

The 17th Annual
Boston University

Conference on
Language
Development



October 23, 24 & 25, 1992

The Seventeenth Annual

Boston University

Conference on Language Development

October 23, 24, and 25, 1992

**Organized by the
Graduate Students in the
Program in Applied Linguistics**

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Welcome

Welcome to the Seventeenth Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development. This year we are fortunate to have three distinguished invited speakers.

George Miller, of Princeton University, will deliver Friday evening's keynote address, "On Looking Through the Lexicon."

Saturday morning's program will begin with an address by Jean Aitchison, of the London School of Economics. It is entitled "Shuddering Halt or Sudden Spurt? The Linguistic Development of Pre-Adolescents."

Our Sunday morning speaker, Ken Hale, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will deliver an address entitled "On Resisting Language Loss: The Human Value of Local Languages."

Otherwise, the program is composed entirely of submitted abstracts. This year's papers were chosen from a record number of very fine submissions and represent the variety of topic areas covered in the abstracts we received.

We are grateful for the support and interest of all our participants. It is our hope that the conference will continue to reflect developments in an increasingly interdisciplinary field and attract participation from both theoretical and applied disciplines.

Enjoy the conference!

The 1992 Conference Committee
[graduate students in the Program in Applied Linguistics]

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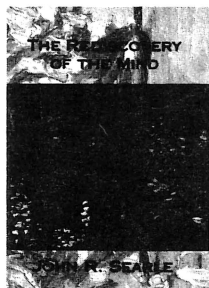
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Acknowledgments

The Boston University Conference on Language Development is run by graduate students in the Program in Applied Linguistics. We receive no direct financial support from Boston University. Therefore, we are most grateful for the uncompensated help, support, and advice of the many people who have contributed to this year's conference preparations. We are grateful to the members of the Boston University faculty for their encouragement and thoughtful advice.

We would specifically like to acknowledge Professor Carol Neidle, our faculty adviser for the conference and the Director of the Program in Applied Linguistics, who has devoted innumerable hours of her time to this project. Her high standards and clear and consistent vision of the Conference on Language Development have helped to give it its present shape.

We are also extremely grateful for the guidance of previous conference committee members, specifically Debra Aarons, Julie Christiansen, Donna Lardiere, Pamela Wendler-Shaw and Yunhee Lee. We have received invaluable last-minute support from a number of incoming graduate students and undergraduates, and we would like to specifically thank the following: Aleka Blackwell, Dalia Cahana, Michael Cyr, Vera Izrailit, Monica Makowski, Dan Sax, Andrea Zukowski.

All expenses (including the costs for rooms, audiovisual equipment, refreshments, phone and postage, copying costs, etc.) must be covered by fees collected from participants. We are very grateful for your support, and welcome charitable donations. We would especially like to thank Nan Bernstein Ratner for her generous contribution.

We would like to thank Kip Opperman of the Office of Disabled Student Services for ensuring that we have sign language interpreters available for all sessions of this conference.

Finally, for their careful reading and selection of abstracts, we would like to thank:

Jean Aitchison	Jean Berko Gleason	Carol Neidle
David Birdsong	Steve Griffin	Loraine Obler
Paul Bloom	James Hodgson	Mary Catherine O'Connor
Ellen Broselow	Nina Hyams	Steven Pinker
Courtney Cazden	Judy Kegl	Thomas Roeper
Harald Clahsen	Marcel Kinsbourne	Bonnie D. Schwartz
Stephen Crain	Beth Levin	Margaret Thomas
Lynn Eubank	Alec Marantz	R. Lorenza Trigo
Lyn Frazier	Lise Menn	Jill de Villiers
James Paul Gee	Paula Menyuk	Kenneth Wexler
	K.P. Mohanan	Lydia White

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General Information

REGISTRATION AND SESSION LOCATIONS

On **Friday**, registration will be held in the lobby on the second floor of the George Sherman Union from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM and from 7:00 to 8:00 PM.

On **Saturday and Sunday**, registration will take place in the lobby of the College of General Studies, beginning at 8:00 AM.

Please register before going to sessions. (Registration fees cover the costs of this non-profit conference. We appreciate your cooperation in wearing your name badge. We cannot admit you to sessions without it.)

KEYNOTE AND MORNING ADDRESSES

George Miller of Princeton University will deliver the keynote address at 8:00 PM in the Large Ballroom, 2nd floor, George Sherman Union. You are invited to a dessert buffet in the Small Ballroom (adjacent to the Grand Ballroom) immediately following the keynote address.

Jean Aitchison of the London School of Economics will deliver the Saturday morning address and **Ken Hale** of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology will deliver the Sunday morning address. The morning addresses will take place at 9:00 AM in the Sleeper Auditorium of the College of General Studies. We hope you will join us for the continental breakfast reception following each morning address in the lobby of the College of General Studies.

Parking is available in the Armory Parking lot (one block west of 881 Commonwealth Avenue) on Friday and Saturday at \$6 per day, and is free on Saturday afternoon and evening and all day Sunday. Please be sure to mention that you are attending the conference.

Publishers' Exhibits will be in the lobby of the College of General Studies on Saturday and Sunday.

Refreshments will be served during breaks.

The following are available at the **registration desk**:

- **ASL Interpreters** (Please inquire when you arrive.)
- **Message Board**
- **Lost and Found**
- **Campus Maps**

Addresses of conference buildings:

George Sherman Union: 775 Commonwealth Avenue

College of General Studies: 871 Commonwealth Avenue

PLEASE NOTE: Daylight Savings Time ends on Saturday night!
Please remember to sleep in an extra hour before coming to Sunday's sessions.

A-Chains in Children's Passive, and *get* as a Raising Verb

Daniel Fox & Yosef Grodzinsky, Tel Aviv University and Boston Veterans
Administration Medical Center

We propose a new account for children's performance on passive constructions. The basic phenomena we seek to explain are children's failure on *be*-passives and success on *get*-passives, as observed in many experiments. We argue for a syntactic structure for *get*-passives in which *get* is a Raising verb, and the participle governs a trace to its left, so as to form a synthetic compound.

Given this analysis of *get*-passives, we proceed to explain the acquisition phenomena. Children's success on *get*-passives indicates that they can construct A-chains (contrary to Borer & Wexler), although they fail on standard passives (contrary to Crain). Children do have a problem, but it has nothing to do with NP movement. Rather, it can be reduced to the internal structure of $\bar{1}'$. We provide a detailed explanation of the problem children have, based on considerations of economy, and we provide comparative evidence in support of this account from children's performance in passives with pre- and post-verbal subjects in Spanish (Pierce 1989).

Competing Analyses of Children's Early Questions

Virginia Valian, Hunter College & CUNY Graduate Center
Ingeborg Lasser & Deborah Mandelbaum, CUNY Graduate Center

Two year old children's early questions are potentially very revealing about the structure of the child's grammar. If properly formed, questions in English require: CP; IP; subject raising from SPEC VP to SPEC IP; tense lowering from I to V for all main verbs except *be*; V raising into I for *be*; obligatory INFL raising into C for wh-questions and optional raising for yes/no questions; *do* insertion; wh-movement from object, adjunct, or subject position to SPEC CP. We propose, in addition, that questions require a Q marker. After describing the children's early yes/no and wh-questions, we compare different proposals for how to characterize the children's early grammars. A consistent account of the child's grammar requires postulating an adult-like grammar, with the exception that the child improperly allows Q to fill C in wh-questions. Postulating more serious errors results in attributing a set of grammars to the child, rather than a single grammar for questions as well as declaratives, and fails to account for the child's range of question types.

The Acquisition of Weak Wh-Islands

William Philip, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Jill de Villiers, Smith College

Children's sensitivity to wh-islands has been well documented in recent years, but there is now linguistic work on various weak islands—negatives, factives and adverbs—which block adjunct wh-extraction as in:

- (1) Why_i didn't he say he was fired *t_i ?
- (2) Why_i did he forget he was fired *t_i ?
- (3) Why_i did he often say he was fired *t_i ?

In a recent semantic theory with implications for language acquisition, Szabolsci and Zwarts (1991) argue that the critical feature that island-inducing expressions have in common is that they are not monotone-increasing. The natural prediction that follows is that children should only show island effects once they know that the expression in question is not monotone-increasing. In a series of three experiments we explored 3 to 5 year olds' acquisition of this monotonicity property of adverbs, negatives, factive verbs and adjectives, and wh-forms, and their interpretation of potentially ambiguous *why*-questions containing each element. Island effects do in fact emerge gradually, and the prerequisite appears to be knowing for each weak island-inducer that it is not monotone-increasing. However, while wh-expressions behave as islands early:

- (4) Why_i did he ask what she made *t_i ?

they do so before children know that they are not monotone-increasing, suggesting a possible separate, syntactic mechanism.

Escape from Islands

Rosalind Thornton & Kenneth Wexler, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

"Strong islands" uncontroversially do not allow extraction, but there is debate surrounding the status of "weak islands". It is generally accepted, however, that adjuncts denoting manner, such as *how*, are not extractable (Chomsky 1986, Cinque 1990, Lasnik and Saito (forthcoming), Rizzi 1990). We investigated children's adherence to extraction from strong islands (clefts), as in (1); weak islands (*whether* clauses), as in (2); and controls with no island, as in (3). Thirty 3 to 6 year old children were tested: 10 in each group.

- (1) How did Donatello find out that it was Lisa who took a bath?
- (2) How did Donatello find out whether Lisa took a bath?
- (3) How did Donatello find out that Lisa took a bath?

Children were found to accept extraction from strong islands 21% of the time. Contrary to predictions, weak islands were accepted 75% of the time, patterning much like the controls which were accepted on 78% of trials. Two possible explanations are given: (i) context supported interpretation of the adjunct trace as an individual variable (Frampton 1990), (ii) children generate *whether* in C but fail to move it at LF to take scope so that it blocks extraction.

Copying and Binding in the Acquisition of Wh-Movement

Thomas Roeper & Ana Teresa Pérez-Leroux, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Previous work has shown that children learning languages experience a stage where sequences of two wh-expressions, where one was in SPEC CP of a sentential component, are reduced to one A-bar chain. This is represented in the configuration below:

- (1) [CP wh_i [IP ... [CP wh_i [IP ... v ec_i]]]]

We hypothesized that this was the result of treating a wh-expression as a +pronominal in inappropriate configurations. Thirty-three children of ages 3 to 5 were given an interpretation task followed by a question to test under which condition it was possible for a wh-word to be bound to another wh-word.

In the story, several individuals thought something about other individuals or about themselves:

- (2) The father thinks he sings well
The mother thinks she sings well. etc.

and the following question types were presented to the children:

- (3) Who thinks who sings well?
(4) Who thinks he sings well?

A bound response, i.e., "the father," is only possible for (4) in the adult grammar. However, the children gave an equal number of bound responses to both types of questions. Following certain theoretical treatments of partial movements, we hypothesized that if children's grammar analyzed sentential complements not as complements to the verb, but as adjoined to VP, children would be allowing a bound reading for a wh-expression in an adjunct, in the same way that binding to the head noun is permitted in the relative clause construction.

The Acquisition of French Relative Clauses Reconsidered

Maria Teresa Guasti & Ur Shlonsky, University of Geneva, Switzerland

We argue that early French Relative Clauses (RC's) with gaps involve movement, *contra* Labelle (1990), but that it is movement of the relative head, not of an operator. We suggest that children lack relative operators or, more generally, non-quantificational operators (Lasnik and Stowell 1991), perhaps for maturational reasons (Wexler 1991). Our account shows that the deviation of early RC's from adult grammar is due to this lacuna and is compensated for in a manner consistent with UG.

This analysis explains the absence of pied piping and the preponderance of gaps in object RC's in Labelle's corpus. We assimilate RC's where the relativized NP occurs *in situ*, to wh- *in situ* in French interrogatives. This is compatible with UG given that internally-headed RC's are attested crosslinguistically. We consider child and adult Korean (Lee et al. 1991) in this context. This approach also captures Flynn and Lust's (1980) observation that free relatives are acquired earlier than restrictive relatives.

Weird Past Tense Forms

Fei Xu & Steven Pinker, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Children overapply the regular *-ed* suffix, resulting in overregularization errors such as *breaked*, and also overapply some irregular patterns, resulting in irregularization errors such as *bring-brang*. We report the first quantitative analysis of irregularizations in children's spontaneous speech, involving 20,000 past and participle forms from 9 English-speaking children between the ages of 2 and 7 in the CHILDES database.

We found that the overall rate of irregularization was low, mean 0.0018, ranging from 0 to 0.007. There was a total of 31 tokens of irregularization, 26 involving irregular verbs and 5 involving regular verbs. There was virtually no consistency across verbs or within a child. We found no increase in irregularization rate from age 2 to 5; the only child for whom we have data past 5 showed a sharp increase between 5 and 7. Most irregularizations were based on exact analogies to existing past tense vowel-change patterns (e.g., *trick-truck*, like *stick-stuck*), though there were a few blends between an irregular vowel change and the regular suffix (e.g., *brunged*).

In sum, children's mechanism for producing irregular past tense forms is strikingly accurate. Irregularizations seem best analyzed as sporadic speech errors in rote memory with slight analogization tendencies.

The Acquisition of Inflectional Rules: Evidence from German Noun Plurals

Harald Clahsen, University of Düsseldorf, Germany
Gary Marcus, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

In studies on the acquisition of inflectional morphology in English, overregularization errors such as *goed* have been claimed to result from a default rule of *-ed* suffixation. Recently, however, it has been argued that rules of inflection do not exist and that overregularizations result from frequency differences in the input.

The systems of German noun plurals provide an interesting test, because in contrast to past tense marking in English, the default plural affix in German has lower type and token frequencies than several of the irregular forms. Moreover, irregular noun plurals in German are usually formed by affixation, not vowel change, unlike most English irregular verbs.

We will present experimental data and spontaneous speech data which demonstrate that German-speaking children develop a regular default plural which is qualitatively different from the irregular forms. Our most important finding is a striking correlation: plural affixes that are used in overregularizations are left out in compounds. This finding indicates that in the children's grammar, the linguistic process of compounding is sensitive to the distinction between regular and irregular plural affixes. We will propose a linguistic analysis of the plural overregularizations and the distribution of plurals-inside-compounds in terms of a modification of Kiparsky's (1982) level-ordering model.

The Learnability Problem in the Acquisition of Nominals: How Do Children Learn Words Like *College*?

Nancy N. Soja, Northeastern University

Children must learn that certain count nouns can be used bare whereas other semantically similar count nouns cannot (e.g., "I go to the college/institute." vs. "I go to college/*institute."). This is analogous to the problem faced by children learning verb alternations (e.g., "She gave/donated the book to the library." vs. "She gave/*donated the library the book."). The spontaneous speech of four children was searched for these words, regular count nouns, and mass nouns. The use of determiners and adjectives was determined for each kind of word. The analysis revealed that *college*-type nouns were differentiated from mass nouns and count nouns while being treated, syntactically, as noun phrases. These findings demonstrate the need to address the learnability problem in the nominal system. Preliminary research will be discussed that points towards a mechanism using broad and narrow range rules, similar to the mechanism provided by Pinker (1989) for the acquisition of verbs.

Semantic Constraints on the Acquisition of Adjectives

Sandeep Prasada, University of Pennsylvania

The present paper proposes an account of the semantic knowledge that underlies the learning of an adjective. The proposal is used to explain phenomena such as adjective ordering and restrictions on the modificational use of adjectives. In addition to explaining these phenomena, the analysis of adjectives is used to motivate a constraint on the meanings of novel adjectives. The constraint is that adjectives name values on dimensions on which a given kind shows variations.

This constraint on adjective meanings was tested in a word learning task with 32 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 year olds. In the experiment, the experimenter modified objects with an adjective or a noun. It was found that 2 and 3 year olds distinguish adjective and noun syntax and that they expect a word to name a property on a dimension of variation more often when the word is an adjective than when the word is a noun. The results provide evidence for the constraint that adjectives name values on dimensions on which a given kind shows variation.

On the Role of Tonal Phenomena in the Acquisition of Morphology

Sven Strömqvist, University of Göteborg, Sweden

Ann Peters, University of Hawai'i, Honolulu

In this paper we explore crosslinguistic evidence for the interaction of tonal phenomena and grammatical morphology in early language development, arguing that perceptually salient pitch contours can serve as a “spotlight” on morphemes associated with such contours, thereby guiding the child’s attention to the morphological forms in question. We look first at two languages which are typologically quite different, Swedish and Sesotho, presenting several striking similarities in their early morphological development. We then consider the typologically homogeneous group of mainland Scandinavian languages, predicting interesting effects in the acquisition of certain minimal differences among them. We present suggestive and possibly supporting evidence from both experimental and longitudinal case studies.

Nonparametric Abstraction in Language Acquisition

Edwin Williams, Princeton University

I will present features of lexical knowledge which I believe pose special learning problems. I will argue that lexical structure is at the same time more abstract and more language particular. This implies that neither a parameter setting nor a low level induction is a good model of the acquisition of lexical knowledge.

First, I will examine idiom families and show they exhibit a continuity of abstraction from the level of particulars about a single idiom, through the intermediate level characterization of idiom families, to parameter setting. I will argue that these idiom families provide the route to setting parameters.

Second, I will examine paradigms, establish that they are a pervasive and basic, not epiphenomenal, feature of language, and show that they exhibit a highly abstract and yet highly language particular structure.

In both these cases, the richness of structure reveals not rich substantive UG, but rather a rich learning device.

The Role of Communicative Gesture in the Transition to the Two-Word Stage

Jana Marie Iverson, University of Chicago

Elena Pizzuto & Virginia Volterra, National Council of Research (CNR), Rome, Italy

This study explores how the gestural and the vocal modality are used by normally developing, hearing children during the transition from the one-word to the two-word stage. We examine the spontaneous production of 12 Italian children at 16 and 20 months of age, focussing on the use of both single gestures/words, and combinations of words and/or gestures. Results indicate that gestures act as an important transitional device en route to the 2-word phase. From 16 to 20 months, a significant increase in the number of word+gesture and word+word combinations produced is noted, with word combinations emerging later than word+gesture combinations. These results complement previous findings regarding the role of gesture in early language acquisition in hearing children. All of the children communicated in the gestural modality, but their gestural communication was less complex at the combinatorial, symbolic level than their spoken language.

Ma, I Need a Mommy! First Person Reference in Young Children's Discourse

Richard Ely, Tufts University

Jean Berko Gleason & Rivka Y. Perlmann, Boston University

First person references in the speech of 24 preschoolers at dinner and in laboratory play sessions were analyzed using the computerized CLAN (Child Language Analysis) programs. More than 70% of children's *I* statements were in the present tense. References to the child's inner states were the most frequent (53%). Volition predominated among these ("I want"). Actions ("I blew the candles out") were the second largest category, accounting for 65% of statements in the past tense. Self-descriptive labels ("I'm big") (7%) were sometimes playful in nature ("I'm Mr. man-eating fish").

Preschool children's use of the pronoun *I* occurs predominantly in reference to their wants and needs. Reference to actions becomes the major category in past tense statements, as children use *I* to talk about their activities. The humorous use of descriptive labels occurs in contexts that indicate a growing metalinguistic and metacognitive ability.

The Use of Questions in Mandarin Adult-to-Child Speech: Evidence for Social Class Differences

Twila Tardif, Yale University

The present study examines the use of questions in the child-directed speech of 10 mainland Chinese families whose children were aged 21 to 26 months during the 6-month study period. Five (4 male, 1 female) of these children had parents who are considered "workers" (*gongren*, or blue-collar workers) in China and 5 (4 male, 1

female) had parents who are considered "intellectuals" (*zhishifenzi*, or college-educated white-collar employees and professionals). Results from when the children were 21 to 23 months of age ($M = 21;23$, $SD = 21$ days) indicate that there is a difference in the frequency of questions and imperatives directed to children, with working class caregivers asking fewer questions but giving more imperatives than "intellectuals," despite a failure to find differences in the total amount of speech directed to children. Further analyses concerning the consistency of these differences over 6 months of observation and across different types of activity settings will be discussed.

Infants Learn Lexical Items Better in Infant-Directed than in Adult-Directed Speech

Roberta Michnick Golinkoff & Anthony Alioto, University of Delaware
Kathy Hirsh-Pasek & Diana Kaufman, Temple University

This study examined the effect of the prosodic modifications of "motherese" or infant-directed (ID) speech on infants' acquisition of novel lexical items. While research has shown that infants can perceive the prosodic cues of ID speech, and even prefer to listen to ID over adult-directed (AD) speech, this is the first study of which we are aware that asks whether the features of ID speech facilitate the learning of lexical items. The question was tested using Golinkoff and Hirsh-Pasek's (1981) "preferential looking paradigm" by creation of a pair of videotapes of novel objects. Half the infant subjects saw the tapes accompanied by ID speech; half saw the tapes accompanied by AD speech. Results indicated that lexical learning did not occur when children heard AD speech but only when they heard ID speech.

Integration of Segmental and Suprasegmental Information in Early Speech Segmentation

James L. Morgan & Jenny R. Saffran, Brown University

Two studies, each employing a variation of the conditioned head turning technique, assessed contributions of rhythmic and distributional information to younger (6-7 months) and older (8-9 months) infants' segmentation of strings of syllables. In each study, twelve infants in each age group were assigned to one of three stimulus conditions. In the first, neither distributional nor rhythmic properties cued grouping. In the second, rhythmic, but not distributional properties, cued grouping. The two studies produced comparable results. Older infants showed superior performance only when both rhythmic cues were available. These results suggest that by 8-9 months infants are beginning to integrate segmental and suprasegmental information in discovering units that may be linguistically relevant. Other recent work (e.g., Werner and Tees 1984, Kuhl 1992) suggests that infants devote increased attention to segmental contrasts embodied in the input language during the second half of the first year. Our results suggest older infants may use suprasegmental cues as a means of isolating invariant sequences of phones that constitute words.

Null Subjects Across Child Languages

Nina Hyams, University of California, Los Angeles

Current theories of null subjects in early language are inadequate in several respects. Grammar-based accounts (e.g., Hyams 1986, Jaeggli and Hyams 1987) predict crosslinguistic uniformity at the initial stage. Studies show, however, that children vary with respect to the distribution and frequency of null arguments. For example, German/Dutch children drop both subjects and objects (de Haan and Tuijnman 1988, Poeppel and Wexler 1991), while English/French children omit only subjects. Also, Italian children drop subjects far more frequently than English speaking children (Valian 1991). On the other hand, performance-based accounts (Bloom 1990, Valian 1991) fail to account for many of the most salient properties associated with the null subject stage, for example, the subject/object asymmetry in English, and the trade-off between null subjects and overt pronouns over time (Hyams and Wexler 1991). In this paper, we provide a grammatical model of the null subject stage which captures the crosslinguistic facts.

Subject Dislocation in French Child Language

Renata A. Ferdinand, University of Leiden, The Netherlands

In adult spoken French, dislocation (left or right) of NP subjects in combination with a coreferential subject clitic (SCL) is very frequent. The hypothesis is that French child language shows the same pattern as adult spoken French in that postverbal NP subjects show the characteristics of right dislocation. This, and the assumption that in child language SCL's can drop during the null subject stage, could explain the variability of word order (S V and V S) in early French.

Romance and Germanic Clitics: A Comparison of the Acquisition

Marco Haverkort, University of California, Santa Cruz

Jürgen Weissenborn, Max Planck Institute, The Netherlands

The acquisition of clitics has fairly recently received serious attention (Guasti 1991, Haverkort and Weissenborn 1991, Penner 1990). The general picture that emerges from these studies which have concentrated on Romance languages, is that the syntactic properties of clitics are acquired early (before 2 years of age). The development of clitic placement in Germanic has not yet been studied in a systematic way. As opposed to Romance, in Germanic we observe (a) a subject-object asymmetry; (b) no strong correlation with the syntax of verbs; (c) a close relation to scrambling type phenomena.

These observations will be the starting point for a discussion of development of cliticization in early Germanic, its status in terms of X-bar theory, and its relation with scrambling, on the basis of longitudinal data from Dutch and German. It will be argued that Germanic cliticization is an instance of A-bar movement, involving a maximal projection. Differences between the acquisition of Germanic and Romance clitics will be discussed in this light.

The Role of AGR-features Gender and Number in the Grammar of Bilingual Children

Natascha Müller, University of Hamburg, Germany

In this paper I will investigate the development of the grammatical features number and gender in two bilingual children (German/French) from the age of 1;5 to 3;5.

There is evidence to suggest that in the early phases of language development, the grammatical features gender and number are not relevant in the children's grammars. I will argue that the syntactic category N is not specified for grammatical features yet and that the functional category DET is not available in the children's early representations of noun phrases in both languages.

At the age of 2;0/2;4, the grammatical features gender and number become relevant in the children's grammar. The children recognize the importance of gender and number as features of DET and N. Gender and number agreement first seems to depend on the feature definiteness. I will offer an account of DET in the children's grammars.

The Role of Conceptual Knowledge in the Acquisition of Count Nouns

Fei Xu & Susan Carey, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Count nouns provide the basis for determining what should be counted as two distinct entities and for tracing identity over time, and count nouns are the only terms in languages that serve these logical functions.

Previous studies have shown that infants as young as 4 months represent at least one concept with these logical properties: *object*. In the present study, we conducted two experiments with 10 month old infants to determine whether they use property information to trace the identity of different kinds of objects. The first experiment confirmed that infants understood that objects travel on spatially continuous paths and use this principle to individuate and trace identity of objects over time. The second experiment showed that 10 month old infants did not use property information to infer how many objects there were in a scenario.

These data are consistent with the claim that 10 month old infants do not yet understand that there are different kinds of objects in the world. It is not until after age 10 months that infants represent concepts of the sort *duck* or *ball*.

Syntactic Cues in the Acquisition of Number Words

Paul Bloom, Karen Wynn & Karen Kemtes, University of Arizona

The acquisition of number words poses a profound problem for theories of word learning. One theory is that children can use syntax-semantics mappings to acquire certain aspects of the words' meanings. This was tested through a set of spontaneous speech analyses on three child/adult dyads that focussed on their syntactic usage of adjectives, number words, and quantifiers. As predicted, both adults and 2 to 3 year olds treated number words differently from adjectives and most quantifiers—but used them in syntactic contexts associated with quantification over sets of individuals of a fixed numerosity.

Syntactic cues provide only limited information about number meaning, however, and 2 year olds go through an extended period in which they know that words such as *two* and *three* refer to numerosities—but they do not yet know which numerosities they refer to (Wynn 1992). This supports a two-stage acquisition theory where children first (i) use information to determine the broad semantic class of a novel word and then (ii) use observation and inference to acquire its precise meaning.

When Nouns Don't Surface as Verbs: Preemption in Children's Denominal Verbs

Amy Bellmer & Peter Gordon, University of Pittsburgh

The present study examines the development of children's knowledge of constraints on forming denominal verbs. The principle of Preemption (Clark and Clark 1979) proposes that denominal verbs are disallowed if there is another form with the same meaning (synonymy) or the same form has another conventional meaning (homonymy). In a test of 76 5 to 7 year olds, we examined whether their rejection of a blocked denominal verb (e.g., *"The boy *jarred* the peaches") was contingent on knowledge of either a synonymous form ("The boy *canned* the peaches") or a homonymous form ("The boy *jarred* the shelf"). The evidence for preemption was found in 6 and 7 year olds, but not 5 year olds. We explore the interpretation of these results in terms of nativist and empiricist approaches, suggesting that the relatively late appearance of preemption reflects underlying reorganizations of lexical space.

Constraints on a Theory of Verb Learning: Insights from Polysemy

Jess Gropen, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

How is it possible for children to learn that the verb *spread* can refer on some occasions to the distribution of a group of objects over a surface (e.g., *spreading pots and pans on the floor*) but on other occasions to the forceful contact and motion of a semisolid substance against a surface (e.g., *spreading butter on a toast*)? On the traditional accounts of concept formation, children engage in a form of hypothesis testing—retaining only those components of meaning that are true on every occasion of a word's use. The problem is that critical components of meaning (e.g., forceful contact) would be lost because they are false on some occasions; ultimately, the meaning of a verb *spread*, and many other words in English and other languages, would be whittled down to next to nothing.

In order to account for how children learn verbs with multiple and related meanings—known as **polysemous** verbs—I hypothesize that children exploit a correlation between the verb meanings and the types of contexts in which the verb is used (e.g., the distributive meaning always involves a semisolid substance). The hypothesis is discussed in terms of specific learning mechanisms, an independently motivated way of defining types of contexts, and relevant findings from the literature, including the results of a linguistic analysis of common polysemous verbs in child and parental speech. The findings support the view that children's independent categorization of objects in the world plays a critical and non-obvious role in how they learn to label the relations between those objects.

Consonant Harmony: A Reanalysis in Terms of Vowel-Consonant Interaction

Clara C. Levelt, University of Leiden, The Netherlands

In this paper it will be proposed that forms analyzed as cases of Consonant Harmony (CH), cf. the well-known "duck becomes [gAk]" case (Menn 1979), are in fact cases of assimilations triggered by vowels. Thus, assimilation does not take place between two non-adjacent consonants, but between adjacent consonants and vowels.

A study of the phonological development of 12 Dutch children (1;0-1;11 at the start of a 1 year data-collecting period) revealed problems with the main ingredients—the assumptions that (1) an underspecified consonant is present and (2) that consonants and vowels are on different planes in the child's phonological system—of the available non-linear accounts of CH. Assuming a different place feature representation, whereby consonants and vowels have one set of place features, sheds new light on the nature of apparent CH cases, and allows us to discard the problematic assumptions former analyses rest on.

Feature Geometry and Underspecification in Developing Phonologies

Mary Ellen Scullen, Indiana University

Using acquisitional data from a French child, SD (Deville 1991), this paper demonstrates the relevance of underspecification theory and feature geometry to developing systems and raises the following theoretical issues: the nature of underspecified representations in early child phonology, the role of context-sensitive underspecification, and segmentalization as a developmental process. SD's substitution data support a model of feature geometry where consonants and vowels are represented on different levels of the geometry but share place features (Clements 1991). They also suggest that children begin with radically underspecified representations rather than more fully specified contrastive representations as posited by Ingram (1991). SD also exhibits putative cases of harmony—nasal, continuant, and voicing. This suggests that feature segmentalization does not occur until 1;10-11, when harmony ceases. Prior to that time, the relevant domain for SD is some unit larger than a segment (cf. Iverson and Wheeler 1987).

Vowel Acquisition in Hungarian: Evidence for an Order of Feature Acquisition

E. Jane Fee, Dalhousie University, Canada

The present study provides an in-depth examination of vocalic acquisition in Hungarian, based on data from 4 children aged 1;1 to 1;11. Hungarian has a particularly interesting vocalic system, which contains 7 short vowels paired with 7 long vowels, with each set containing back and front rounded and unrounded vowels (Vago 1980, Ringen 1986). Results of the analyses demonstrate that approximately 85% of attempted vowels were correctly produced, with a majority of errors being due to confusions between long and short vowels. For all 3 children, the short vowel inventory is acquired by approximately 1;9, while the long vowel inventory is only beginning to develop at this time. The first vowels acquired are /a/, /e/ and /o/, followed by /i/, then by /u/, and finally by the front round vowels /ö/ and /ü/. I propose a theory of **feature availability**, in which features become available to children in the fixed order [low], [back], [high] and then [round] to account for this order of emergence.

Asymmetries in the Acquisition of Phonemic Inventories

Judith A. Gierut & Mary T. Hughes, Indiana University

Advancement of phonological theory often emerges from examination of asymmetries in fully developed primary languages. Two seemingly unrelated asymmetries were observed in the phonemic inventories of 30 children with phonological delay: (1) distinctions were added following a pattern of voice then place, and (2) phonemic structure was elaborated by adding either affricates or liquids following the introduction of a continuant distinction. Importantly, selection of affricates versus liquids had consequences for the pattern of voice then place. Children who added an affricate introduced concurrently a voice distinction within fricatives, in contrast to those who added a liquid with no accompanying fricative voice distinction. The voice-place pattern is hypothesized to dictate phonemic acquisition, and further, motivates a single core distinction between laryngeal and supralaryngeal properties in feature geometries. Moreover, phonemic acquisition will proceed in cyclic fashion, alternating between laryngeal and supralaryngeal.

Competence or Performance? What Phonology Shows About Children's Emerging Syntax

Katherine Demuth, Brown University

Early stages of acquisition show variability in the use of Functional Categories. This variability has been interpreted by Radford (1990) and Lebeaux (1988) to indicate that children do not have grammatical knowledge of closed class items, and that early child grammars are limited to a VP projection, with no access to IP or CP, i.e., that they have one grammar, with only lexical projections.

Alternatively, Lebeaux suggests that variable output can be interpreted as occasionally "falling back" to a more primitive grammatical structure, showing alternation between the positing of a VP and an IP. Such a view implies that children have two grammars developing concurrently, one of which includes functional projections, the other of which does not.

In this paper we argue for a metrical model of production, where children have one grammar including functional projections, but where functional categories may be phonetically unrealized as a result of metrically conditioned constraints on early child productions.

IP and its Development in Mauritian Creole Grammar

Dany Adone, University of Hamburg, Germany

It has been proposed that functional categories are present from the earliest stage in the child grammar. This may apply for languages such as German, French, Italian (all languages with more or less morphology). In this paper we argue that there is no evidence for the presence of functional categories in earliest Mauritian child grammar (henceforth MC). The study of MC provides an interesting case study because it does not have any overt morphology and thus every element under \bar{I}' is generated separately on the surface structure.

We base this claim on our research into the development of Tense, Modality and Aspect markers, modal verbs and the finiteness and nonfiniteness distinction in the earliest stage of MC grammar.

First we present a brief characterization of IP in the adult MC grammar. Second, we analyze the acquisition data. Finally, we discuss the theoretical implications of our findings for the ongoing debate on the availability of IP in early child grammar.

Subject Case and the Acquisition of CP

Anne Vainikka, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Based on longitudinal data from four English-speaking children I propose the following stages of development:

Stage I: sentences consist of a bare VP (cf. Radford 1988)

Stage II: IP has been acquired, but there is no evidence for a CP

Stage IIIa: CP begins to play a role in the grammar, but it is not productive

Stage IIIb: CP has been acquired.

I show that children use non-nominative subjects at two points in the development. During the earliest stage of syntactic development, 'me' or 'my' subjects occur in the SPEC VP because no other syntactic position is available for it. After that early stage, nominative *I* subjects appear together with INFL-elements; modals, certain forms of auxiliaries, and the productive past tense *-ed* show up for the first time. I argue that the IP comes in at this point, while there is no clear evidence for CP at this stage.

The second point at which children use non-nominative subjects coincides with the appearance of the first clear CP-constructions. I propose that at this stage (Stage IIIa), the *wh*-phrase exceptionally occupies the SPEC IP position, preventing the subject from raising to the SPEC IP. Once CP has been fully mastered, the SPEC IP position is again available for the subject, resulting in nominative case.

Acquisition of the CP

Thomas Roeper, University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Jill de Villiers, Smith College

In this paper it is argued that it is not clear that UG guarantees that all forms of sentential complementation entail the presence of a CP. Therefore it is possible that a child must project a complement VP without a CP (see Clark 1989). And therefore it follows that for all complement clauses the child must find evidence to "decide" if the complement contains a CP. Among the evidence used to argue for the lack of CP is the deletion of the complementizer (e.g., Radford 1990). We have asked whether children can be shown to be sensitive to the presence or absence of the complementizer in comprehension studies. One study compared interpretations of the following:

- (1) They said in school they played baseball.
- (2) They said that in school they played baseball.

If children are insensitive to *that*, then they could find either (1) or (2) ambiguous. In fact we have found precisely this result in a picture choice experiment. This result echoes an earlier result in which French children failed to discriminate quotation from indirect speech on the basis of the complementizer *que*. It is natural to expect that where verb-subcategorization is involved, lexical specification of the properties of CP cannot be acquired at once but must be triggered on a construction by construction basis in terms of specific lexical triggers.

Semantic Memory and Foreign Language Learning

Angela Willson-Quayle, Wake Forest University

An experiment was conducted to investigate whether differences in semantic memory type might exist between advanced and beginner foreign language learners. Two aspects of memory were studied: memory for meaning or “gist” of passages and memory for the original language of presentation of passages (i.e., whether the passage was presented in Spanish, French or English). Three groups of subjects of varying degrees of foreign language competence participated and their recall of items was compared. It was predicted that: (i) compared to beginners (1st years), the more advanced subjects (2nd and 4th years) would recall gist of passages with greater accuracy and language of presentation of passages with poorer accuracy and (ii) compared to advanced subjects, the beginners would show the opposite effect. Both predictions were supported by the data. The assertion that semantic memory in advanced Ss is more abstractive and less language specific, while in beginner subjects it is more verbal, is made. The results are discussed in terms of the relative influence of individual level of comprehension and attentional processes.

Why are Nominal Terms Learned Faster than Dimensional Adjectives? A Connectionist Account

Michael Gasser & Linda B. Smith, Indiana University

Children learn names for categories of things more rapidly than they learn names for the perceptual attributes of objects. The mechanisms behind this nominal advantage over dimensional adjectives were investigated by building a feed forward connectionist network that learned to name objects and to label the perceptual properties of objects. One factor that emerged as critical to the nominal advantage is category span. Nouns span “smaller” categories than dimensional adjectives and the network showed an advantage in learning nominal categories only when the span of nominals was less than that of adjectives.

Lexical Access in Children: New Evidence from Masked Priming

Marc Pratarelli, Speech Communication Research Laboratories, Inc. & Naval Health Research Center, San Diego
Kathryn Perry, San Diego State University & Naval Health Research Center

The first stage of word recognition is the visual stimulus encoding where graphemic/orthographic features of words are extracted and a search conducted through the lexicon. This phase is also known as automatic lexical access. Previous notions suggest that visual encoding is slower in children and that their higher reliance on context reflects a compensatory effect. Such notions are supported by models that rely more heavily on top-down processes (context) in comparison to the data driven bottom-up processes (lexical access). Our goal was to compare the process of automatic lexical access in normal 4th grade readers with that used by adults. A masking procedure was used on Identity and non-Identity primes during a lexical decision task. ANOVA results suggest that although adults were faster in all conditions, the priming effect was not slower in children, a result that does not support previous contentions that visual encoding is slower in this age group.

[session continues on page 20]



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Lexical Processing: Searching for an Explanation of Developmental Differences in Speed

Jan Edwards, Hunter College & The Graduate Center, CUNY
Margaret Lahey, Emerson College

This study examined the influence of non-lexical response factors on the speed of lexical processing. Adults and children participated in an auditory lexical decision task and a confrontation naming task (where the response signal varied from 0 to 1300 ms after picture presentation). Response times on both tasks decreased significantly as age increased. In the confrontation naming task, significant differences between the children and adults were observed even at the longest delay intervals when all access processing should have been completed. On the lexical decision task, significant differences between the children and the adults disappeared when the time taken to respond to a tone was subtracted from lexical decision times. These results indicate that much of the developmental increase in the speed of lexical processing on such tasks is related to non-lexical response factors. Implications of such findings for understanding developmental differences in lexical organization will be discussed.

Movements from Fingerspelling Underlie Deaf Spelling

Caroline Carrithers, Rutgers University
Carol J. Patrie, Gallaudet University
Barry Weinstein, Rutgers University

One of our deaf subjects spelled 447 out of 550 words correctly; a second spelled 441 out of 450 correctly. These 2 deaf subjects were the best spellers from a combined group of 7 deaf and 7 hearing subjects given identical test batteries. The scores of 4 of the remaining 5 deaf subjects were not significantly different from those of the hearing controls. These data demonstrate that deaf bilinguals' ability to spell words in a spoken language is the functional equivalent of that developed by hearing monolinguals.

However, the deaf subjects produced more transposition errors (*carrot* → *corrat*), but fewer consonant substitutions (*bribe* → *brime*); they produced more phonologically impossible responses (*brisk* → *brsck*), but fewer phonologically equivalent errors (*odor* → *oder*). From evidence that the lexical representations of deaf spellers consist of co-articulation instructions choreographing fingerspelled responses, we hypothesize that deaf signers learn to spell by associating fingerspelled movements with printed text.

The Elaboration of Segmental Structure in First Language Acquisition: Evidence from the Phonological Discrimination of English Phonemes

John S. Matthews & Cynthia A. Brown, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

Current phonological theory maintains that the distinctive features internal to the segment are arranged hierarchically (Clements 1985, Sagey 1986). Extending previous work of Jakobson (1941-1968), Rice & Avery (1991) have proposed that children build these types of structural representations based on contrasts present in the phonemic inventory of the input language. The present study evaluates the Rice and Avery model of phoneme acquisition with empirical data. We also argue that learning mechanisms proposed for the acquisition of syntactic knowledge (in particular, the Subset Principle and a structure building mechanism) also operate in the acquisition of phonology.

We present data from 20 subjects ranging in age from 1;6 to 2;6. Successful performance on a picture identification task is taken as evidence that the child is able to discriminate the two phonemes which distinguish the names of the pictures. This ability demonstrates that they have built the structure necessary to differentiate the two segments. The data indicate that children do, in fact, differ with respect to their phonological discrimination of segments. Furthermore, the performance of individual subjects demonstrates that superordinate structure is posited before dependent structure is elaborated. Thus, our study provides empirical support for the hypothesis that feature geometry is constructed by the child rather than being present in the child's grammar from the start in its fully-elaborated form.

The Acquisition of Dutch Stress

Paula Fikkert, University of Leiden, The Netherlands

In this paper stress patterns in Dutch child language are analyzed. The basic pattern is that disyllabic words with initial stress are not reduced, while those with final stress are initially reduced to monosyllables (stage 1). If both syllables are produced, stress is often on the first (stage 2):

			<i>Stage 1</i>	→	<i>Stage 2</i>
gitaar	/χi' taɪ /	'guitar'	['ta]	→	['sita]
kalkoen	/kal' kun /	'turkey'	['kun]	→	['kɑukun]

Crucially, the stressed syllable of the adult word is always maintained; however, it need not be realized as stressed. Rather, it seems that stress in adult words helps the child to select material of the adult word, which is then mapped onto the child's trochaic foot template. This shows that the independence of prosodic structure and segmental content argued for in non-linear phonology is manifested particularly clearly by the child acquiring the language. Furthermore, the mechanism used by the child is reminiscent of that of the theory of prosodic circumscription.

How Native is a Near-Native Speaker?

Lydia White & Fred Genesee, McGill University, Canada

In order to assess whether UG plays a role in L2 acquisition, it is important to establish whether bilinguals ever attain native-like competence in the UG domain. Results from recent studies are conflicting: some report that near-native L2 speakers do not achieve native-like competence in certain areas (Coppieters 1987, Sorace 1991), while others report few differences between near-natives and natives (Birdsong 1991). These studies suffer from vague criteria for choosing subjects.

We report on a study where (a) criteria were developed to classify subjects as near-native and (b) near-native subjects are compared to non-natives with respect to the operation of UG. Subjects were 89 bilingual speakers (English as L2) and 19 monolingual English controls. Subjects were interviewed; portions of each interview were submitted to two judges who rated them on general fluency, phonology, syntax, morphology and lexicon. On the basis of these ratings, 45 of the subjects were classified as near-native and 44 were classed as non-native.

Subjects took a grammaticality judgment task (involving judgments and reaction times) and oral and written production tasks. All tasks tapped subjects' knowledge of various principles of UG constraining wh-movement (ECP, Subjacency). The near-natives' performance is not significantly different from the monolinguals': they neither accept nor produce violations of UG. There are few significant effects for age of exposure to English for the near-native group. In conclusion, if consistent criteria are adopted, near-natives are totally native-like in the UG domain, even if they are late learners of the L2.

Knowledge of Ungrammaticality in Second Language Acquisition Theory

David Birdsong, University of Texas, Austin

Following Felix (1985), Zobl (in press) regards knowledge of target language ungrammaticality—which is not derivable from input—as evidence for UG's availability. Zobl supports this position by pointing out an asymmetry: in several studies, L2 learners are more accurate, and show less intragroup variability, for judgments of ungrammatical UG-type items than for corresponding grammatical items. The present paper challenges the assumptions and the evidence associated with this position.

(1) Closer examination of studies that Zobl considers reveals no generalized performance for ungrammatical items.

(2) In Trahey and White (1992), Francophone learners properly accept English SAVO, but are less successful in learning that SVAO is ungrammatical.

(3) L2 learners of French and Spanish abstract case are more accurate in judgments of grammatical items than ungrammatical items (Ayoun 1992).

(4) Birdsong (1991) finds no asymmetry for +/- grammatical items among near-native French speakers.

(5) Linguists' determinations of nominal grammaticality are notoriously problematic points of reference.

(6) The position on knowledge of ungrammaticality cannot predict or account for differences among groups at various proficiency levels, differences depending on types of constraints violated, or additivity effects noted in judgments when multiple constraints are violated.

(7) While attested asymmetries may be consistent with a domain-specific knowledge account, they are also consistent with domain-general accounts based in perception.

Second Language Acquisition and the Subset Principle

Dawn MacLaughlin, Boston University

In this paper, I argue against the hypothesis that the unavailability of the Subset Principle (SP) to second language learners is (partly) responsible for the fossilization that seems characteristic of L2A (White 1989). This hypothesis gives rise to both logical and empirical problems. In reviewing the L2 research on which the hypothesis is based, I argue that 1) logically, there is an alternative interpretation of the L2 results which does not rule out the operation of the SP; but 2) the parameters that have been investigated may not actually involve the SP. Concentrating the discussion on the parameterized binding theory (Manzini & Wexler 1987), I discuss several implications for L2A theory, and I suggest an alternative approach to binding which does not involve subset parameters. I conclude that there is no support for this hypothesized difference between L1A and L2A concerning the availability of the SP.

On the Use of Triggers in Parameter Setting

Robert Frank & Shyam Kapur, University of Pennsylvania

Parameter-based theories, such as Government-Binding Theory (Chomsky 1981), have been heralded as providing an answer to many of the learnability problems present in earlier theories. Since such a theory of grammar permits only a finite number of possible languages, learnability is trivially guaranteed (Gold 1967). However, the learning-theoretic results guarantee only that the learner will *eventually* succeed and only under conditions of non-noisy input. For parameterization to yield computationally feasible and robust learning, the parameter space must have a special structure. In this paper, we explore one such structure that has been proposed, the existence of triggering data. We consider the formalization of triggers offered by Gibson & Wexler (1992) and show that the presence of such triggers does not guarantee feasibility and robustness in learning. In addition, we show that the absence of triggers that is displayed in linguistically realistic parameter spaces, such as the parameterization of word order by Gibson and Wexler, is quite exceptional, and hence we argue that the existence of triggers alone is unlikely to be a central property of human grammar.

Friday

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

	Auditorium	East Balcony	Terrace Lounge
	Syntax	Morphology and the Lexicon	Early Child Language
9:00	<i>D. Fox & Y. Grodzinsky</i> , A-Chains in Children's Passive, and "get" as a Raising Verb	<i>F. Xu & S. Pinker</i> , Weird Past Tense Forms	<i>J. Iverson, E. Pizzuto & V. Volterra</i> , The Role of Communicative Gesture in the Transition to the Two-Word Stage
9:40	<i>V. Valian, I. Lasser & D. Mandelbaum</i> , Competing Analyses of Children's Early Questions	<i>H. Clahsen & G. Marcus</i> , The Acquisition of Inflectional Rules: Evidence from German Noun Plurals	<i>R. Ely, J. Berko Gleason & R. Perlmann</i> , Ma, I Need a Mommy! First Person Reference in Young Children's Discourse
10:30	<i>W. Philip & J. de Villiers</i> , The Acquisition of Weak Wh-Islands	<i>N. Soja</i> , The Learnability Problem in the Acquisition of Nominals: How Do Children Learn Words Like "College"?	<i>T. Tardif</i> , The Use of Questions in Mandarin Adult-to-Child Speech: Evidence for Social Class Differences
11:10	<i>R. Thornton & K. Wexler</i> , Escape from Islands	<i>S. Prasada</i> , Semantic Constraints on the Acquisition of Adjectives	<i>R. Golinkoff, A. Alioto, K. Hirsh-Pasek & D. Kaufman</i> , Infants Learn Lexical Items Better in Infant-Directed than in Adult-Directed Speech
12:00	<i>T. Roeper & A. Pérez-Leroux</i> , Copying and Binding in the Acquisition of Wh-Movement	<i>S. Strömquist & A. Peters</i> , On the Role of Tonal Phenomena in the Acquisition of Morphology	<i>J. Morgan & J. Saffran</i> , Integration of Segmental and Suprasegmental Information in Early Speech Segmentation
12:40	<i>M. Guasti & U. Shlonsky</i> , The Acquisition of French Relative Clauses Reconsidered	<i>E. Williams</i> , Nonparametric Abstraction in Language Acquisition	

Auditorium

	Syntax
3:00	<i>N. Hyams</i> , Null Subjects Across Child Languages
3:40	<i>R. Ferdinand</i> , Subject Dislocation in French Child Language
4:30	<i>M. Haverkort & J. Weissenborn</i> , Romance and Germanic Clitics: A Comparison of the Acquisition
5:10	<i>N. Müller</i> , The Role of AGR-features Gender and Number in the Grammar of Bilingual Children (German/French)

East Balcony

	Morphology and the Lexicon
	<i>F. Xu & S. Carey</i> , The Role of Conceptual Knowledge in the Acquisition of Count Nouns
	<i>P. Bloom, K. Wynn & K. Kemtes</i> , Syntactic Cues in the Acquisition of Number Words
	<i>A. Bellmer & P. Gordon</i> , When Nouns Don't Surface as Verbs: Preemption in Children's Denominal Verbs
	<i>J. Gropen</i> , Constraints on a Theory of Verb Learning: Insights from Polysemy

Terrace Lounge

	Phonology
	<i>C. Levell</i> , Consonant Harmony: A Reanalysis in Terms of Vowel-Consonant Interaction
	<i>M. E. Scullen</i> , Feature Geometry and Underspecification in Developing Phonologies
	<i>E. J. Fee</i> , Vowel Acquisition in Hungarian: Evidence for an Order of Feature Acquisition
	<i>J. Gierut & M. Hughes</i> , Asymmetries in the Acquisition of Phonemic Inventories

8:00 *Grand Ballroom*

George Miller, Princeton University
On Looking Through the Lexicon

Jean Aitchison, London School of Economics
Shuddering Halt or Sudden Spurt? The Linguistic Development of Pre-Adolescents

Sleeper Auditorium

Room 511

Room 515

Room 505

	Syntax	Lexical Processing	Phonology	Second Language Acquisition and Parameter Setting
10:30	<i>K. Demuth</i> , What Phonology Shows About Children's Emerging Syntax	<i>A. Willson-Quayle</i> , Semantic Memory and Foreign Language Learning <i>M. Gasser & L. Smith</i> , Why are Nominal Terms Learned Faster than Dimensional Adjectives? A Connectionist Account	<i>C. Carrithers, C. Patrie & B. Weinstein</i> , Movements from Fingerspelling Underlie Deaf Spelling <i>J. Matthews & C. Brown</i> , The Elaboration of Segmental Structure in First Language Acquisition: Evidence from the Phonological Discrimination of English Phonemes	<i>L. White & F. Genesee</i> , How Native is a Near-Native Speaker? <i>D. Birdsong</i> , Knowledge of Ungrammaticality in Second Language Acquisition Theory
11:10	<i>D. Adone</i> , IP and its Development in Mauritian Creole Grammar	<i>M. Pratarelli & K. Perry</i> , Lexical Access in Children: New Evidence from Masked Priming <i>J. Edwards & M. Lahey</i> , Lexical Processing: Searching for an Explanation of Developmental Differences in Speed	<i>P. Fikkert</i> , The Acquisition of Dutch Stress	<i>D. MacLaughlin</i> , Second Language Acquisition and the Subset Principle <i>R. Frank & S. Kapur</i> , On the Use of Triggers in Parameter Setting
12:00	<i>A. Vainikka</i> , Subject Case and the Acquisition of CP			
12:40	<i>T. Roeper & J. de Villiers</i> , Acquisition of the CP			

Sleeper Auditorium

Room 511

Room 515

Room 505

<p>3:00</p> <p>Syntax</p> <p><i>Z. Penner & N. Müller, On the Early Stages in the Acquisition of Finite Subordinate Clauses: The Syntax of the So-called Preconjunctive Embedded Clauses</i></p> <p>3:40</p> <p><i>J. van Kampen, Underspecification of Functional Features: The Acquisition of Root Wh-questions in Dutch and English</i></p>	<p>Exceptional Language</p> <p><i>H. van der Lely, Canonical Linking Rules: An Investigation of Forward vs. Reverse Linking in Normally Developing & Specifically Language Impaired Children</i></p> <p><i>T. Fechnay & L. Rescorla, Mother-Child Synchrony in Specific Expressive Language Delayed (SELD) and Normal Toddlers</i></p>	<p>Early Child Language</p> <p><i>V. Gathercole, S. Somerville, L. Cramer & M. Jansen op de Haar, Whole Object vs. Substance: Function and the Determination of Ontological Status</i></p> <p><i>S. Jones, L. Smith, B. Landau & L. Gershkoff-Stowe, On the Origins of the Shape Bias in Young Children's Novel Word Extensions</i></p>	<p>Second Language Acquisition</p> <p><i>G. Lee, A Reanalysis of Bley-Vroman, Felix & Ioup: L2A, UG and L1 Influence</i></p> <p><i>B. Schwartz, An Alternative Account of Apparent Inaccessibility to UG in L2A</i></p>
<p>4:30</p> <p><i>U. Lakshmanan & L. Selinker, The Status of CP and the Tensed Complementizer 'that' in the Developing L2 Grammars of English</i></p> <p>5:10</p> <p><i>T. Hoekstra, C. Koster & T. Roeper, Left-Branch Violations in Child Grammar</i></p>	<p><i>M. Bodwell, M. Chesnick, T. Tsushima, M. Green & P. Meryuk, An Analysis of the Story Propositions Recalled by Language Disordered and Non-Language Disordered Children</i></p> <p><i>W. Frawley, A Vygotskian Account of Language Disorders with Form/Function Dissociations and Pragmatic Deficits</i></p>	<p><i>C. Echols, The Role of Linguistic Context in the Identification of Nouns and Verbs by Young Language Learners</i></p> <p><i>S. deCordova, Lexical Creativity by Children and Adults: Conversion in English</i></p>	<p>Phonological Awareness and Written Language</p> <p><i>J. Hodgson & G. Johnson, Metaphonological Skills in the Development of Reading: A Reconsideration Based on Cognitive Neuropsychological Case Data</i></p> <p><i>M. Yavas & F. Yavas, Phonological Awareness and Reading Readiness</i></p>

Sunday

All sessions in the College of General Studies

Sleeper Auditorium

9:00

Ken Hale, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
On Resisting Language Loss: The Human Value of Local Languages

Sleeper Auditorium

Room 511

Room 505

	Syntax	Neurolinguistics	Discourse & Narrative
10:30	<i>K. Brothier & K. Wexler</i> , Control Structures in Child Grammar	<i>D. Townsend, T. Bever & C. Carrithers</i> , Heredity, Maturation, and Proficiency in Sentence Comprehension	<i>K. Malan</i> , Structure and Coherence in South African Children's Personal Narratives
11:10	<i>T. Sano</i> , Explaining the Developmental Delay with the Continuity of UG: The Case of the "Condition B Effect"	<i>R. Loew, J. Kegl & H. Poizner</i> , Flattening of Distinctions in a Parkinsonian Signer	<i>A. Miranda, L. Camp, L. Hemphill & D. Wolf</i> , Developmental Changes in Children's Use of Tense in Narrative
12:00	<i>C. Foley, Z. del Prado, J. Barbier & B. Lust</i> , An LF Representation of Pronouns in VP Ellipsis: An Argument for UG in the Initial State	<i>V. Shafer, L. Gerken, J. Shucard & D. Shucard</i> , "The" and the Brain: An Electrophysiological Study of Infants' Sensitivity to English Function Morphemes	<i>S. Engel</i> , Are there Reminiscers and Practical Rememberers in the Classroom?
12:40	<i>S. Crain, W. Philip, K. Drozd, T. Roeper & K. Matsuoka</i> , "Only" in Child Language	<i>Y. Levy, N. Amir & R. Shalev</i> , A Further Look at the Null-Subject Parameter: Data from the Acquisition of Hebrew	<i>Y. Kuwahara, L. Pease-Avarez & K. Hakuta</i> , Shifting Toward Explicitness

All sessions in the College of General Studies

Sleeper Auditorium

Room 511

Room 505

	Syntax	Bilingualism	Discourse & Narrative
3:00	<i>A. van Hout & J. Weissenborn, Aspectual Bootstrapping: On the Acquisition of Unaccusativity</i>	<i>D. Kaufman, Fragmentation and Crosslinguistic Restructuring in L1 Attrition: Evidence from Word Innovations</i>	<i>D. Harkins, Mother-Child Storytelling Patterns and Four-Year-Old Children's Narrative Performance</i>
3:40	<i>M. Jack & J. Kegl, Argument Structure Profiles of Aphasic vs. Non-Aphasic Narrative Production</i>	<i>N. Mahecha, L. Obler, A. Haravon & J. Centeno, Is there a Bilingual Monitor for Code-Switching?</i>	<i>T. Lensmire & D. Beals, Appropriating Others' Words: Five Little Peppers, "Gingerbread Man," and Suzanne's The Missing Piece</i>

On the Early Stages in the Acquisition of Finite Subordinate Clauses: The Syntax of the So-called Preconjunctional Embedded Clauses

Zvi Penner, University of Bern, Switzerland

Natascha Müller, University of Hamburg, Germany

In our paper we will review and analyze the facts of the so-called “preconjunctional” stage in the acquisition of subordination. The term “preconjunctional” refers to the fact that, until the age of ca. 2;6, subordinate clauses produced by children systematically lack overt complementizers. In some cases we find (otherwise non-existent) “universal” linkers (e.g., a schwa vowel). The most striking observation concerning the preconjunctional stage is that subordinate clauses behave as if they had an overt complementizer. That is, they uniformly display the V-end pattern in finite embedded clauses. Three questions will be addressed: (a) How can the lack of complementizer be accounted for? (b) What is the trigger of the V-end effect? and (c) How are the requirements on subordination met at the preconjunctional stage? We will consider two possible accounts. The first hypothesis is the “Operational Lag Hypothesis” (OLH) according to which the lack of complementizers derives from the fact that the operation of “conflating” the CP- and the IP-system, which is the core of the V2 phenomenon in both root and non-root structures, fails to apply at the initial stage. The other hypothesis, namely the “Underspecification Hypothesis,” traces back the lack of overt complementizers to the assumption that *assigned* COMP features cannot be instantiated in early grammars. Both hypotheses make clear predictions with regard to the realization of a preconjunctional stage in full, residual, and non-V2 languages. The relevant data from all three types will be checked against the predictions made by each approach.

Underspecification of Functional Features: The Acquisition of Root Wh-questions in Dutch and English

Jacqueline van Kampen, University of Utrecht, The Netherlands

Empirical evidence from longitudinal corpora shows that in their early grammars Dutch children produce wh-questions in which the wh-word is absent, but where the finite verb *heb* is fronted:

- (1) Heb jij meenomen?
have you taken with you
'What have you taken with you?'

These data contrast with those of Klima & Bellugi (1966), who noted wh-questions in early English which lack Subject-Aux Inversion and *do*-insertion but show a fronted wh-element:

- (2) What the dollie have?

In generative acquisition theory recent proposals concerning the structural make-up of early child grammars, have either postulated a complete phrase structure (Rizzi 1991, Hyams 1991) or the absence of functional categories and their projections (Lebeaux 1988, Radford 1986/1990). We will argue that both syntactic analyses meet with several problems. Instead, the results of the crosslinguistic study on the acquisition of wh-questions strongly point in the direction of a third syntactic claim, i.e., that functional projections are initially underspecified (or default specified). Using these results as a framework, we will propose that the discrepancies observed in the acquisition between V2 and residual V2 languages (Rizzi 1990) could lie in the order in which features of the functional CP/IP are set.

The Status of CP and the Tensed Complementizer *that* in the Developing L2 Grammars of English

Usha Lakshmanan, Southern Illinois University

Larry Selinker, University of Michigan

In this paper, we examine the development of the Complementizer system in the L2 grammars of 4 children (2 native speakers of Spanish, 1 native speaker of French, and 1 native speaker of Japanese), and we show that C and its maximal projection CP are operative from the very beginning.

Next, we focus on the development of the tensed complementizer, *that*. We provide evidence which suggests that the status of the tensed complementizer during the early stages of these child L2 grammars is that of an ordinarily null complementizer. We next examine restrictive relative clauses produced by our subjects. The evidence suggests that the tensed complementizer is first realized overtly as *that* in the relative clause domain. We speculate on the possible reasons as to why the relative clause domain should trigger the emergence of the overt tensed complementizer. We argue that the child L2 developmental facts provide evidence for recent proposals by Rizzi (1990) that the complementizer in relative clauses, in contrast to the complementizer in declaratives and questions, is specified for the feature [+ predicative] and further that it is in an abstract agreement relation with the subject of predication.

Left-Branch Violations in Child Grammar

Teun Hoekstra, University of Leiden, The Netherlands

Charlotte Koster, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

Thomas Roeper, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

A small amount of naturalistic data indicates that children seem to violate what was known as the "left-branch" condition. For instance, children may move a possessive from its noun in Dutch: "cynthia not pajama" = not cynthia's pajama (Hoekstra & Jordens 1991). The absence of the possessive marker should be part of the explanation for why the child can move the possessive but the adult cannot. Experimental work moreover suggests an interpretive insensitivity to the **determiner** characteristics of the possessive: Deutsch, Koster & Koster (1986) show that children will allow either John or the brother to be washed in "John's brother washed himself" to refer to "himself".

Both experimental and naturalistic data from 3-8 year olds showing left-branch violations will be presented. We suggest that a **small clause** structure would allow the kind of movement that is found, as it does in adult language:

(1) I painted [_{SC} [the cup]_{NP} [red]_{AP}]

Here we are able to extract in the adult language because the small clause has two maximal projections [NP AP], each of which can move. If we assume that the same structure is available in [cynthia pajama] or [dark][red], then it is not surprising if the modifier can move. This is consistent with the view that a child does not project all language specific features of functional categories immediately, or uses a minimal structure in contexts where adults use a full structure.

Canonical Linking Rules: An Investigation of Forward vs. Reverse Linking in Normally Developing & Specifically Language-Impaired Children

Heather K. J. van der Lely, University of London, Great Britain

Canonical linking rules for mapping thematic roles with syntactic functions were studied. Three experiments were undertaken to investigate productive forward linking (from semantics to syntax) and productive reverse linking (from syntax to semantics). Six specifically language impaired (SLI) children (aged 6;1 to 9;6) were individually matched on comprehension and expression of language to 17 younger, normally developing children (language age 3;1 to 6;6). In Experiment 1—forward linking—the children described an event demonstrating the meaning of a novel verb. Experiment 2—a comprehension task—required acting out a sentence containing a newly learned verb. In Experiment 3—reverse linking—the children made up an event that went with a novel verb in a sentence. A significant difference between the group's performance was only found for Experiment 3. The normally developing children showed good productive forward and reverse canonical linking. The SLI children demonstrated good forward linking but were significantly worse at reverse linking. The data are discussed in relation to possible differences in the linguistic specification required for using linking rules in a forward vs. reverse direction, and to the underlying linguistic deficit in SLI children.

Mother-Child Synchrony in Specific Expressive Language Delayed (SELD) and Normal Toddlers

Terri Fechnay & Leslie Rescorla, Bryn Mawr College

Mother-child synchrony during free-play was examined in 18 24 to 30 month old toddlers with specific expressive language delay (SELD) and 18 demographically-matched normal toddlers. Mothers of SELD children did not differ from mothers of normally developing toddlers in topic synchrony (approximately 90% of turns), speech acts (25% declaratives, 30% questions), or joint play frequency (40-50% of turns). Similarly, SELD toddlers did not differ from normal toddlers in communicativeness (total verbal plus non-verbal social cues), in play synchrony (about 70% of turns), or in compliance. Mothers of SELD children showed a marked tendency to adopt either a highly "conversational" or a highly "controlling" discourse style. In the SELD dyads only, a "controlling" discourse style was associated with lower maternal synchrony and more attempts to "extend" the child's play activity, as well as with lower child play synchrony.

An Analysis of the Story Propositions Recalled by Language Disordered and Non-Language Disordered Children

Mary Buchinger Bodwell, Marie Chesnick, Teruaki Tsushima, Meryl Green & Paula Menyuk, Boston University

Story recall was examined in 4 different populations: younger language disordered (LaD) (mean age: 7;2 yrs; n=10) and age-matched non-language disordered subjects (mean age: 7;2 yrs; n=10), and older LaD (mean age: 10;5 yrs; n=10) and age-matched non-LaD subjects (mean age: 10;5 yrs; n=6). The recall of individual story propositions was analyzed in order to determine those factors which contribute to memorability. The results of this study suggest that the saliency of particular propositions in a story is related to such factors as imageability, specificity and the description of eating and drinking experiences. Non-semantic mechanisms such as the part of the story in which the proposition falls, i.e., the beginning, middle or end, were found to influence recallability. In addition, significant differences between the groups in terms of the total number of propositions recalled and in the pattern of recall for the different groups were found.

A Vygotskian Account of Language Disorders with Form/Function Dissociations and Pragmatic Deficits

William Frawley, University of Delaware

This paper is a study of language disorders reported to exhibit a delinking of discourse/pragmatics from the rest of language, with consequent pragmatic deficits: e.g., Williams syndrome, Turner syndrome, Noonan syndrome, and autism. The paper has three principal results. First, it recasts the form/function dissociation as an algorithm/heuristic split, which in turn accounts for the retention in these syndromes of deterministic aspects of communicative competence. Second, it uses Vygotskian psycholinguistics to argue that these disorders are more properly understood as dissociations of a language *of* thought from a language *for* thought: algorithmic mentalesse vs. heuristic, strategic, self-directed speech activity leading to metathought. Third, it offers suggestions on what Vygotskian theory might contribute to the study of these disorders and the development of techniques for intervention: e.g., the elicitation and use of private speech.

Whole Object vs. Substance: Function and the Determination of Ontological Status

Virginia C. Mueller Gathercole, Florida International & Arizona State Universities
Susan C. Somerville, Lisa Cramer & Marian Jansen op de Haar, Arizona State University

This study tests children's differentiation of objects from substances (Soja, Carey, & Spelke 1991, Dickinson 1988) in the presence of functional information about referents. Seventy-two 3 and 4 year olds were taught names for new items and were tested on their extension of each new name to either a similarly shaped item made of different material or a differently shaped item of the same substance. Some subjects were shown "object-linked" functions, some "substance-linked" functions, and some no functions at all. One third of the subjects heard the new names presented with count syntax, one third with mass syntax, and one third with neutral syntax.

Results indicate that children were generally not influenced by function in assigning meaning to a new term, although there were individual differences. Children took syntax into account when functional information was not available. And there was an overall lack of a whole object bias and a clear-cut differentiation of objects from substances.

On the Origins of the Shape Bias in Young Children's Novel Word Extensions

Susan S. Jones & Linda B. Smith, Indiana University
Barbara Landau, University of California, Irvine
Lisa Gershkoff-Stowe, Indiana University

Landau, Smith & Jones (1988) have suggested that the shape bias in novel word extensions originates in children's early word-learning experience—especially in their learning of count noun labels for basic level categories organized primarily by shape. Two studies examine the relation between the emergence of the shape bias and the growth of children's vocabularies. In a cross-sectional comparison, 18 month old infants showed no shape bias in naming, whereas 24 month old children showed a shape bias both when objects were named for them, and when they named novel objects themselves. In both age groups, vocabulary size was related to the tendency to match objects on shape. In a longitudinal study, the emergence of a shape bias was temporally related to children's achievement of 50+ count nouns in their productive vocabularies. Both studies support the proposal that the shape bias is in large part the product of early language-learning experience.

The Role of Linguistic Context in the Identification of Nouns and Verbs by Young Language Learners

Catharine H. Echols, University of Texas, Austin

A study with 13 month old infants investigates the beginnings of infants' sensitivity to sentence-context cues for determining word meanings. A familiarization procedure was used to determine whether linguistic frames may direct infants' attention to objects and verb-frames may direct infants' attention to motions. Results suggested that the linguistic frame did influence infants' attention to events: infants in the noun-frame condition showed a higher proportion looking to the novel object than did the infants in the verb-frame condition. The verb-frame did not, however, appear to be effective in directing infants' attention to motions. These results will be discussed in the context of other data concerning infants' attention to labeled events and in terms of implications for bootstrapping in language acquisition.

Lexical Creativity by Children and Adults: Conversion in English

Susan Freedman deCordova, Northwestern University

This paper will look at conversion (also referred to as zero-derivation) as an example of children's creativity with language. Conversion is a productive process whereby a lexical item traditionally of one grammatical category—i.e., noun, verb, or adjective—is used as if it belonged to a different category (as in Eve Clark's (1978) examples "Pillow me!" and "I'm crackering my soup."). Using previously published tokens as well as my own collection, and restricting the focus to innovative denominal verbs, this paper defines three different types of novel conversions. In addition, I explore the nature of children's conversions in terms of their semantic, metalinguistic and contextual environments. Finally, adult conversions are considered, allowing us to view the process of conversion as a unitary phenomenon in children and adults, exploited variously by different users depending on their experience and communicative goals.

A Reanalysis of Bley-Vroman, Felix & Ioup: L2A, UG and L1 Influence

Gyeongja Jun Lee, Boston University

This paper reanalyzes Bley-Vroman *et al.* (1988), which sought to test “UG-accessibility” in native-Korean speakers’ L2A of English. The logic of their study was the following: as Korean has no syntactic wh-movement, the L1 grammar cannot “tell” L2 acquirers the constraints on wh-movement in English. Thus, the extent to which these (advanced) L2 acquirers come to know Subadjacency (as a principle of UG) is the extent to which UG is still accessible.

This paper questions their assumption about Korean and argues that even without overt syntactic wh-movement, at least some island effects (WHIC and CNPC) exist in Korean at LF, and thus the claim that Subadjacency does not constrain Korean grammar is not warranted. Therefore, their basic hypothesis must also be misguided. Moreover, careful consideration of their test sentences and test results suggests strong “transfer” effects from the L1 rather than accessibility of UG.

An Alternative Account of Apparent Inaccessibility to UG in L2A

Bonnie D. Schwartz, University of Durham, Great Britain

This paper argues that what appears to be evidence for the failure to “reset” a parameter turns out to be evidence for the operation of an invariant UG principle.

The data (White, cf. Haegeman) concern French ([+] Verb-movement) speakers acquiring English ([-] Verb-movement). Our interest is an early stage, seemingly unpredicted in a parameter-setting model:

- (1) The boys do not like the girls.
- (2) * The boys like not the girls.
- (3) Linda takes always the metro.
- (4) * Linda always takes the metro.

Thus, the interlanguage system is like neither French nor English.

One possible account (following Pollock): *do*-support indicates the impossibility of Verb-movement to T° (1-2). Yet, V° to AGR° movement is not simultaneously relinquished (3-4). Why? In order to *not* violate an inviolable UG principle (no vacuous quantification): were the Verb to not raise, there would be no variable for the tense operator in T° to bind. Under this analysis, what is difficult in the L2A of English is the null *do*, for which there is phonetically-realized positive evidence.

Metaphonological Skills in the Development of Reading: A Reconsideration Based on Cognitive Neuropsychological Case Data

James M. Hodgson & Gretchen Johnson, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA

In most models of reading development explicit metaphonological knowledge plays a central role in the acquisition process. This core status is supported by an extensive body of evidence, including demonstrations of significant correlations between preliterate metaphonological skills and later reading achievement, reports of facilitatory effects of metaphonological training on later reading skill, and evidence that classic developmental dyslexia is marked by a deficit in phonemic awareness. These findings have also been taken as evidence that mature phonologically based mechanisms of visual word recognition evolve directly out of metaphonological skills. Little direct evidence of that evolutionary relationship has been adduced, however. We will briefly review existing evidence regarding this claim and present new data from a set of cognitive neuropsychological case reports in support of an alternative view, in which metaphonological skills bear only an indirect relationship to those mature reading processes.

Phonological Awareness and Reading Readiness

Mehmet Yavas, Florida International University
Feryal Yavas

This paper reports on an investigation of phonological awareness in terms of syllable constituents and its possible relationship to reading readiness. Thirty kindergarten children subjects participated in the study which involved two tasks. In the first one, the children are asked to separate the odd member of a 3 word set. The triplets have 2 words agreeing in onset, nucleus or coda, and 1 odd word with nothing in common with the other 2. The second task also has triplets but their nature is different in that any 2 given words agree with one another in terms of 1 dimension (onset, nucleus, coda); children's grouping of the 2 most similar words is tested. Results are tabulated and matched with the reading readiness ratings (excellent, good, fair). Task I was found to be sensitive in distinguishing the "fair" group, and Task II in distinguishing the "excellent" group from the rest.

Control Structures in Child Grammar

Kevin Broihier & Kenneth Wexler, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Unlike adults, children in an attested stage of “object control” (Goodluck 1981, McDaniel, Cairns & Hsu 1991) are argued to allow, and in some cases even insist upon, coreference between the matrix object and the null subject of a temporal adjunct in sentences like: “Daisy hit Pluto after putting on the watch” (Goodluck’s 32a). A common analysis suggests that children get this non-adult pattern of coreference because they attach the adjunct lower in the phrase marker where the matrix object can c-command the adjunct’s subject. We will argue that this analysis, while perhaps descriptively adequate, conflicts with the standard assumption in UG-based approaches to language acquisition that the linguistic representations that a child constructs are uniformly compatible with UG. We present evidence from an experiment using the truth-value judgment task (Crain & McKee 1986) that suggests that “object control” children actually allow a wider range of referents for the subjects of temporal adjuncts than has been attested. These results support an alternative hypothesis according to which children initially entertain a UG-compatible misanalysis of these adjuncts as nominals.

Explaining the Developmental Delay with the Continuity of UG: The Case of the “Condition B Effect”

Tetsuya Sano, University of California, Los Angeles

The developmental progression of English-speaking children shown in (1) (cf. Chien & Wexler 1990, etc.) will be accounted for by arguing that, before age 6, *him* is treated by children as something like the Japanese pronoun *kare*, which cannot be construed as a bound variable (cf. (4)).

- (1) Stage I (before 5): reject neither (2) nor (3)
 Stage II (5-6): do not reject (2), reject (3)
 Stage III (after 6): reject both (2) and (3)
- (2) John hit him. (situation: John hit himself)
 (3) Everyone hit him. (situation: Everyone hit himself)
- (4) *Minna_i -ga [Mary-ga kare_i -o sukida to] omotteiru.
 Everyone NOM NOM he ACC like that thinking
 ‘Everyone_i is thinking that Mary likes him_i.’

The proposed scenario accounting for the developmental stages in (1) hinges on the following: (i) *kare* obeys Condition B “50%” (ii) before age 6, English children identify *him* as being like *kare*. I will argue for these points. The proposed account allows us to assume the Continuity of UG Conditions related to the “Condition B Effect”; the advantages of this proposal will be discussed.

An LF Representation of Pronouns in VP Ellipsis: An Argument for UG in the Initial State

Claire Foley, Zelmira Nuñez del Prado, Isabella Barbier & Barbara Lust,
Cornell University

In current theory of Universal Grammar, a critical issue concerns the degree to which both bound variable and referential interpretations of pronouns are determined by the Binding Theory. This issue is crucial to both linguistic theory and to the theory of language acquisition (e.g., Reinhart and Grodzinsky (to appear), Fiengo and May (to appear)).

VP ellipsis structures like (1) below are central to this issue, since the same structure allows both referential and "bound variable" readings.

(1) Oscar bites his banana and Bert does, too.

In this paper, we report the results of the first of a series of experiments designed to test children's knowledge of structures like (1) and their possibilities for pronoun interpretation. This study tested whether children would initially access both referential and bound readings continuously from the beginning of development; and whether these interpretations would be constrained. On the basis of the experimental results, we propose a revised theoretical treatment of these structures, one in which general principles of a theory of UG apply at LF to provide the set of both possible and impossible readings.

Only in Child Language

Stephen Crain, University of Connecticut

William Philip, Ken Drozd & Thomas Roeper, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Kazumi Matsuoka, University of Connecticut

Few mistakes have been reported with the quantifier *only* (e.g., Donaldson & Lloyd 1974), but having observed several apparent discontinuous analyses ("Only I want milk" = I only want milk), we were prompted to reinvestigate *only* in child language. We tested 18 3 to 6 year olds in a picture verification task. All but one child consistently gave non-adult responses. One group (N=12) applied *only* to individuals, regardless of its S-structure position, so as to exclude individuals other than those mentioned in the subject NP. The other children applied *only* to events, regardless of position, so as to exclude the subject NP from participating in any event besides the one mentioned in the VP. Children's analyses are seen to be a direct reflection of Logical Form. Group differences are attributed to the type of variable being quantified over.

Heredity, Maturation, and Proficiency in Sentence Comprehension

David J. Townsend, Montclair State College
Thomas G. Bever, University of Rochester
Caroline Carrithers, Rutgers University

Computational models attribute the development of linguistic proficiency to increased efficiency in computing and integrating linguistic information within a single computational system. Genetic models, however, emphasize the computational and biological independence of the processes that form linguistic representations. With three comprehension tasks, we tested predictions of these models by comparing comprehenders who were (a) skilled versus less-skilled in comprehension from (b) right-handed families versus families with mixed-handedness, and who were (c) either children aged 10 to 13 years or adults aged 18 to 23 years. All subjects were right-handed. The evidence favored computational models in children and genetic models in adults. We discuss various interpretations of these age differences, and develop a model that integrates computational and genetic factors in the acquisition of linguistic proficiency.

Flattening of Distinctions in a Parkinsonian Signer

Ruth Loew, Judy Kegl & Howard Poizner, Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience, Rutgers University

The analysis of motor deficits in Parkinsonian signing provides an important new vehicle for understanding the role of the basal ganglia in language processing, and the ongoing interplay between linguistic intelligibility and processes that ease articulation. Frame by frame analysis of 2 elicited narratives from a 72 year old, congenitally deaf, Parkinsonian signer revealed that most signs were produced with the same neutral handshape, and in the same neutral area in front of the chest, regardless of target handshape or location. Often the non-dominant left hand shadowed the handshape of the dominant right, or two consecutive signs were blended into a single portmanteau form. Moreover, there was an imposition of a very uniform rather than variable pattern of juncture between signs within an utterance. While the Parkinsonian signer reduced amplitude, crispness, and rhythmic variation, he stopped short of obliterating linguistically relevant distinctions, implying that there was a clamping of an intact linguistic system by a more general motor deficit.

***The* and the Brain: An Electrophysiological Study of Infants' Sensitivity to English Function Morphemes**

Valerie L. Shafer, LouAnn Gerken, Janet L. Shucard & David W. Shucard,
SUNY, Buffalo

Attention to distributional regularities involving function morphemes could aid children in the acquisition of syntactic categories such as Noun and Noun Phrase. Because function morphemes tend to exhibit unique phonological properties (e.g., in English: weak stress, reduced vowels and fricative consonants), they might allow infants to notice distributional regularities before they begin to speak. Consistent with this notion, we present research using auditory evoked potentials that suggests that 10 to 12 month old infants can distinguish between a story with normal English function morphemes and the same story in which function morphemes are replaced with nonsense syllables that change the canonical segmental and prosodic properties of English. We will discuss how the representation of specific function morphemes might develop, as well as implications of this research for theories of language acquisition.

A Further Look at the Null-Subject Parameter: Data from the Acquisition of Hebrew

Yonata Levy, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel

Neomi Amir & Ruth Shalev, Sharei Zedek Hospital, Jerusalem, Israel

With regard to the null-subject parameter, Hebrew is a mixed language. It allows non-overt subjects in first and second persons in the past and future but only rarely in the present. With regard to third person, there are various restrictions even in the past and the future. While past and future tense verbs are marked for number, person and gender, present tense verbs are not marked for person. Furthermore, Hebrew differs radically from English with regard to obligatoriness of overt objects with transitive verbs. We suggest that in languages with overt morphological marking, cliticization *is* overt subject. From a developmental perspective, omissions of obligatory elements in a language like Hebrew should not include sentences in which there is a fully specified marking on the verb.

In this paper we report on longitudinal, naturalistic study of the acquisition of Hebrew grammar in children with congenital, left hemisphere focal lesions. The study examines the proportion of S omission vs. O omission; length of VP in subjectless sentences and in full sentences; lexical vs. pronominal subjects and contextually dependent S and O omissions. It is concluded that the children's grammar must contain syntactically-defined categories.

Structure and Coherence in South African Children's Personal Narratives

Karen Malan, University of Cape Town, South Africa

Very little research has addressed the specific problems surrounding language and literacy acquisition in disadvantaged urban South African 'Coloured' communities whose speech repertoire includes vernacular forms of English and Afrikaans. This paper presents results of a linguistic analysis of personal narratives produced by children aged 3 to 6 years in one such speech community. Narrative analysis combined Labovian notions of narrative components with a line and stanza analysis. Results show that these children structure their experiences via narrative in ways that are very different from the literate-style narrations reportedly used by mainstream children and valued by schools. Coherence is achieved by thematic rather than sequential links, using devices that include thematic focus lines, prosodic contrasts, repetition, refrains and syntactic and lexical parallelism. Differences with regard to the function of orientation and evaluation between these narratives and those reported elsewhere are discussed. Finally, findings of analysis of classroom discourse at pre- and early primary-school levels are presented, to demonstrate dissonances arising between narrative structures with which children enter school and those expected in the classroom.

Developmental Changes in Children's Use of Tense in Narrative

Ana Elisabeth Miranda, Linda Camp, Lowry Hemphill & Dennis Palmer Wolf,
Harvard University

This study explores developmental changes in children's verb tense use in narrative. Wordless picturebook narrations were collected from 28 children at ages 6, 7 and 8. Narratives were transcribed using CHILDES and segmented into clauses. Clauses were coded for narrative function (orientation, evaluation, event, reported speech). Tensed verbs were coded for narrative function and marking of temporal sequence. Results show that 6 year olds used tense shifts to mark both global and local discourse units. Between 6 and 8, tense shifts declined by 50%. This decline seems related to children's acquisition of other means for encoding text segmentation, including nominal reference, connectives, and verb aspect. Tense shifts marking orientative and evaluative clauses and units of episode structure showed most decline at 8. Results will be discussed in relation to children's increased exposure to written narrative conventions, and acquisition of a wider range of coherence strategies.

Are there Reminiscers and Practical Rememberers in the Classroom?

Susan Engel, Williams College

When preschoolers tell each other stories, do they employ two different styles of talking about the past? Previous research has identified two styles of personal narratives: reminiscing and practical remembering. Does this individual difference last and does it occur in peer conversations? To answer these questions, conversations between preschoolers in a day care center were tape recorded over a period of 10 weeks, resulting in a total of 160 conversations. Children did use two styles of talk about the past and these styles corresponded to earlier differences. But the function of these two types of narratives was different for preschoolers talking to one another.

Reminiscing talk occurred as a kind of collaborative play and entertainment. Practical remembering was used to negotiate relationships and roles and establish interactive rules. These differences in style and function will be presented and discussed in terms of their implications for the development of narrative style and individual differences in how preschoolers use narratives as a form of linguistic interaction.

Shifting Toward Explicitness

Yuri Kuwahara, Stanford University

Lucinda Pease-Alvarez, University of California, Santa Cruz

Kenji Hakuta, Stanford University

Schools in the United States have traditionally required that children acquire "literate" modes of verbal expression which are characterized by explicitness. Such classroom language demands can pose problems for non-mainstream children who come to school without having had the kinds of language experiences which are thought to facilitate the acquisition of this style.

Our study looks at the degree of explicitness seen in several narratives elicited from a group of 8 to 9 year old children of Mexican descent who have varying degrees of family "rootedness" in the United States. Our preliminary findings indicate that while all children are fairly explicit in their personal narratives, a shift may be occurring to greater explicitness in both Spanish and English in the storybook narratives told by children with greater residential ties to the US.

Aspectual Bootstrapping: On the Acquisition of Unaccusativity

Angeliek van Hout & Jürgen Weissenborn, Max Planck Institute, Nijmegen,
The Netherlands

According to the Unaccusative Hypothesis, while at D-structure an unergative verb projects its only argument onto subject position, an unaccusative verb projects its only argument onto direct object position. Movement applies in the latter case but not the former, leaving both arguments in subject position at S-structure. This hypothesis poses a problem for the acquisition of argument structure and its projection to syntax: how can a child distinguish between two classes of intransitive verbs, when they are alike at the surface?

We will argue on the basis of longitudinal data from Dutch, French, German, and Italian that syntactic and semantic “bootstrapping” as currently discussed is not sufficient to explain the development of verb-argument structure in general, and of the unergative-unaccusative distinction in particular, and that aspectual information, i.e., telicity, has to be taken into account.

Argument Structure Profiles of Aphasic vs. Non-Aphasic Narrative Production

Mary Jack & Judy Kegl, Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience,
Rutgers University

We present a coding system for the syntactic analysis of aphasic speech based on a linguistic typology of argument structure developed by Kegl & Levin (1990). We compare and contrast the syntactic profiles of FOK, a left-lesioned agrammatic English speaker, and JMD, a left-lesioned anomic English speaker, with those of SC and VV, their respective matched controls.

The controls reveal a balance between constructions with and without external arguments. Unaccusatives (constructions without external arguments), are also evenly split between copular constructions and other unaccusatives. FOK successfully produces constructions that maintain the lexically specified arrangement of arguments (transitives, unergatives, ditransitives/double object patterns—i.e., those predicate argument structures that have an external argument)—and systematically avoids those that do not (non-copular unaccusatives (*bloom*, *appear*, etc.), *amuse*-type psychological verb constructions—i.e., predicate argument patterns that lack an external argument). JMD demonstrates control over the entire range of possible argument structures, but tends toward semantically empty verbs like *is*, *go*, *have*, *like*, and *got* and exhibits specific accessing problems. Both compensate for their deficits with an increased reliance on copular constructions. The auxiliary *is* accounts for three times as many instances of the verb *to be* in aphasic vs. “normal” speech.

Fragmentation and Crosslinguistic Restructuring in L1 Attrition: Evidence from Word Innovations

Dorit Kaufman, SUNY, Stony Brook

A child's mastery of word formation devices in a language will allow unlimited linguistic creativity and will generate numerous linguistic innovations. Currently there is little documentation of such linguistic creations by children who are losing their first language as they gain a second language.

When exposure to L1 is reduced dramatically, diminishing opportunities for L1 production cause disintegration in L1 word formation devices. Consequently, innovative hybrid linguistic constructions are generated. These new restructured forms are attributed to crosslinguistic interplay. Typological differences between the two languages trigger a myriad of innovations that open a window to stages in the acquisition of the second language (English) and in the attrition of the first language (Hebrew).

It will be shown that although preference for L2 word formation devices is evident in the innovative hybrid configurations produced by the children, L1 word formation devices, though fragmented, are not totally abandoned.

Is there a Bilingual Monitor for Code-Switching?

Nancy Mahecha, Nova University

Loraine Obler, Emerson College & Graduate Center, CUNY

Anita B. Haravon & Jose Centeno, Graduate Center, CUNY

Mahecha (1990) found that Spanish-English bilinguals perceived pre-switch cues and used them to predict upcoming code-switches in code-mixed speech. We asked whether such a "monitor" for code-switching was peculiar to bilinguals. This study administered Mahecha's task to English monolinguals before and after training to perceive pre-switch cues. Subjects listened to clauses ending with pre-switch cues, foil cues, or no cues, and guessed whether the sentence would continue in the same or the other language. Results indicate that monolinguals are equal (before training) or better (after training) than bilinguals in the perception of cues found in monolingual contexts (e.g., hesitation). Untrained monolinguals do poorly with cues particular to bilingual contexts (i.e., phonological anticipation) but can be trained to perceive them especially if accented with their marked language (i.e., Spanish). It is postulated that the bilingual monitor employs cues from various contexts but is further specialized to process cues specific to the bilingual context.

Mother-Child Storytelling Patterns and Four Year Old Children's Narrative Performance

Debra A. Harkins, Children's Hospital, Boston, MA

Storytelling patterns of 36 4 year old children (19 females) and their mothers were examined. The mothers narrated a non-worded storybook; this was compared to the children's subsequent narrative performance. Mother-child storytelling that involved mothers asking evaluative questions and children responding with explanations of motive and cause of story events was associated with a more "prototypic" narrative performance (including a setting, initiating event, internal response, attempts, consequences and an outcome) by children than non-interactive questions and responses. Results also indicated that mothers with more years of schooling had different reported goals (social enjoyment rather than comprehension) and reported styles of storytelling (asking many questions rather than reading uninterrupted) and engaged in different storytelling patterns than mothers with fewer years of schooling. Sex of child was also found to interact with mothers' educational level and joint storytelling patterns.

Appropriating Others' Words: *Five Little Peppers*, "Gingerbread Man" and Suzanne's *The Missing Piece*

Timothy J. Lensmire & Diane E. Beals, Washington University

Bakhtin's notion of *appropriation* seems particularly fruitful for conceptualizing children's writing development. In this paper, we look closely at how one child appropriates aspects of oral and written sources in her production of an extended narrative. Suzanne, a third-grader participating in a writing workshop, produced a 6-chapter book inspired by a children's novel her grandmother had given to her. We trace how Suzanne appropriated aspects of Sidney's *Five Little Peppers and How They Grew*, as well as children's rhymes and potent words from the local peer culture, in writing her story.

Bakhtin reminds us that people appropriate not only forms, but words, topics, themes, purposes, and styles. A close examination of one child's acts of appropriation—an examination that considers dimensions of discourse often ignored in developmental research—will help us begin to paint a richer portrait of discourse development.

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