# Prefabs in L2 acquisition

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# Lexical specificity in L1 acquisition

The earliest multi-word units children produce are unanalyzed chunks:

(1) What-s-that?
(2) Gimme-that!
(3) Lemme-see
(4) All-gone

The earliest utterances composed of two or more words/units are often organized around specific words:

(4) Wanna duck.
(5) All-gone doggy
(6) More milk

# Lexical specificity in L1 acquisition

(1) I-wanna bag
(2) I-wanna milk
(3) I-wanna that
(4) I-wanna ride

(5) Let-me turn on
(6) Let-me see it
(7) Let-me make a road
(8) Let-me do it.

(9) How-do-you-know ... that a duck?
(10) How-do-you-know ... I saw ducks?
(11) How-do-you-know ... doesn't hurt me?
(12) How-do-you-know … fell down?

# Item-based constructions in adult language

(1) I was wondering if __ .

(2) Let's DO __ .

(3) I don't known __ .

(4) How about __ .

(5) Would you mind __ .

(6) Can I __.

(7) I was just about to __

(8) On the one hand __ on the other hand __

What does Alison Wray (2002) say about the role of formulaic express in L2 acquisition?

# Lexical specificity in L2 acquisition

Hypothesis: Formulaic expressions play a different role at different stages of L2 acquisition. Some formulaic expressions are learned very early in L2 acquisition (Wray 2002):

(1) Do you speak English?
(2) What's your name?
(3) What time is it?
(4) How are you?
(5) Where are you from?
(6) Excuse me.
(7) I don't know.
(8) I don't understand.
(9) May I ask you a question?
(10) Can you say that again?

# Lexical specificity in L2 acquisition

Dufon (1995): Formulaic expressions are often used as “gambits” in early L2 acquisition:

(1) That’s all I have to say about this.
(2) The main point is __
(3) You know, I mean, I think
(4) What happened to __
(5) What about __,
(6) Actually, __ Well, __
(7) How do you know __
(8) Could you please __
(9) I see what you mean, but __
(10) I was trying to __

Dufon (1995): Formulaic expressions provide “islands of reliability”.

Dufon (1995): They are expressions L2 learners can “cling on”.

Ellis, Nick. 1996. Sequencing in SLA. Phonological memory, chunking, and points of order. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 18: 91-126.

# Sequence learning in L2

Ellis, Nick. 1996. Sequencing in SLA. Phonological memory, chunking, and points of order. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 18: 91-126.

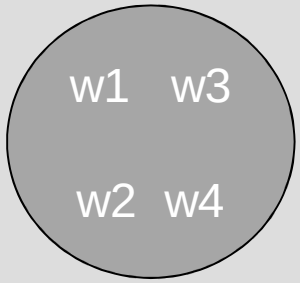
1. ***Language learning is the learning and analysis of sequences****.* The learner must acquire sound sequences in words. The learner must acquire word sequences in phrases. These sequences form the database for the abstraction of grammar.
2. ***Language learners differ in their sequencing ability****.* L2 learners are more or less talented to learn linguistic strings. The ability to learn sequences is determined by the learner's working memory capacity.
3. ***Frequency is an important determinant of L2 acquisition***. L2 learning is crucially driven by repetition and practice. The more often a string of linguistic elements is experienced by an L2 learner the more strongly it is represented in memory.

Automatization

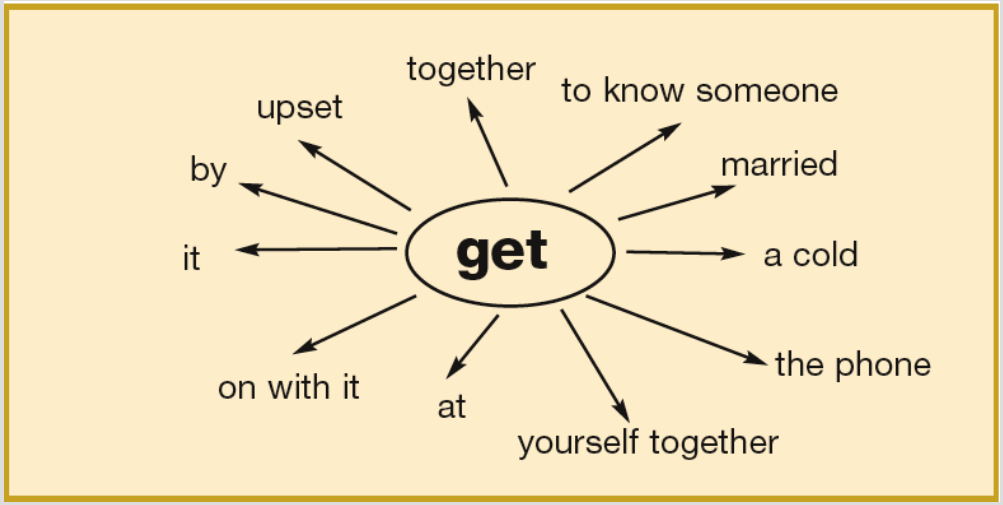
# Automatization

$W_1\ W_2\ W_3\ W_4\ W_5\ \ldots.$



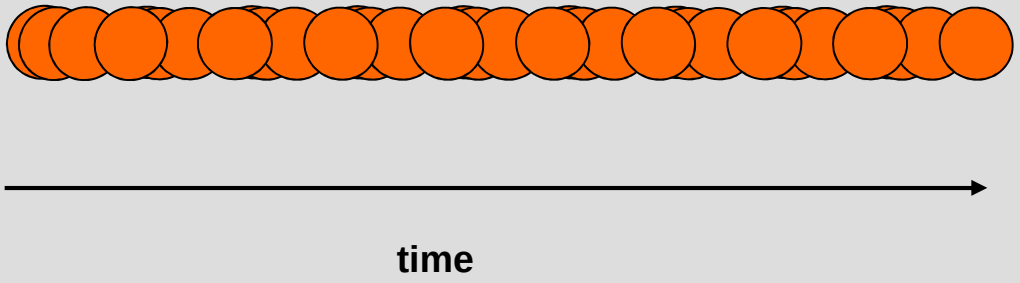



Frequently used strings of linguistic elements are converted into chunks of prefabricated expressions.



# Automatization

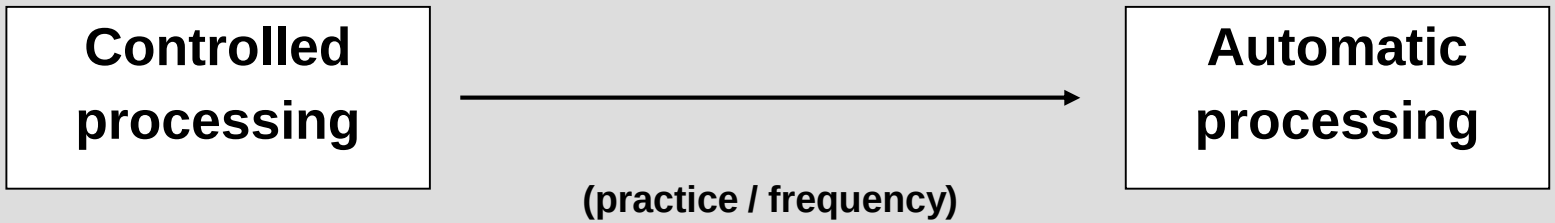
- Exemplar-learning: strengthening of one unit
- Automatization: strengthening of sequential links



# Automatization

William James (1890): automatic processes vs. controlled processes

Shiffrin and Schneider (1977): Development from controlled processes to automatic processes through repetition and practice.



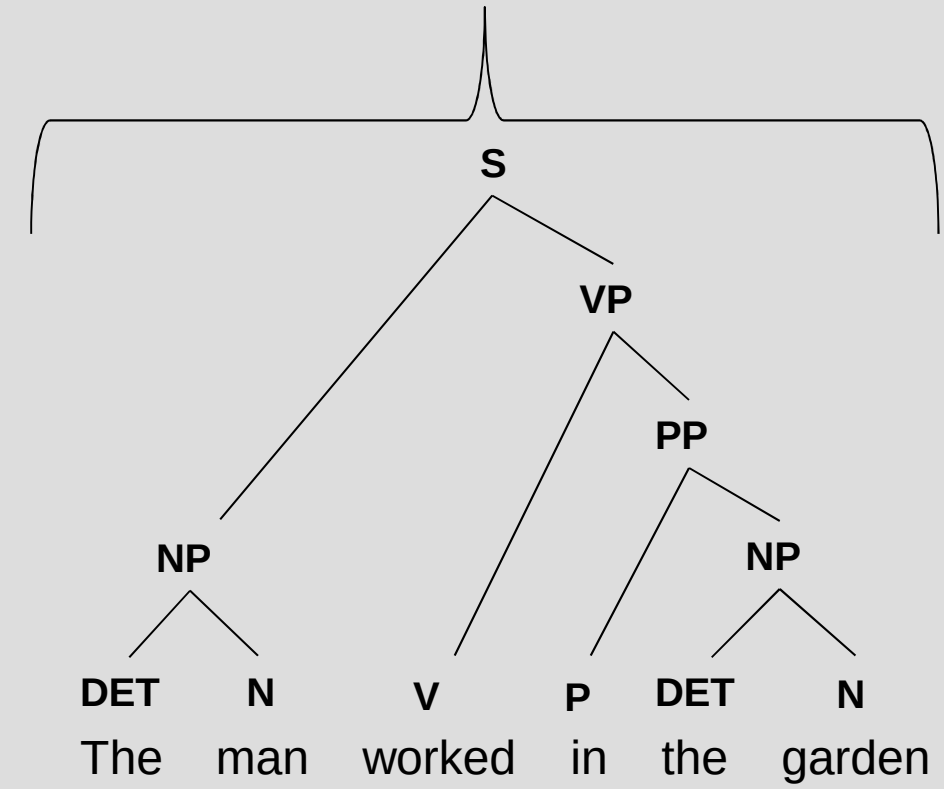
# Automatization

Schneider and Chein (2003): Features of controlled and automatic processes:

- Automatic processes require extensive prior training, whereas controlled processes can be established without training.
- Automatic processes are fast and can occur in parallel to other cognitive tasks, whereas controlled processes are slow and cannot be so easily combined with other tasks.
- Automatic processes require no or only little effort, whereas controlled processes require attention and effort.
- Automatic processes are often difficult to change (or to control), whereas controlled processes involve constant monitoring (i.e. control).

# Automatization

Top-down perspective: All elements are simultaneously there.




Horizontal perspective: Language unfolds in time.