Activation of L1 lexical networks during L2 collocational processing

A) RATIONALE FOR THE PROJECT
Even very advanced L2 speakers are known to have difficulties with lexical collocation, the statistical association between syntagmatically related words (e.g. utter failure, run risk). Learner corpus and elicited production studies with late bilinguals consistently report that collocational knowledge displays variability and is subject to L1 influence even when grammatical and other lexical aspects have been mastered to near-nativelike levels. Activation of L1 collocates during processing might be a reason why incremental, statistical learning of lexical associations in a L2 seems to proceed inefficiently even with massive input.

B) REFERENCES THAT SHOULD BE READ (if you do not have access to these, please email me)

C) RESEARCH AIMS / QUESTIONS
This project investigates how a bilingual's two languages interact beyond the word level, using multi-word units as test case. While there is relatively robust evidence for cross-linguistic lexical activation, including evidence for automatic translation, it is still presently unclear whether this translation activates the L1 lexical network (via shared lemma entries).

D) METHODS
You will use a combination of on and off-line methodologies, including eyetracking, lexical decision, and production measures. Participants will include both mono and bilinguals.

E) SKILLS AND OPPORTUNITIES YOU COULD GAIN
You will gain knowledge of advanced experimental and statistical methods.