Introduction

Natural languages are constantly in change. Language change is a universal and diachronic phenomenon that covers the variation of a language in its lexical, morphosyntactic, phonological, semantic and pragmatic inventory. Language internal change includes processes such as lexicalization and grammaticalization, which have been discussed extensively in research in the last decades. Over a certain period of time, internal language change can lead to language variation. This language variation becomes especially apparent when one language undergoes different processes of language change in different geographic areas. But languages may also change due to external factors, such as cultural and political influences, attempts of language standardization and language contact. In a very simple definition, language contact implies the use of different languages at once in the same geographical area (Thomason 2001). Here, language contact does not always necessarily go along with multilingualism. In some geographical areas, languages may coexist without multilingualism. This is the case for speakers in countries where the languages are restricted to a specific region, such as Switzerland and Belgium. This type of multilingualism is also referred to as territorial multilingualism. But language contact may not only arise in countries with different official languages. It may also occur in regions with linguistic minority groups, such as the different regional languages in France or Spain, or in situations of large-scale immigration of a certain linguistic group. It is important to distinguish between language contact in a certain society, generally termed as language contact, and language contact in a certain speaker, generally termed as bilingualism or multilingualism. Here, several factors influence the degree of bilingualism or multilingualism of a speaker. These factors include, amongst others, the age of language acquisition, the modalities of language acquisition, the sociolinguistic environment and the degree of language proficiency.

In the last decades, bilingualism and multilingualism have been extensively studied from a psycholinguistic perspective. Research questions include the exact nature of the bilingual mental lexicon, the storage and processing of more than one language in the bilingual brain and the interaction and influence of the languages in the bilingual brain.

In contrast, language change and language contact have not been in the focus of psycholinguistic investigations. Language change has mainly been investigated from a historical perspective. In early research on language contact, it has been questioned if language contact played an important role in the development of languages at all. This perspective has changed in recent years and it has been pointed out that languages can indeed transfer parts of their structure to another language in situations of intensive long-term language contact (Heine & Kuteva 2005).

The present work aims to investigate cross-linguistic influences in language contact situations by means of the linguistic expressions pragmatic markers. Pragmatic markers are linguistic ex-
pressions that are still not clearly defined, classified and limited. In the present work, I refer to pragmatic markers as a class of words, but this terminology and classification is by no means an uncontroversial issue (see chapter 4). They generally emerge through processes of grammaticalization or pragmaticalization from already existent lexical items. Pragmatic markers are known to be very suited for language change in contact, because they are syntactically very detachable and often do not contribute to the propositional content of an utterance.

The aim of the present work is to analyze, by means of own corpus data, how pragmatic markers develop in a language contact situation and, by means of experimental investigations, which implications this change has on bilingual language processing. A variety of Canadian French, the Franco-Manitoban, spoken in the Canadian province of Manitoba, serves as basis for an own corpus of spoken and informal speech data. This variety of Canadian French has experienced a long period of intensive language contact with English and is highly influenced by the English language.

Therefore, Franco-Manitoban is very suited for an analysis of pragmatic markers in language contact. The underlying speech data was collected with highly fluent and early bilingual Franco-Manitoban speakers and therefore, the corpus data contains English and French to unequal parts. After a detailed analysis of the corpus data, the processes found in the corpus analysis will be investigated experimentally. The combination of a corpus-based approach and a psycholinguistic approach aims to give a broad view over pragmatic markers in language contact and the impact on bilingual language processing.

The choice to investigate pragmatic markers in language contact situation has different motivations. First, a cross-linguistic analysis of pragmatic markers can give important insights into their role in language change. Second, these insights may help to point out the specific characteristics and the functioning of pragmatic markers in general. Third, only very few psycholinguistic studies have focused on pragmatic markers and very little is known about their role in language processing. Psycholinguistic research is mainly based on prototypical word classes, such as nouns and verbs. Research on non-prototypical word classes, such as pragmatic markers, may give important insights into language processing and the models of the mental lexicon. Forth, the impacts of language contact on language processing have not been investigated at all from a psycholinguistic perspective. Therefore, experimental investigations on language contact phenomena, based on natural speech data, may help to clarify if these changes are also anchored in language processing.

The first chapter of the present work gives a brief overview about pragmatic markers and language change. Pragmatic markers are a very heterogeneous class of words, which is not clearly defined, classified and delimitated. Therefore it is crucial to clarify the present understanding of pragmatic markers and to give an overview about past research on pragmatic markers in lan-
language contact. Furthermore, the first chapter introduces different processes of language internal and contact-induced language change.

The second chapter of this work focuses on bilingual language processing from a psycholinguistic perspective. In the first parts, current models of bilingual language representation and processing will be introduced and (dis)advantages of the respective models will be highlighted. The third part of the second chapter focuses on semantic, conceptual and pragmatic representations in the bilingual brain, delimiting these different notions and introducing past research on this topic.

The third chapter aims to introduce the underlying contact variety of the present work, the Franco-Manitoban. First, the sociolinguistic and historic background will be highlighted, with special focus on linguistic peculiarities of this variety and past linguistic research.

Chapter four provides a detailed corpus analysis of three French partial equivalent pragmatic markers, *comme/genre, alors/donc* and *bon/ben* as well as their respective English translation equivalents *like, so* and *well*. Each analysis is preceded by a detailed overview about current research on the respective markers, their emergence and their functioning in monolingual contexts. The actual corpus analysis then contrasts the monolingual use of the respective markers, based on monolingual corpus data, with the use of these markers in the corpus data of the contact variety Franco-Manitoban. The main focus lies on the question how the markers developed in the specific language contact situation and how their use differs from their purely monolingual use. Regarding the results, it will be questioned if the markers underwent processes of contact-induced language change and how these changes manifest themselves.

Chapter five aims to consider the results of the corpus analysis from a psycholinguistic perspective. Here, the focus will be on the impacts of the different processes of language change on bilingual language processing and how they can be explained by means of different models of bilingual lexical access and language representation.

Chapter six presents the experimental investigation on pragmatic markers in language contact. Two experiments were conducted to investigate the influence of different processes of language change in a contact variety on language processing. Experiment 1 focuses on monolingual French pragmatic markers in sentence processing, whereas Experiment 2 focuses on bilingual pragmatic markers in word processing. In both experiments, Franco-Manitoban-speaking early bilinguals serve as experimental group and European French speaking late bilinguals serve as the control group. The main results of the experiments will be discussed and related to the results from the corpus analysis and to current models of bilingual language processing.