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## For a better understanding of the lexical-semantic structure of LSF

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## STATE OF ART

- Evidence of the intense networks of form-meaning links in so-called SL « core-lexicon » (e.g. ASL: Fernald & Napoli 2000, Frishberg & Gough 2000; Israeli SL: Tobin 2008, Meir & Sandler 2008; LSF: Bonnal 2005, Garcia et al. 2007, Garcia 2010, 2013);
- Nature of units that assure these links (not derivation, composition, templates).
  - Proposals:
    - Liddell & Johnson 1989: **S-morph** (incomplete segmental morph) / **P-morph** (paradigmatic morph);
    - Fernald & Napoli 2000: **ion-morph** (phonologically incomplete lexical item);
    - Bonnal 2005: **phylum** (a group of several manual components associated with a certain meaning in the limits of a lexical field);
    - Cuxac 2000, Garcia et al. 2007, Garcia 2010, 2013.
  - > close to **phonesthemes** in SpLs (Tournier 1985, Bottineau 2008):  
[st]ill/[st]all/[st]and/[st]ay/[st]are => [st] = 'stativity';
- Epilinguistic awareness of the morphemic status of LU components (Garcia & L'Huillier 2013)

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

**Semiological approach** (Cuxac 2000, Cuxac & Sallandre 2007, Fusellier-Souza 2004, Garcia & Derycke 2010, Garcia & Sallandre 2014) :

### Two semiological and linguistic modes of meaning production in SL

**Telling by showing**  
(Highly Iconic Structures)

**Transfer units (TU)**  
Global meaning = the exact sum of meaning component

Compositional structure  
(iconic components)

**Telling without showing**  
(standard structures)

**Lexematic units (LU)**  
Global meaning ≠ the exact sum of meaning component

Compositional structure = **molécule d'atomes de sens**  
(morphemic/iconic components; commutable, not autonomous)  
(also Johnston & Schembri 1999)

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- LSF lexicon: structured how & on which level(s)?
- Nature of SL entity assuring form-meaning links between lexemes?

## METHODOLOGY

### Stage 1 In vitro analysis

Morpho-lexicographical analysis of French-LSF dictionary corpus (IVT; Girod et al. 1997: ± 4500 LU)

Objectives:

- validate morphemic character of form-meaning components (morphemes);
- confirm hypothesis of LU integration into families of signs;
- => Establish such groups of linked signs: validation of these groups in stages 2 & 3

### Stage 2 In vivo analysis

Analysis of metalinguistic dialogues in LSF between deaf signers about recently emerged lexematic units (Corpus Creagest, Garcia & L'Huillier 2011)

Objectives:

- highlight how signers perceive and analyse the structure of recent units;
- extract family links spontaneously described by signers;
- confirm hypothesis that components are directly mobilised as morphemes in recent units.

### Stage 3 : Data collection & analysis

**Data.** Exchanges between adult LSF deaf signers (3 groups: pilot (n=3) + 2 groups (2 x n=6); Total time: ± 9 hours)

**Protocol.** Various tasks using mixed families of signs (stages 1 & 2), LU of other SL & families containing imposters.

Objectives:

- idem. stages 1 et 2;
- evaluate differences in acceptability / reception of compound types of recent LU by signers;
- evaluate efficiency of morphemic components for decoding recent LU via signer reaction to unknown LU (invented and/or from another SL).

## RESULTS

- Confirmation of relevance of a LU analysis on morphemic components and the strength of lexicon organisation into families;
- Spontaneous perception of LU (be there recent or not) as structured in families (stages 2 & 3):



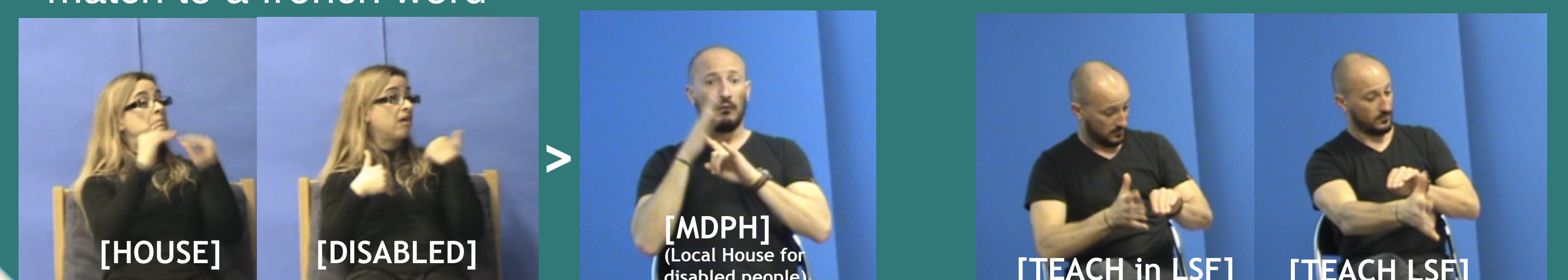
- Clear metalinguistic awareness of signers that many recently coined LUs result from combination of morphemic components;



- Highlighting restrictions on the combination of morphemic components:
  - articulatory facility restriction;
  - perceptive salience restriction;
  - sign lisibility restriction: hypothesis of component hierarchy



- socio-linguistic obstacles: systematic reluctance to sign creation due to its match to a french word



## PERSPECTIVES

Formalise constraints on the integration of recently coined LUs in families of pre-existing LUs:

- Hierarchy of the morphemic values: *monopolisation* of a parameter and a *block* of certain compounds: why [VIDEOCONFERENCING] is widely accepted while [VETERINARY SURGEON], [TEACH LSF/IN LSF] cause numerous debates?
- Identify why certain parametric substitutions as a (very productive) mean to coin new LUs are possible while others are not: [DEAF CULTURE], [OPERATE] versus [HURT].

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