

# LING3204 Second Language Acquisition

## Tutorial: Adverb placement of L1 French, L2 English

Yige Chen, Ziyang Meng

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Week 4, Fall 2022





- No class next Tuesday (public holiday)



- French and English differ in adverb placement and question formation as shown below.

	Weak I (English)	Strong I (French)
Adverbs	S-Adv-V-O	S-V-Adv-O
Adverbs	<i>Mary often watches TV.</i>	<i>Marie regarde souvent la télévision.</i>
Questions	Do-S-V-O	V-S-O
Questions	<i>Does she watch TV?</i>	<i>Regarde-elle la télévision?</i>

- The differences have been accounted for by the VERB RAISING parameter within the principles and parameters framework.



- Native Language: French
- Target Language: English
- Data Source: Acceptability judgment
- L2 learners' age: 11–12 years
- Learning Environment: Intensive ESL program in Quebec
- Proficiency Level: Beginners (5 months of instruction)

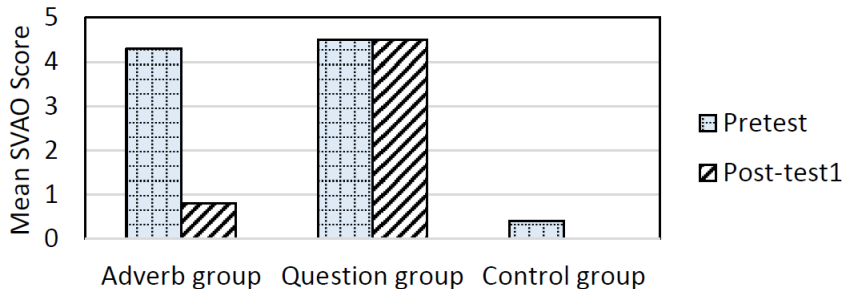
# Problem Set: Methodological Background



	Adverb Group (n = 82)	Question Group (n = 56)	Native controls (n = 26)
Grade	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 5 and 6	Grades 5 and 6
Pretest (Day 1)	Pretesting adverbs	Pretesting adverbs	Testing on adverbs
Teaching (2 weeks)	Teaching adverbs	Teaching questions	-
Post-test (Day 15)	Post-test adverbs	Post-test adverbs	-



SVAO error (\*Mary watches often TV)  
(max. possible error score = 16)





- 1 Describe and explain the pattern of judgments of the Adverb group and Question group in the pretest and the posttest respectively.
- 2 Do these findings constitute supporting evidence for parameter resetting in SLA?



Describe and explain the pattern of judgments of the Adverb group and Question group in the pretest and the posttest respectively.

- In the pretest both groups accept sentences exemplifying the SVAO pattern, such as Mary watches often TV, which is ungrammatical in English. In the post-test, the patterns of responses given by the Adverb group and the Question group diverge: the Adverb group, who have been presented with explicit negative evidence about adverb placement in English, reject SVAO sentences; the Question group, who have received explicit instruction about question formation but not adverb placement, still accept SVAO as possible in English.





Do these findings constitute supporting evidence for parameter resetting in SLA?

- No. Explicit knowledge of question formation clearly does not generalize to knowledge of adverb placement. These findings do not constitute supporting evidence for parameter resetting in SLA.
- One possibility is that properties associated with the same parameter would cluster only in naturalistic, but not in instructed, acquisition.
- Another possibility is that the time interval between the explicit instruction period and the post-test was too short for any generalizing effects to take place.
- The third possibility is that the properties are not related after all: crucial evidence that would decide on this issue is evidence from first language acquisition, since the presence of clustering in child grammars would be powerful evidence in favour of the theory.