

Motivation and premises

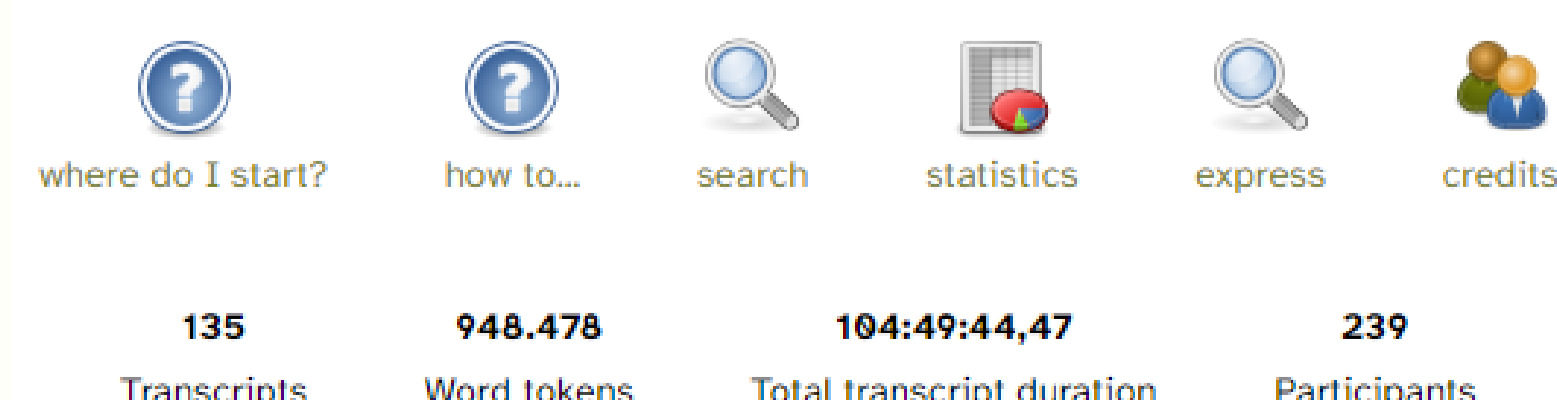
- **Social embedding:** Participants were approached as experts, sharing their lifelong experiences with an actively listening interviewer ([1]).
- **Intra-generational perspective:** With participants mostly over the age of 70, attention is directed towards differentiating factors within an age group.
- **Oral History:** Participants represent the last pre-war (WWII) generation. They were approached to sustain an Oral History project and tell their life-stories.
- **Plural-corpus:** Additional materials include recordings of writing sessions in older adults' education centers and a corpus of personal letters provided by Mme Moreau (pseudonym).



Corpus architecture

- ◇ **Longitudinal design over 18 years:** The corpus comprises data from four interview series: 2005 (56), 2012 (34), 2015 (23+25), 2023 (7+3).
- ◇ **Access:** Open access availability for the first series of interviews (2005), restricted according to the type of authorization given by the corpus participants.
- ◇ **Output:** Transcripts and soundfiles of entire recordings or selected sections through individual queries are exportable.

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Corpus statistics

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Lifespan pragmatics research



- ◇ **Focus on multidimensional dynamics:** Up until the post-retirement phase of life, linguistic aging has proven itself to be a dynamic process ([2]).

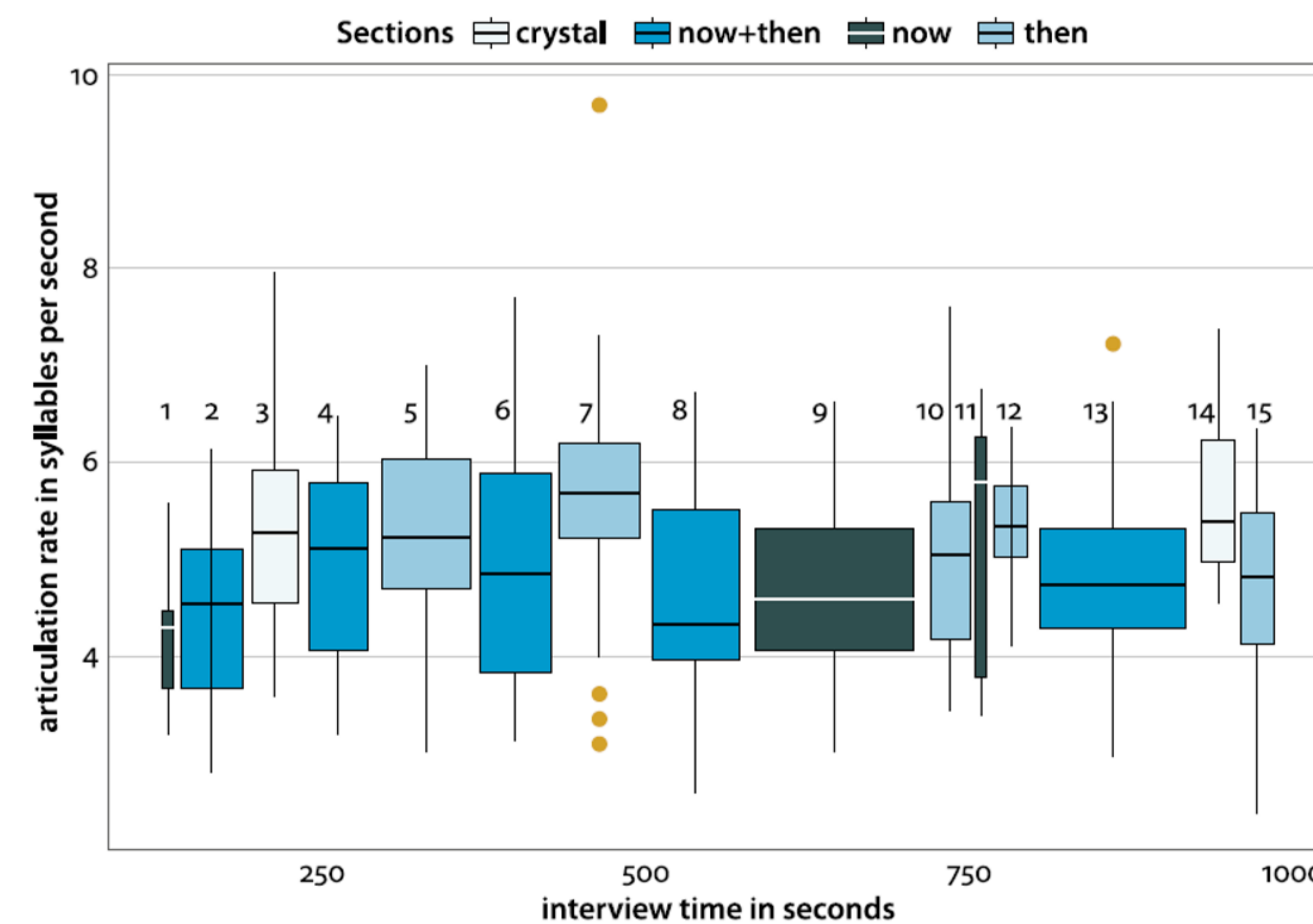


Figure 3. Ms. Moreau's articulation rate in the opening of October 2014 according to 15 sections

- ◇ **Focus on usage:** LangAge corpus data can help to illuminate various facets of the complex and efficient adaptation processes by which "language processing is so well maintained in late life, noting instances of remediation, elimination, and, perhaps, compensation" ([3, 391]).

References

- [1] N. Coupland, J. Coupland, and H. Giles, "Telling age in later life: identity and face implications," *Text & Talk*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 129–152, 1989.
[2] M. Ramscar, C. Chu Sun, P. Hendrix, and R. H. Baayen, "The mismeasurement of mind: how neuropsychological testing creates a false picture of cognitive aging," *COGSCI. The Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, pp. 1–6, 2016.
[3] A. Wingfield and E. A. Stine-Morrow, "Language and speech," in *The Handbook of Aging and Cognition 2nd ed.*, F. I. M. Craik and T. A. Salthouse, Eds. Mahwah (NJ): Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000, pp. 359–416.

PhD projects

Friederike Schulz (in progress): *Syntactic complexity in autobiographical narratives of older people*

Research question: Dissertation focuses on longitudinal variation in syntactic structures in spoken French in 10 heterosexual married couples from in the LangAge corpus. **Sample:** Categorization of narrative contents and syntactic complexity markers led to identification of 20 to 30 matrix sentences for analysis. **Preliminary results:** Answers concerning childhood and adolescent experiences are often characterized by extensive detail, narrative elements and complex syntactic structures. Much of the content is reproduced by the speakers at two or three points in time. **Perspectives:** The aim of this study is therefore to investigate the extent to which syntactic structures change or remain stable when response content is overwhelmingly stable, as well as in combination with extralinguistic factors.

Valerie Hekkel (2021): *Eine soziolinguistische Betrachtung von parce que-Strukturen in Synchronie und Diachronie – A sociolinguistic analysis of parce que structures in synchrony and diachrony*. Dissertation focused on synchronic and diachronic variation in the use of the French causal conjunction *parce que*, as well as on its interaction with the extralinguistic variables age and socioprofessional category, as it undergoes pragmaticalization. Research corpus of 56 interviews was extracted from the diachronically distinct corpora ESLO1, ESLO2 and LangAge. Based on Construction Grammar, constructions containing *parce que* were annotated in a bottom-up approach and categorized into five pragmatic degrees (pra0-pra4). Results challenge diachronic concepts, such as age grading and apparent time, by questioning the simplicity of the underlying mechanisms as well as the prevalent methods recurred to in order to identify them.

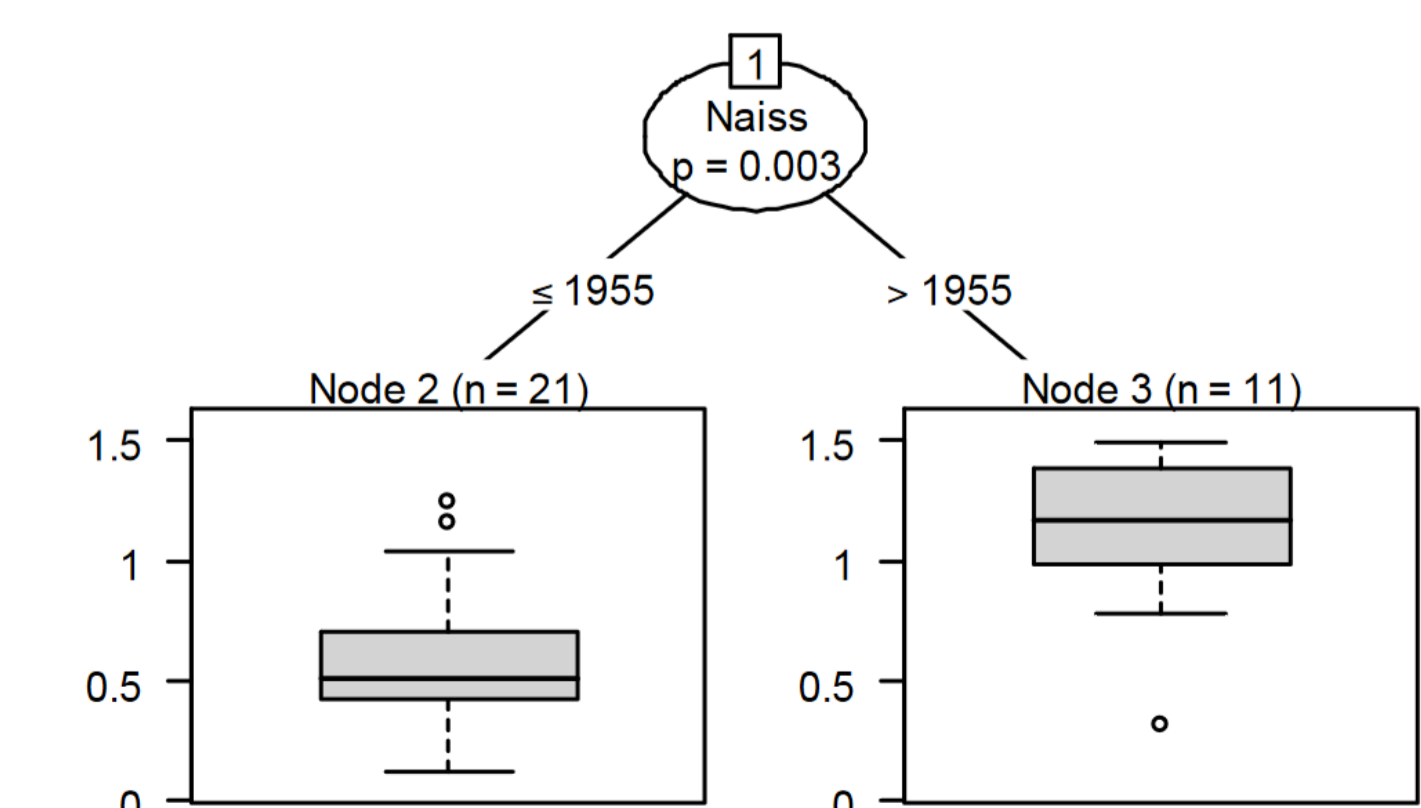


Fig. 16 Ctree der Häufigkeiten der Vorkommen von pra2 in Abhängigkeit des Geburtsjahres (und der sozioprofessionellen Kategorie) für E2/LA.

Pragmaticalization of *parce que* and speakers' year of birth.

Corpus management

- ◇ **Input.** Time-aligned Transcriber (*.trs)-files (xml formatted). The principles of orthographic transcription are inspired by the ESLO guide.
- ◇ **Tools and Scripts.** Cordial is used for lemmatization and part-of-speech tagging. PYTHON scripts are used to convert *.trs to *.textGrid and for CORDIAL parsing including metadata, PRAAT with is used for the anonymization of sound files.

Longitudinal design over 18 years

- ◇ **Interview guideline.** A biographical questionnaire with open questions was used and additionally, in 2015 and 2023, an “age-fair”-Big5 questionnaire.
- ◇ **Variables.** Extra-linguistic variables include dense biographical information on family background, marital status, and social activities. Additionally, parameterized variables are available.
 - **Education.** Three categories are used: Certificat d’études primaires (ca. 13 y.), Brevet d’études élémentaires (ca. 15 y.), Baccalauréat (ca. 18 y.).
 - **Socio-professional.** Four categories are used, adapting the official classification by the National Institute of Statistics (INSEE): Manual, Qualified, Diploma, Academic positions.
 - **Authorization.** Re-use of data was granted by the participants for written and online publication. Data can be stored in its original format, or can be converted into TextGrid for PRAAT.
 - **Annotation.** Data can be annotated on different levels, and can be exported as a table of results.
 - **Usage.** Access is granted according to the usage intentions by a LangAge team member or external partner.

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References

[1] N. Coupland, J. Coupland, and H. Giles, “Telling age in later life: identity and face implications,” *Text & Talk*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 129–152, 1989.

[2] M. Ramscar, C. Chu Sun, P. Hendrix, and R. H. Baayen, “The mismeasurement of mind: how neuropsychological testing creates a false picture of cognitive aging,” *COGSCI. The Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society*, pp. [1–6], 2016.

[3] A. Wingfield and E. A. Stine-Morrow, “Language and speech,” in *The Handbook of Aging and Cognition 2nd ed.*, F. I. M. Craik and T. A. Salthouse, Eds. Mahwah (NJ): Lawrence Erlbaum, 2000, pp. 359–416.