> ...
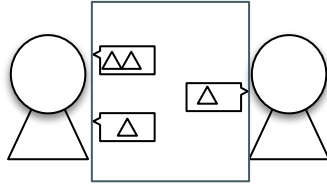Child: <u>a lollipops</u> is **in it**

Second Language (L2)

Tutor: is it a **big bedroom** or a <u>small bedroom</u>?
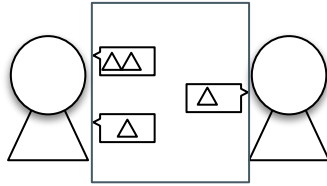Student: **big bedroom**.
Tutor: a **big bedroom** okay .
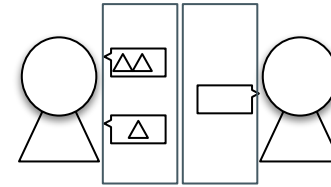
Global measures

Dialogue Level

1. Relative inventory size
2. Construction length
3. Usage rate

Global measures

Dialogue Level

1. Relative inventory size
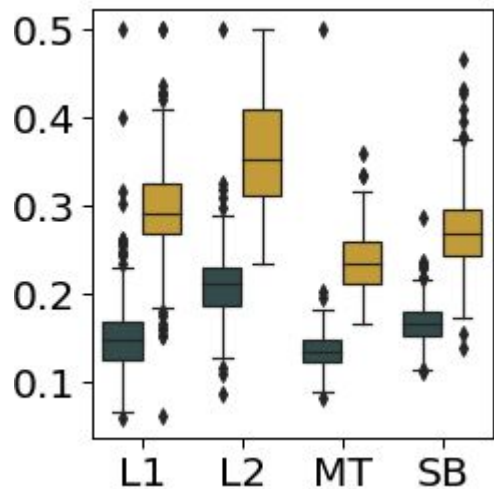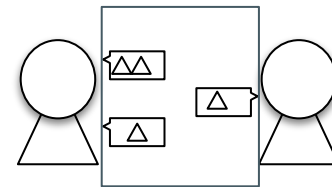2. Construction length
3. Usage rate

Differences across types of dialogue participant

1. Construction initiator
2. Usage rate per participant
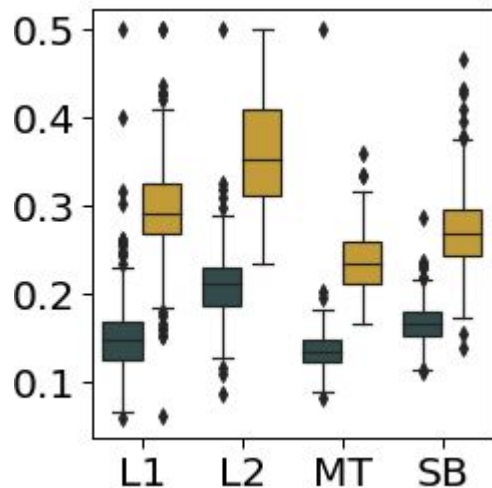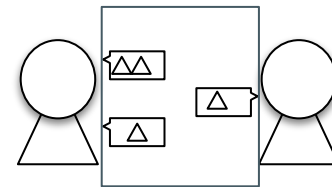
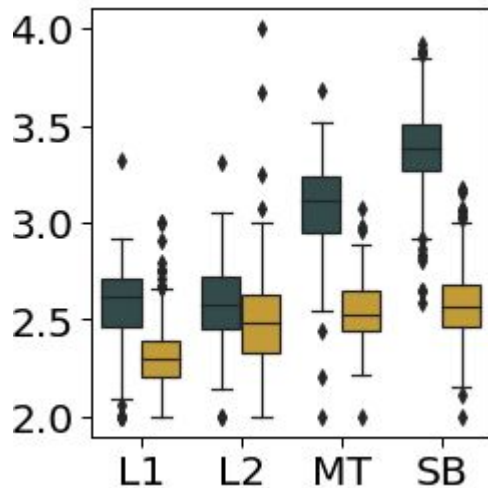# Results

Shared Constructions: Key properties

relative inventory size
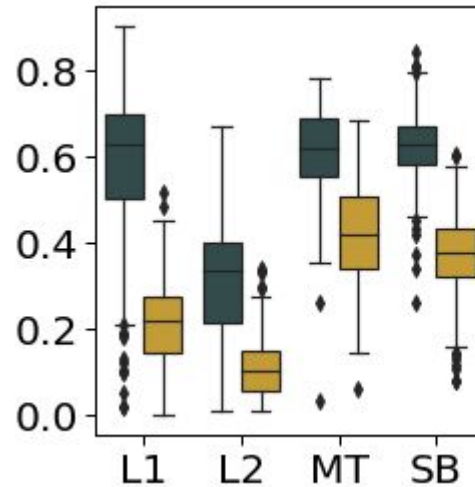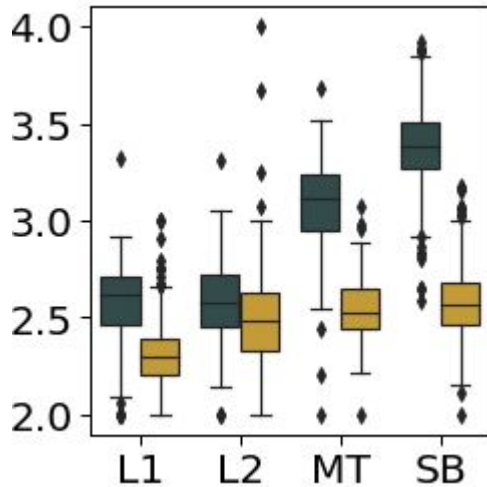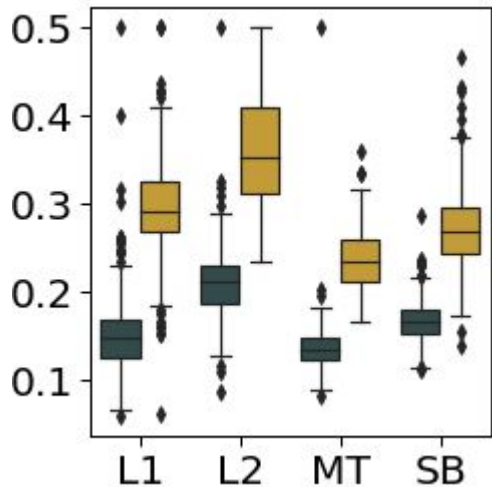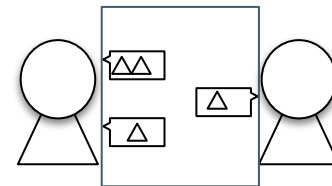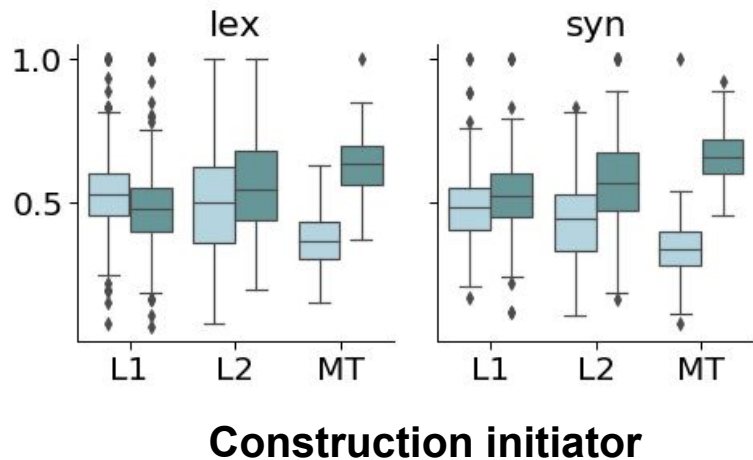
Shared Constructions: Key properties

relative inventory size   **shared construction length**
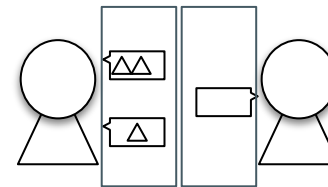
Shared Constructions: Key properties

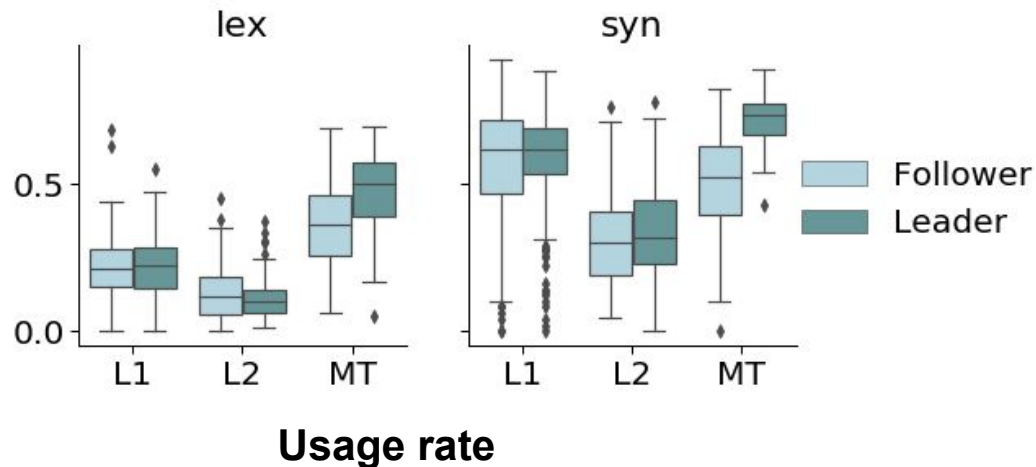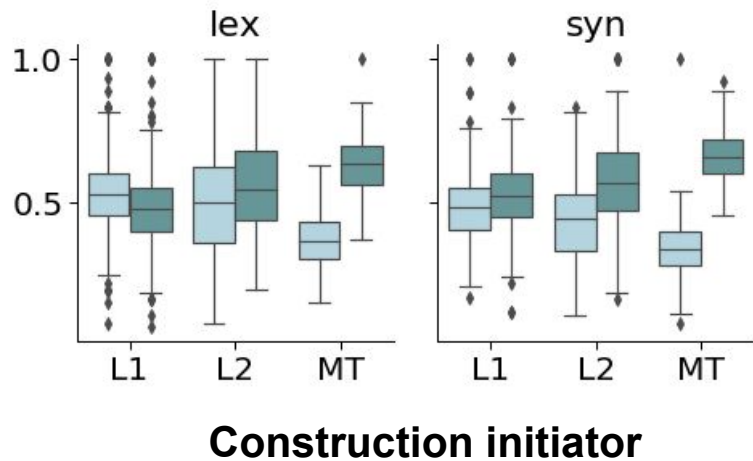
relative inventory size   **shared construction length**   **usage rate**
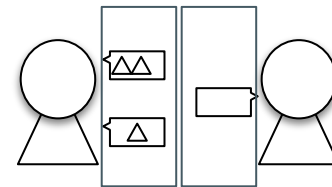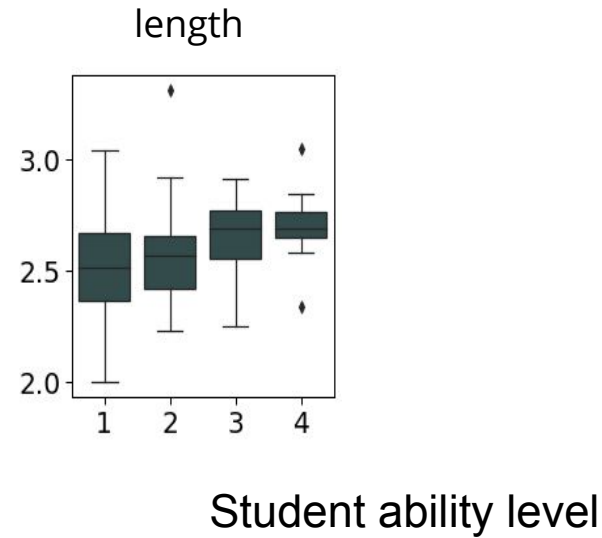
Shared Constructions: Per speaker

Construction initiator

Follower
Leader

Shared Constructions: Per speaker

Construction initiator

Usage rate

Changes over the course of learning

L1

L2

length

length

Age (months)

Student ability level
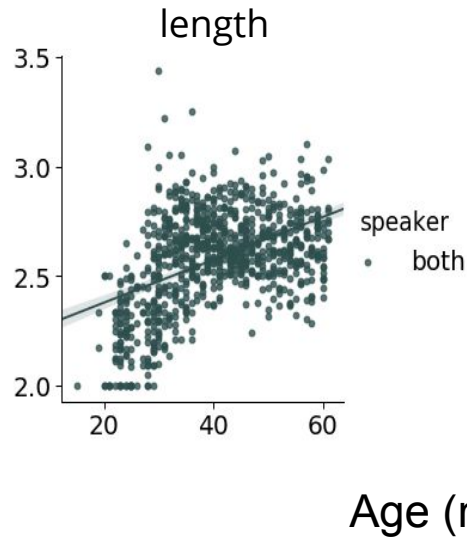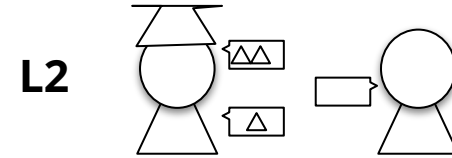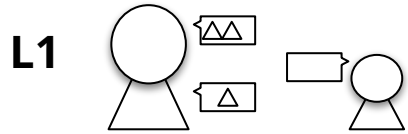
Changes over the course of learning

Modelling local effects

xCRP: cross-speaker construction repetition proportion

Dialogue

△△ ▲ Shared constructions

Modelling local effects

xCRP: cross-speaker construction repetition proportion

Dialogue

Distance 1

Distance 1

Shared constructions

Modelling local effects

xCRP: cross-speaker construction repetition proportion

Dialogue

Distance 1

Distance 1

Scrambled baseline

Distance 4

Distance 3
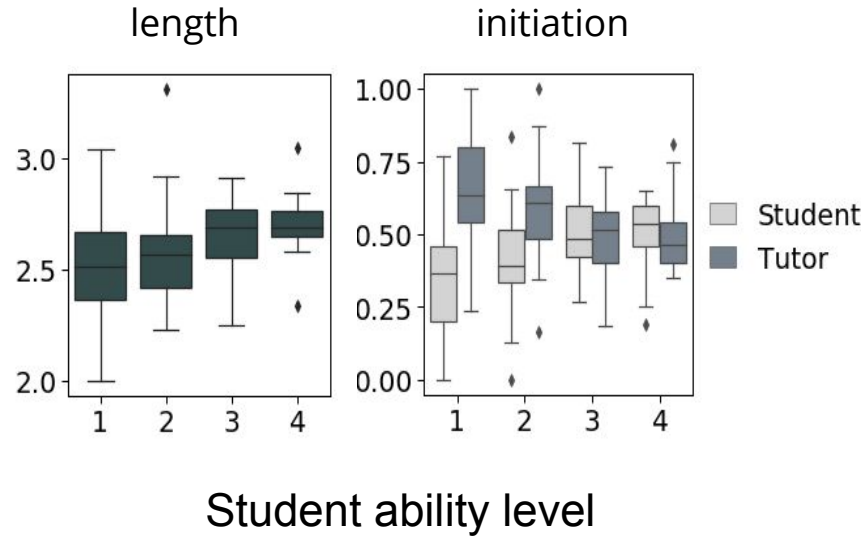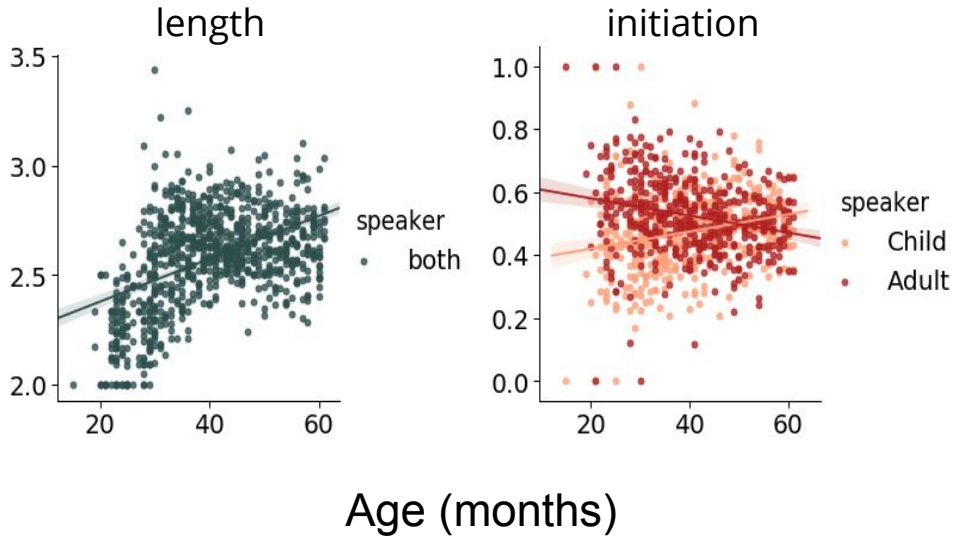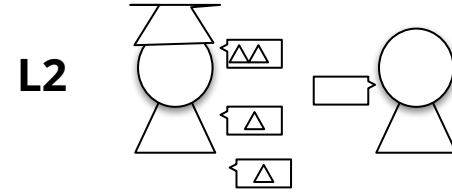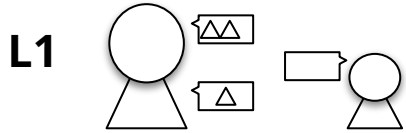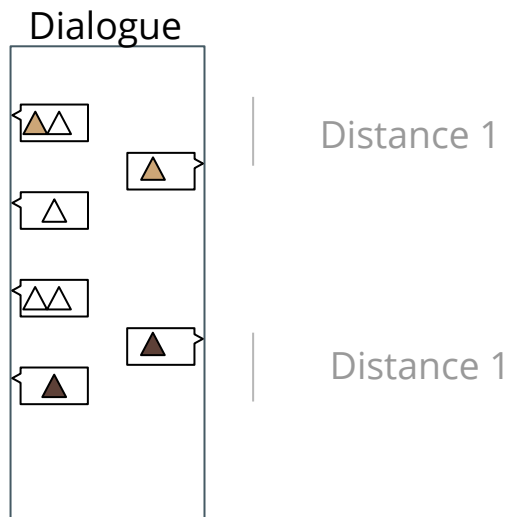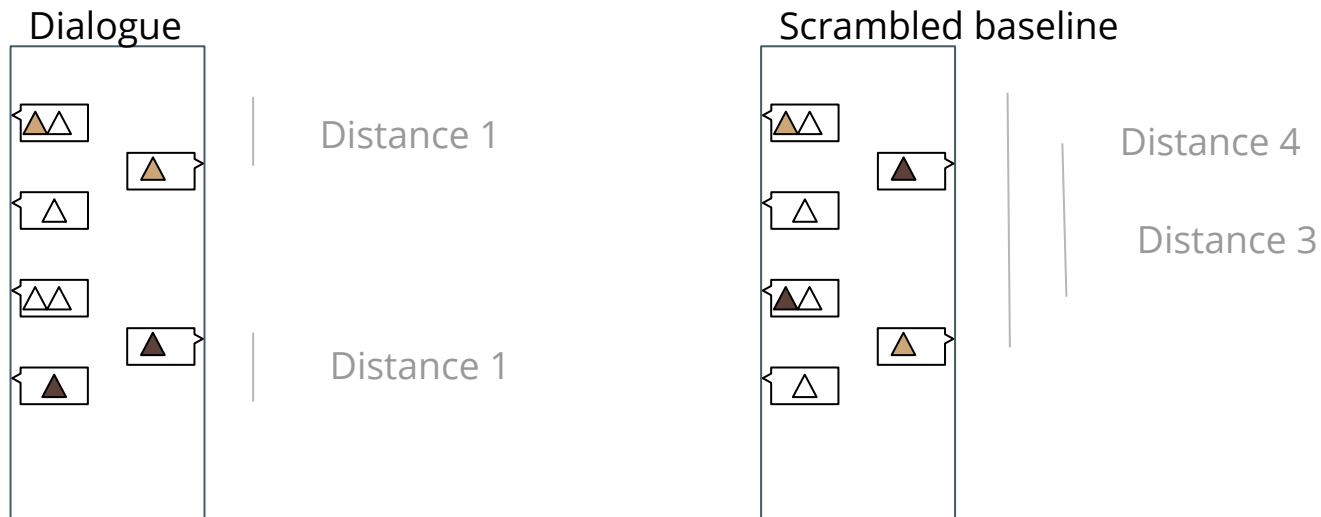
△ ▲ Shared constructions

Effect of Locality: different reasons for repetition

L1
Child-Adult
(Childes)

L2
Student-Tutor
(BELC)

MapTask
Adult- Task based
(MapTask)

Switchboard
Adult- Conversational
(Switchboard)

Effect of Locality Cross-Speaker Construction Repetition

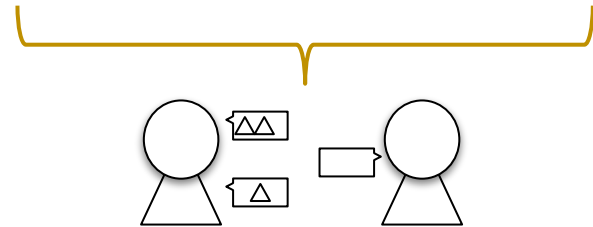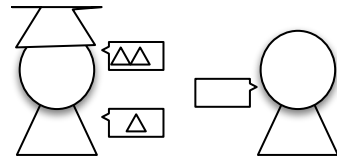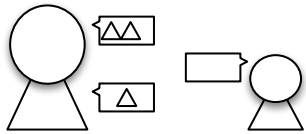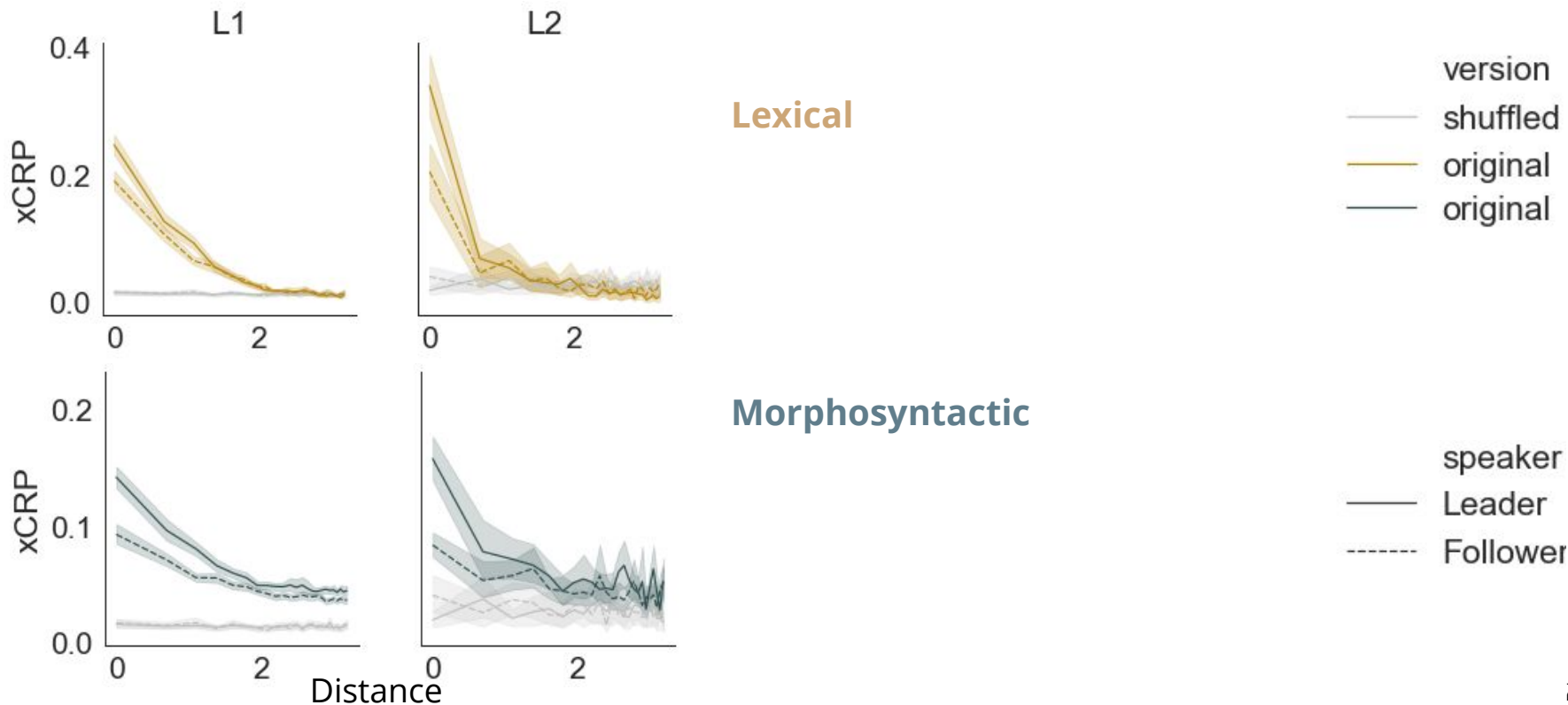# Effect of Locality Cross-Speaker Construction Repetition
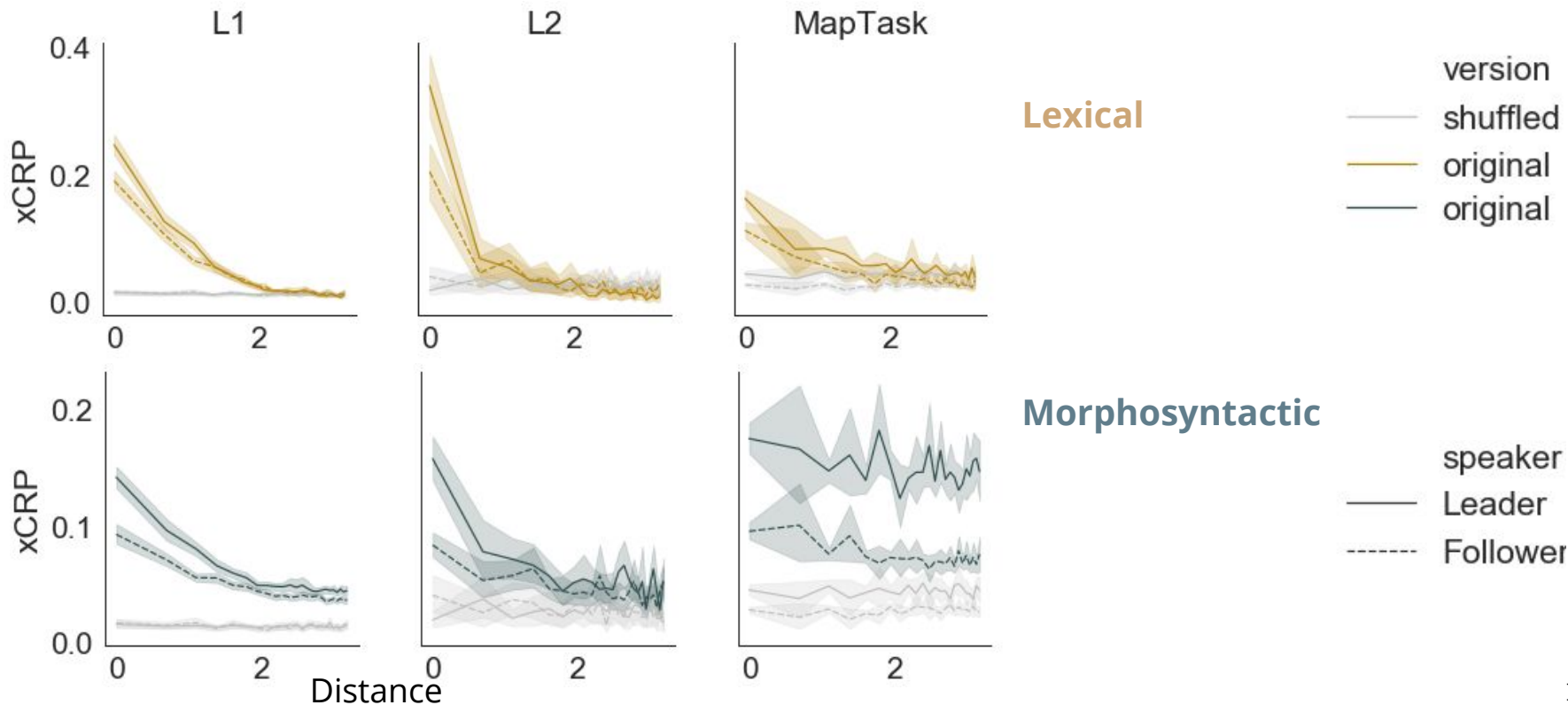
Effect of Locality Cross-Speaker Construction Repetition

Conclusion

- Shared constructions form an important aspect of dialogue

- Construction use evolves as learner linguistic ability increases

- Learner dialogues show higher local construction repetition than in fluent adult dialogues, this decreases with learner ability

Conclusion

- Shared constructions form an important aspect of dialogue
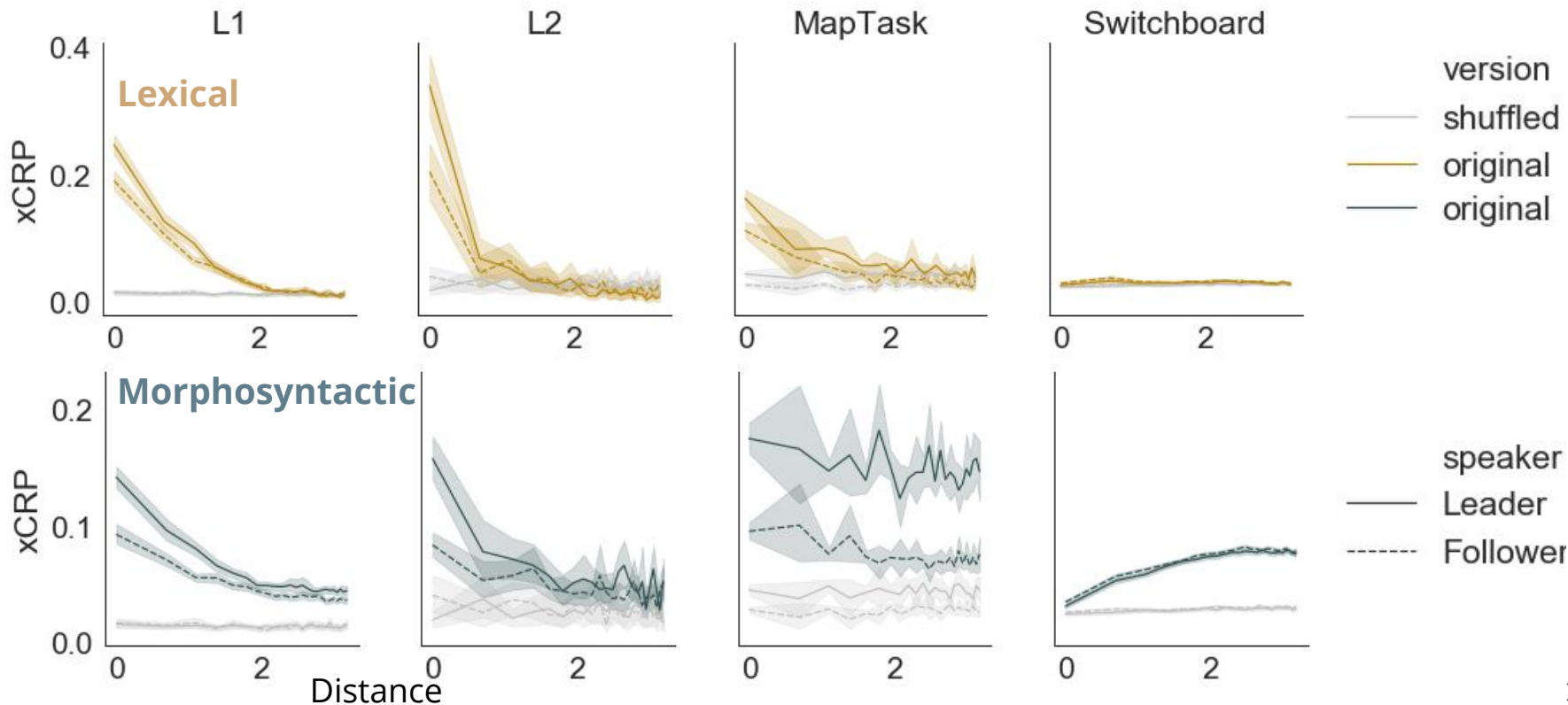- Construction use evolves as learner linguistic ability increases
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Conclusion

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UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

Thank you

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https://staff.fnwi.uva.nl/a.j.sinclair/