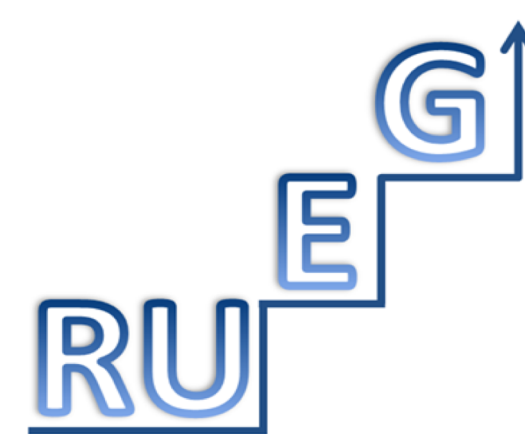# Clause type distribution across registers in heritage German

Wintai Tsehaye, University of Mannheim (P5)

Do HSs make similar use of structural options in their HL (German) compared to German monolinguals?

Participants

20 German HSs (μ age=15.95, SD=1.28, 10 females)
20 German monolinguals (μ age=16.45, SD=0.83, 11 females)

Method

Language Situations Method (Wiese 2020): elicitation of controlled and comparable productions across registers (two modes, two settings) → RUEG corpus

Theoretical Background

- Register: variety dependent on situational parameters (e.g. participants, setting, purpose of communication) (Biber & Conrad 2001).
- L1 learners typically acquire a broad register repertoire in their language and are more or less tacitly aware of appropriateness (Halliday 1975, 1978).
- HSs: early bilinguals acquiring one language (HL) as L1 and family language within the wider context of a dominant ML (Pascual y Cabo and Rothman 2012).
- Selection of clause types provides insight into HSs repertoires because the interface of syntax and discourse is an important source of variation (Sorace 2011).

Register	HSs	Monolinguals
formal spoken	346	491
formal written	271	422
informal spoken	277	438
informal written	160	258
Total	1054	1609

Data coding (English examples for illustration)
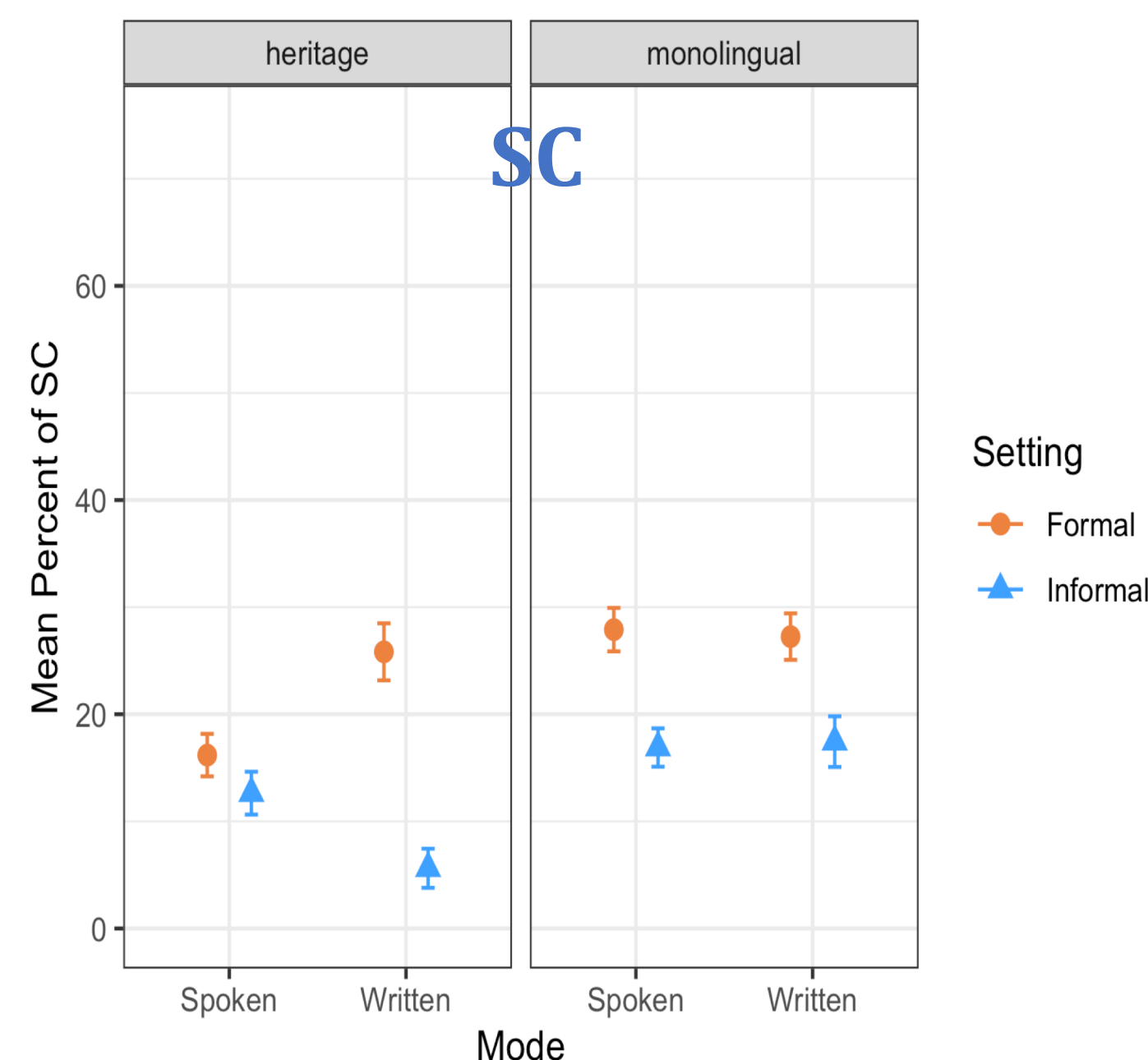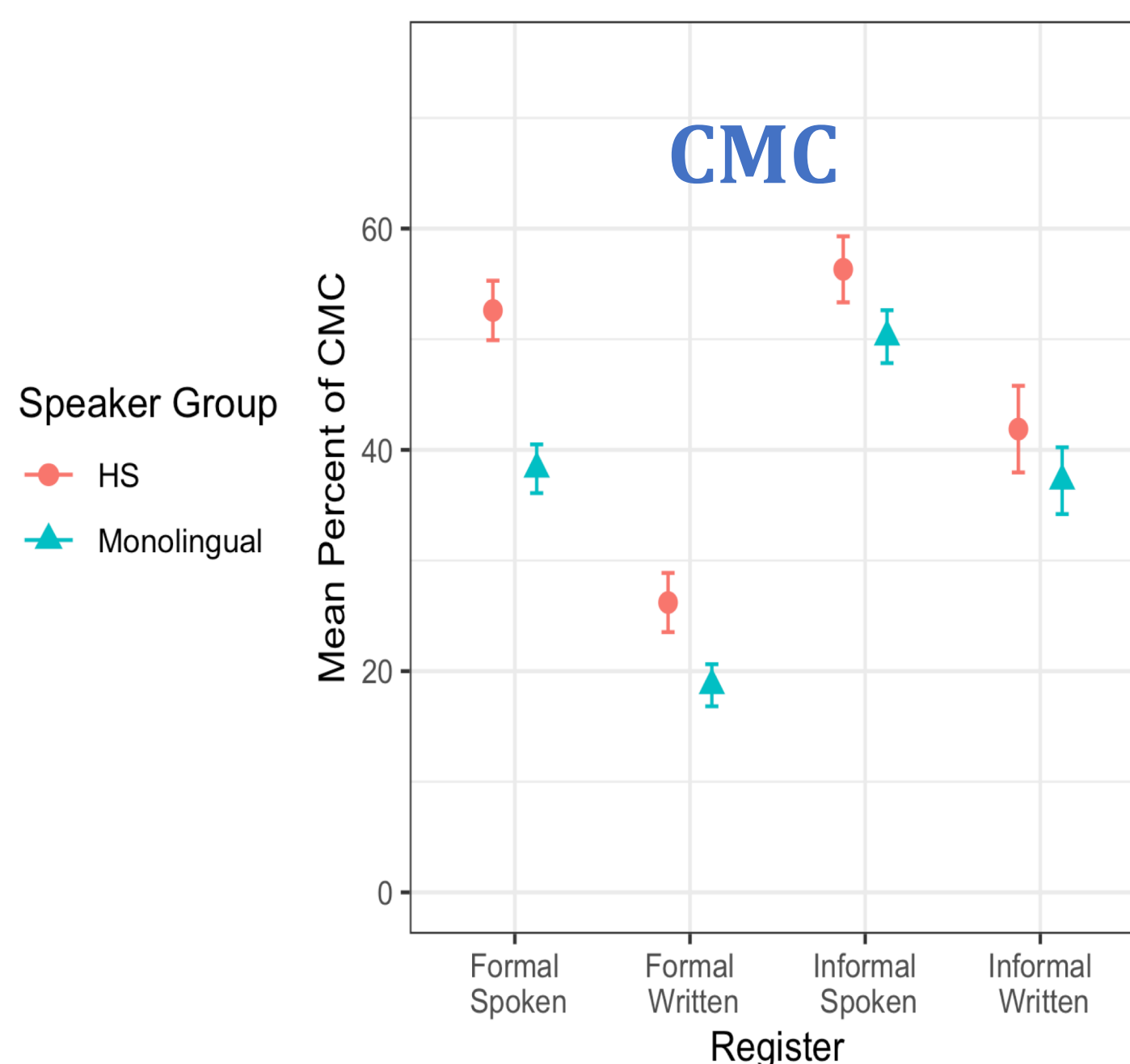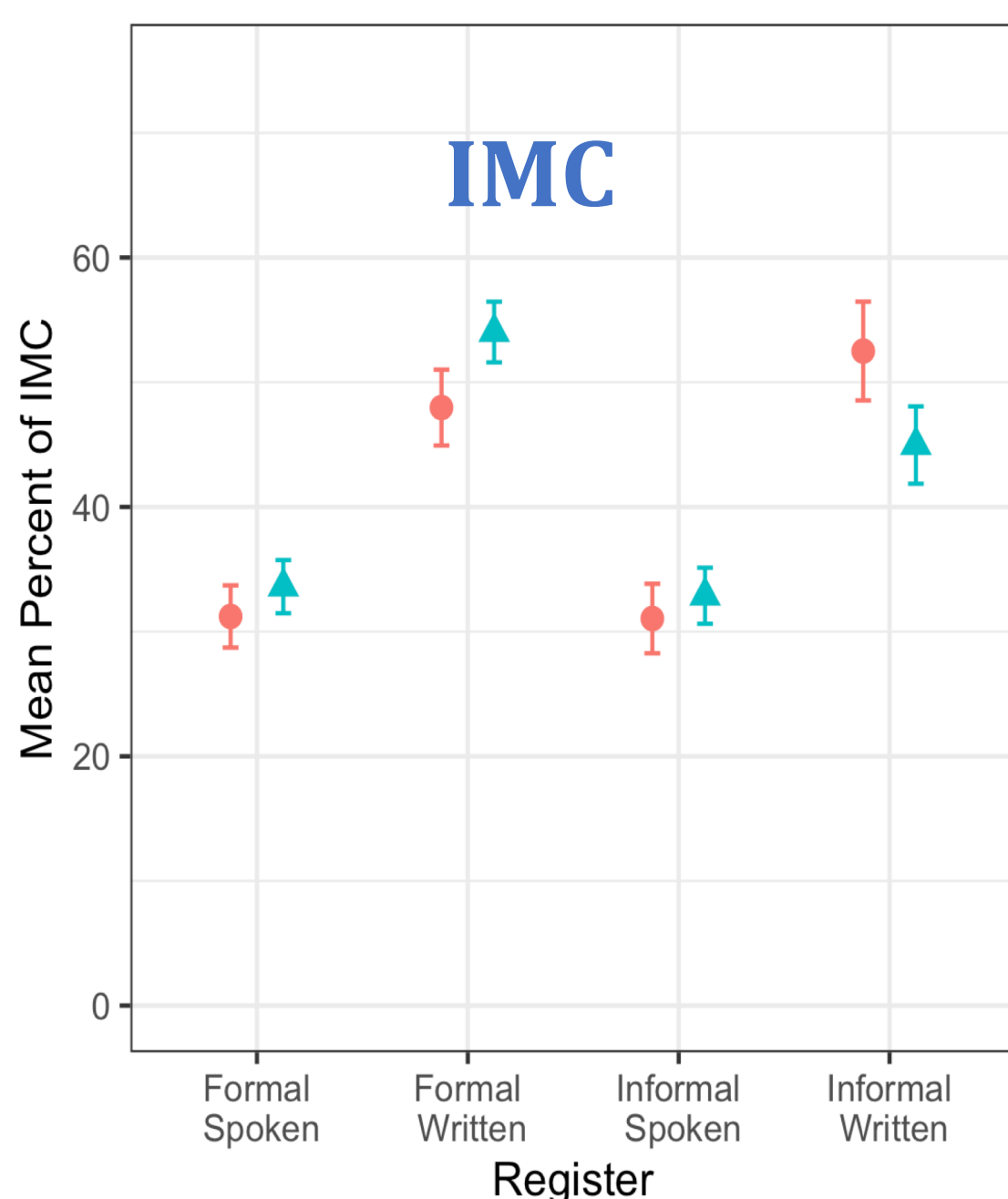
Independent main clauses (IMC):
I was walking down the street. I saw a couple.
Coordinated main clauses (CMC):
I was walking down the street, **and I saw a couple.**
Subordinate clauses (SC):
While I was walking down the street, I saw a couple.

Results

IMC: HSs = monolinguals in each condition, more IMCs in the written than in the spoken mode.
CMC: HSs > monolinguals, more CMCs in the informal than in the formal setting, more CMCs in the spoken than in the written mode.
SC: monolinguals > HSs, HSs sensitive to interaction of setting and mode, monolinguals only sensitive to setting.

Conclusion

- Registers have an effect on clause type choices.
- HSs produced more CMCs and fewer SCs than monolinguals.
- No 1:1 mapping of clause type choices between HSs and monolinguals but results point to the same syntactic organization of discourse.

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