

Acquisition of French Liaison - A Look Into L2 Speakers' Production Patterns

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Previous studies have attempted to account for the variability in the production of *Liaison* in French as conditioned by a range of factors, looking at linguistic as well as extralinguistic variables. However, previous work has focused almost exclusively on native speakers and the *Parisian French* variety. This study lies in the intersection of the two fields of sociolinguistics and second language acquisition. I present a corpus-based quantitative study providing insight into L2 learners' acquisition of a variable socio-phonological phenomenon in the target language.

In my study, I am exploring recordings of naturalistic speech produced by an ethnically diverse group of L2 learners of French, and namely undergraduate students at the University of Toronto. The recordings were stored in the Romance Phonetic Database. I present the effects of linguistic factors such as *consonant type* and extralinguistic factors such as *acquisition onset age* on the production patterns of French Liaison. I then compare the L2 production patterns with those observed in the L1 population. The intermediate findings suggest a partial-only acquisition and contribute to extending the somewhat scarce literature on the topic.

Better prediction of actual occurrences of liaison in different populations is beneficial to theoretical phonology. This allows for descriptive phonological rules to account better for empirical data and language variation. Also, it might be useful to test phonological theory against actual observations of naturalistic speech in different populations.

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