

# Scientific Report

## Project title

Is *only* special ?

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## Goal of the project

Assess the value and relevance of Beaver and Clark's (2008) survey observations on *only* in a cross-linguistic perspective (Dutch, English, French)

## Purpose of the visit

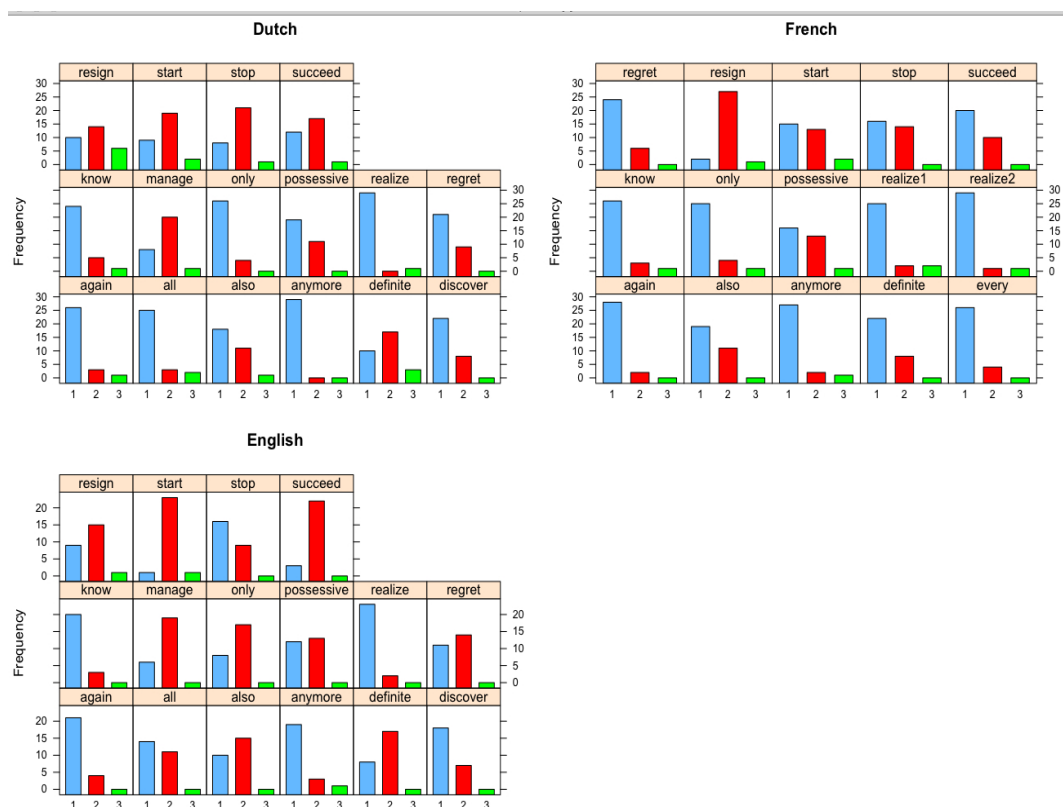
In the first stage of our work we determined the experimental setup (overall design, stimuli, fillers, pseudorandomization type) for Dutch and French experiments, which were conducted between February and May 2011. We planned to discuss whatever results were ready at the time of the meeting.

## Work carried out during the visit

The Dutch results were ready whereas the French results had still to be entered in a spreadsheet. We carried out a detailed statistical analysis for Dutch results, writing a R script for running automatically McNemar tests for each pair of triggers and clustering the observations with the pvcust package. Since the results were at variance with Beaver and Clark's results and the French results were suggestive of a similar difference between English and French, we prepared a script for running an online experiment through Amazon MTurk and collected the results. We also prepared a submission to the Amsterdam Colloquium (deadline August 31<sup>st</sup>).

## Main results

A few days after the end of the visit, we had all the results ready and could confirm that Dutch and French do not pattern like English.



The main data can be found at: <http://perso.ens-lyon.fr/jacques.jayez/onlyglobal.txt>.

It was not possible to determine the cause of this difference. Our best guess at the moment is that people who answer quickly tend to choose the complementary set of the set that verifies the positive version of the question with *only*. This is consistent with the result of a logistic regression with the proportion of type 2 answers as a dependent variable and the overall time as an independent variable. We will run a new experiment based on images (rather than purely linguistic material) by the end of August to adduce new evidence concerning this problem.

### **Future collaboration**

We plan (i) to broaden our scope of interest by addressing the more general problem of presuppositions and (ii) to

### **Projected publications**

Submission for the Amsterdam Colloquium

Submission to a linguistic journal (JOURNAL of Semantics, probably)