

# The crosslinguistic intertextuality of loanwords

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## 1 Presentation and aims

The semantic meaning potential of words is to a large extent governed by their intertextual history of use (ref Linell, ref Traugott & Dasher). Loanwords are an interesting case, since they have a history in their source language, but lose some of their meaning potential when they are borrowed. We wish to examine the following topics:

- a. How much of a word's meaning changes when it is borrowed (e.g. the term 'body guard', borrowed from English into Swedish), i.e how much of its meaning potential and history is lost?
- b. After a loan word is established, how does it share the semantic space with already existing, seemingly synonymous native words (e.g. the Swedish term 'livvakt', body guard.)
- c. How do ?? and ?? compare across three European languages, i.e. Swedish, Dutch, and Spanish?

By using both quantitative experimental and corpus methods, as well as qualitative interview methods, we also wish to examine if there are marked discrepancies between the measurements of meaning and the subjective reported opinions about meanings of speakers.

## 2 Theoretical background

### 2.1 What is meaning?

Meaning can be approached in a variety of ways **Koptjevskaja-Tamm2008**

## 3 Susanne's draft

HOW TO MEASURE MEANING CHANGE As a word is borrowed from one language to another, its meaning changes - the number and kind of referents it represents can grow or shrink, and its register (in which social setting it is appropriate to use) can also vary. This project seeks to investigate this change - how large is it, and are there recurrent patterns in the kinds of changes that occur to loan words? This project aims to create both etic and emic definitions

of the meaning, and meaning changes, of the loanwords. In an etic definition, the meaning of a word as defined as the set of its uses (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2008), or the set of its situated instances (Evans 2009). In this, we follow the exemplar semantics research done by Wd'chli & Cysouw (2012), and will take a denotational approach to meaning where similarity in form will be assumed to represent similarity in meaning. In an emic definition, the commonalities behind the different uses are sought (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2008), what Traugott & Dasher 2002 call a "stabilized, institutionalized, and prototypical magnetic center that can be contextually interpreted in constrained ways" and which Linell (REF) refers to as the meaning potentials of a word. The etic definitions will be investigated through the uses of the words in corpora (see section CL) and by acceptability judgments in the psycholinguistic research tradition (see section AJ). The emic definitions can aptly be arrived of by a careful analysis of the commonalities in these two experiments, but the subconscious evaluations of the words by speakers will also be measured through psychological Semantic Differential experiments (see section SD).

### **3.1 Lexcial Borrowings**

Matras2009

## **4 Materials**

## **5 General method and phases**

## **6 Expected outcome**

## **7 Appendices**

### **7.1 Swedish loanwords**