

**The 19th Annual  
Boston University**

**Conference on  
Language  
Development**



**November 4, 5 & 6, 1994**



**The Nineteenth Annual**

**Boston University**

**Conference on Language Development**

**November 4, 5, and 6, 1994**

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

# Essential Reading from Cambridge

## **Mental Spaces**

Aspects of Meaning in  
Natural Language

*Gilles Fauconnier*

1994 185 pp. 44499-3 Hardback \$39.95  
44949-9 Paperback \$14.95

## **Input and Interaction in Language Acquisition**

*Edited by Clare Gallaway  
and Brian Richards*

1994 334 pp. 43109-3 Hardback \$64.95  
43725-3 Paperback \$19.95

## **The Poetics of Mind**

Figurative Thought, Language,  
and Understanding

*Raymond W. Gibbs Jr.*

1994 577 pp. 41965-4 Hardback \$59.95  
42992-7 Paperback \$18.95

## **Mapping the Mind**

Domain Specificity in Cognition  
and Culture

*Edited by*

*Lawrence A. Hirschfeld  
and Susan A. Gelman*

1994 530 pp. 41966-2 Hardback \$64.95  
42993-5 Paperback \$24.95

## **The Cambridge Thesaurus of American English**

*William D. Lutz*

1994 525 pp. 41427-X Hardback \$16.95

## **Sociocultural Approaches to Language and Literacy**

An Interactionist Perspective

*Edited by Vera John-Steiner,  
Carolyn P. Panofsky,  
and Larry W. Smith*

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## **Understanding Language Change**

*April M. S. McMahon*

1994 372 pp. 44119-6 Hardback \$59.95  
44665-1 Paperback \$17.95

## **Pushing Boundaries**

Language and Culture in  
a Mexicano Community

*Olga A. Vasquez,  
Lucinda Pease-Alvarez,  
and Sheila M. Shannon*

1994 234 pp. 41935-2 Hardback \$49.95

## **Literacy, Culture and Development**

Becoming Literate in Morocco

*Daniel A. Wagner*

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## Welcome

We would like to join in welcoming all of you to the Nineteenth Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development. It is a pleasure to be able to receive you again here at Boston University and to return to our traditional format.

We are honored to have Andrew Radford, of the University of Essex, and Jill de Villiers, of Smith College, as featured speakers. Professor Radford will present Friday's Keynote Address, "Children: Architects or Brickies." Saturday's program will close with Professor de Villier's Plenary Address, which is entitled "On Questioning Minds and Answering Machines." This year we are also fortunate to be able to have on hand the entire "Human Language" film series, which will be shown during lunch breaks on all three days.

The rest of the program is devoted to a wide range of papers chosen from submitted abstracts. This year we received over 200 submissions, which were then sent to outside reviewers. Of these, 87 were selected for presentation, and we are sorry not to have had space to include more of the many excellent submissions we received.

We continue to value the support and interest of our participants. Many of you came to our aid with letters and e-mail messages a year ago. We wish to acknowledge your invaluable support in resolving our institutional difficulties. We also would like to express our appreciation to the Linguistic Society of America for enabling us to hold the 1993 B.U. Conference here in Boston.

It is our commitment to continue to provide a forum for work in this field here at Boston University. We are also pleased to announce that for the first time we will be publishing the proceedings of the B.U. Conference on Language Development. Information and order forms will be available throughout the weekend.

We hope you will enjoy the conference.

The 1994 Conference Committee  
[graduate students in the Program in Applied Linguistics]

Susan McEwen, *coordinator*

Dalia Cahana-Amitay, *exhibits coordinator*

Aleka Akoyunoglou Blackwell, *administrative and budget coordinator*

Elizabeth Hughes, *registration coordinator*

Robert Lee, *interpreter coordinator*

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Automated seasonal information about the conference  
may be obtained by sending an e-mail message with a  
blank body to: info@louis-xiv.bu.edu

## Acknowledgements

The Boston University Conference on Language Development is organized by graduate students in the Program in Applied Linguistics. The Conference receives no direct support from Boston University, so we are extremely grateful for the uncompensated time and energy devoted to this project by a number of individuals from within and outside the university community.

We are especially indebted to Professor Bruce Fraser, the Program in Applied Linguistics (GRS), and the Program in Literacy, Language and Cultural Studies (SED) for resources made available to us throughout the year. In addition, we would like to thank the Applied Linguistics faculty for their ongoing advice, encouragement, and support.

This year we have two new faculty advisors, Professors Paula Menyuk and Mary Catherine O'Connor. We are grateful to both of them for their advice and for providing tireless models of grace under pressure. Special thanks are due Cathy O'Connor for her expert guidance, wit, and wisdom. We appreciate her taking on the demanding and time-consuming role of advising us on conference planning and implementation details and for providing us with coast-to-coast support throughout a busy summer.

In addition, a number of students new to the program have been contributing their time and skills, and we look forward to their continued participation in the conference. We would especially like to thank Andy Stringfellow for the many hours he devoted to making our database interpretable. Special thanks are also due to Mark Turnbull for his important role as computational and design troubleshooter and general morale booster.

Once again, we would like to acknowledge the support of the Office of Disabled Student Services and of Paul Hostofsky for ensuring the availability of sign language interpreters throughout the conference.

Finally, we would like to thank the following people for their thoughtful reading and rating of the many fine abstracts we received. They have provided invaluable guidance in the selection of papers, and we are grateful for their ongoing support.

Dorothy Aram  
David Birdsong  
Paul Bloom  
Ellen Broselow  
Andrea Calabrese  
Courtney Cazden  
Harald Clahsen  
Stephen Crain  
Katherine Demuth  
Richard Ely  
Lynn Eubank  
James Paul Gee  
LouAnn Gerken  
Jean Berko Gleason

Steve Griffin  
James Hodgson  
Nina Hyams  
Dorit Kaufman  
Judy Kegl  
Marcel Kinsbourne  
Beth Levin  
Alec Marantz  
Lise Menn  
Michelle Mentis  
Paula Menyuk  
Loraine Obler  
Catherine O'Connor  
Steven Pinker

Thomas Roeper  
Bonnie Dale Schwartz  
Karin Stromswold  
Margaret Thomas  
Hoskuldur Thrainnsön  
R. Lorenza Trigo  
Terry Tsushima  
Anne Vainikka  
Jill de Villiers  
Kenneth Wexler  
Lydia White  
Wendy Wiswall

The B.U. Conference on Language Development presents preview screenings of a new PBS series, available on video for educational use right away. Linguist Judy Kegl, Rutgers, will introduce the films and answer questions.

**THE HUMAN LANGUAGE SERIES**  
**THREE ONE-HOUR FILMS**  
**ON WHAT LANGUAGE IS AND HOW IT WORKS**

*"Someone has finally gotten the central issues in language acquisition straight. This is a terrific achievement."* Lila Gleitman

*"Super. Brilliant."* Russell Baker

*"I'm impressed."* Noam Chomsky

**THE HUMAN LANGUAGE SERIES** is the only large-scale attempt to "explain language" on film, in a way that intelligent people of all kinds will enjoy and understand. Six years in production, with an all-star cast of 50 linguists and psychologists, in addition to authors Stephen Jay Gould, Lewis Thomas, and Russell Baker; comedians George Carlin and Sid Caesar; plus philosophers, former head hunters, Eskimos, aborigines, baseball players, circus performers, and hundreds of "real people", including many, many children. The series is designed for teachers and students in linguistics, psychology, child development, anthropology, education, and cognitive science, where no resource of this kind now exists.

Produced by Gene Searchinger, Equinox Films/Ways of Knowing, Inc.  
Principal adviser: psycholinguist George A. Miller, Princeton.

**PROGRAM ONE**

**Friday, Nov.4 1:00 PM**

**Discovering The Human Language: "Colorless Green Ideas"**

Noam Chomsky asks, "How do people simply use language? You meet somebody, say, at a bus stop, and you start having a conversation. How do you do it?" Program One is about words, sentences, and Universal Grammar--including how it is used in Waripiri, an ancient language of Australia which works the same way as Latin. With Noam Chomsky, Dan Slobin, Suzette Haden Elgin, Judy Kegl, Jerry Fodor, Mark Aronoff, George Carlin, Sid Caesar, Russell Baker, and many others.

**PROGRAM TWO**

**Saturday, Nov.5 12:30 PM**

**Acquiring The Human Language: "Playing the Language Game"**

How do children "acquire" language without being taught? Do they learn it by imitating their mothers? Or do they "inherit grammar?" Experiments with infants. Children and grown-ups speaking in Siberian Yupik Eskimo in Alaska, and in Menya, one of the astonishing 750 languages of Papua, New Guinea. With linguists Steven Pinker, Lila Gleitman, Jill de Villiers, Frederick Newmeyer, Ursula Bellugi, Judy Kegl, Howard Lasnik and others.

**PROGRAM THREE**

**Sunday, Nov.6 12:15 PM**

**The Human Language Evolves: "With and Without Words"**

How did speech evolve? Why chimps can't talk and we can. How we combine syntax with body language, gestures, and facial expressions inherited from our animal past, into a unique mixed system. Featuring Deborah Tannen, David McNeill, Paul Ekman, Philip Lieberman, Peter Ladefoged, Al Liberman, Kim Olier, Rebecca Eilers. Nobody knows how the human language evolved, but we hear speculations from Stephen Jay Gould, Noam Chomsky, George Miller, and yes, others.

*"I showed Part One to my undergraduate psycholinguistics class, and they thought it was just dynamite. It's a marvelous way to introduce students to the mysteries and joys of language.."* Dan Slobin

## General Information

### REGISTRATION AND SESSION LOCATIONS

All sessions will be held in the **George Sherman Union, 775 Commonwealth Avenue**. Registration will take place in the lobby on the second floor. You may register on **Friday** from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM and again from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. On **Saturday and Sunday**, registration will begin at 8:30 AM.

*Please register before going to sessions.* (We rely entirely on registration fees to cover the costs of the Conference. We appreciate your willingness to wear your name badge; you may be asked to present it before entering sessions.)

### KEYNOTE AND PLENARY ADDRESSES

**Andrew Radford** will deliver the Keynote Address on Friday at 8:00 PM in the Large Ballroom on the second floor of George Sherman Union. A dessert buffet will immediately follow in the Small Ballroom next door.

**Jill de Villiers** will give the Plenary Address on Saturday afternoon at 5:30, again in the Large Ballroom. There will be a sherry reception preceding the address in the Small Ballroom, beginning at 4:30.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**Parking** is available in the lot at 766 Commonwealth Avenue (across from the George Sherman Union) for \$8 per day. A less expensive lot is located behind the Armory, one block west of 881 Commonwealth Avenue (\$6 per day). Parking is free in the lot behind the Armory on Saturday afternoon and in both lots all day on Sunday. Limited on-street parking is also available in 4-hour blocks.

**Temporary Luggage Storage Space** will be available all three days of the conference. If you wish to store luggage during the day, please find one of the conference personnel (they will be wearing purple badges).

**Publisher's Exhibits** will be held in the second floor Ziskind Lounge on Saturday and Sunday. For a list of exhibitors, see page 44.

**The Human Language Film Series** will be presented in three parts during lunch breaks. See announcement on facing page.

**Refreshments** will be served in the second floor lounge during breaks. A list of local restaurants is provided with your registration packet, and the Food Court on the ground floor of the George Sherman Union (one floor below meeting rooms) offers a wide variety of eating establishments.

**The Registration desk** provides the following services:

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

**The 20th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development** is tentatively scheduled to be held on November 3, 4, and 5, 1995, at Boston University.

**Connections Between the Acquisition of DP  
and AGR in Early Child German**

Sonja Eisenbeiss & Martina Penke, University of Düsseldorf  
Harald Clahsen, University of Essex

This paper will demonstrate that the acquisition of DPs and the creation of Agr-Ps are two closely related domains of structure-building in child language development. We have analyzed 78 recordings from longitudinal corpora of four monolingual German children (age range: 1;7 to 2;9), with two major results. First, a developmental connection: when children start producing fully specified DPs, there is also evidence for AgrS-P and AgrO-P in the data; before that point, no such evidence is available. Second, structural co-occurrence relationships in children's utterances, e.g. fully specified DP-subjects, do not appear in root-clause infinitives, but only in utterances with overt subject-verb-agreement, i.e. in AgrS-Ps. We will interpret the observed connections in terms of Checking Theory (Agr-Ps are required for licensing the N-features of DPs) and the Lexical Learning Hypothesis (functional projections gradually emerge in children's grammars based on X-bar principles and the input); no additional maturational constraints or peripheral mechanisms are required.

**On the Acquisition of Scrambling in Dutch**

Jeannette Schaeffer, UCLA

In adult Dutch the definite direct object can move out of the VP to a higher position, a phenomenon known as "scrambling". In this paper we show that in Dutch child language objects fail to scramble in obligatory contexts.

Following Diesing (1992; 1994), we assume that the feature responsible for scrambling is Definiteness. We propose that *in the child's initial grammar D can be underspecified with respect to the feature [DEFINITE]*. This analysis predicts that:

1. During the underspecification stage we will find nouns without determiners.
2. These indeterminate DPs will fail to scramble out of the VP.

Both predictions are borne out.

**The Syntactic Representation of Degree and Number in  
Children's English:  
Evidence for Delayed Parametric Learning**

William Snyder & Dolon Das, MIT

This paper presents evidence for remarkably late acquisition of a parametric property of adult English, governing the syntactic representation of degree/quantity in NPs and APs. The availability of bare-numeral modifiers in adult English is syntactically related to obligatoriness of plural-marking on semantically plural nouns, possibility of degree modifiers in APs ('two feet high'), possibility of subcomparatives ('The door is taller than it is wide'), and existence of the Left Branch Constraint on degree/quantity questions. Combining comprehension and transcript studies with a literature review, we argue that children (<5yr) generally exhibit a parameter-setting inappropriate to adult English, but correct for certain other languages.

**Negation in Child Japanese**

Tetsuya Sano, UCLA

In this paper, External Negation in child Japanese is discussed with the intention to resolve the tension between description and explanation. It is argued that the External Negation should not be attributed to children's wrong placement of the negative word 'nai' (i.e. no trial-and-error in the placement of a negative marker). Relevant data in child Japanese are: i) External Negation occurs with tense inflection, ii) External Negation is not found with an auxiliary construction '-teru', iii) External Negation is not found with an imperative '-te', etc.

**Children's Negative Questions**

M. Teresa Guasti, University of Geneva  
Rosalind Thornton, University of Maryland  
Kenneth Wexler, MIT

A recent elicitation experiment with 4-year-olds found that the majority of children produce well-formed positive questions (with SAI), but non-adult negative questions. In children's negative questions, the clitic *n't* fails to raise to Comp with the auxiliary verb. Among children's non-adult forms are questions with doubling of the auxiliary verb ('What do you don't like?' and 'What can you can't eat?') and non-inversion ('What you don't like?' and 'What you can't eat?'). We propose that the non-adult questions arise because children require that the Neg-Criterion (Rizzi, 1991) be satisfied inside the IP.

### **Robust Lexical Acquisition Despite Noisy Input**

Jeffrey Mark Siskind, University of Toronto

Noise is a central problem facing a language learner. Any theory of lexical acquisition must explain how children robustly make correct categorical decisions about word meanings despite low correlation between word and world. I present a two-stage model of lexical acquisition. The first stage gathers statistical evidence about word-to-meaning mappings. The second stage uses symbolic techniques to make categorical decisions from this evidence. The first stage alone can deal with high noise rates but produces inaccurate output. The second stage alone produces robust output but only for lower noise rates. The two stages combined, however, can robustly learn word-to-meaning mappings with 99% accuracy despite input with 90% noise.

### **Word Formation as Evidence**

Ruth A. Berman, Tel Aviv University

Research on children's command of Hebrew derivational morphology is reviewed, to examine the domain of word-formation within a general model of language development. Studies include structured elicitations coining new words from familiar source items (e.g. nouns from verbs and verbs from nouns) and alternating verbs for transitivity and resultativity, compared with spontaneous lexical innovations.

### **How Children Learn German Noun Plurals**

Susanne Bartke, University of Düsseldorf

Gary Marcus, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Harald Clahsen, University of Essex

Do children acquire symbolic rules of inflection? Previous studies on the English past tense system left this question open. We suggest that data from German noun plurals is of particular value in this debate. In a judgment task with 25 German children (age 3;0 - 6;6) we found that even three-year olds treat -s as a default, despite its low input frequency and that the irregular plural forms are treated qualitatively differently. These results argue against frequency-based associative models and support the view that children acquire symbolic inflectional rules.

Two-year-olds obey typologically motivated structural constraints on possible words, though command of derivational morphology emerges later - after grammatical inflections - and accurate matching between source and target forms takes even longer. Children succeed more in comprehension than production, and with familiar rather than novel forms. These developments are accounted for by different interacting factors: perceptual transparency, formal simplicity, lexical familiarity, and the typological and functional productivity of morphological processes.

### **The Role of Semantics in Solving the Bootstrapping Problem**

Paul Bloom, University of Arizona

A fundamental issue in language acquisition is how children syntactically categorize new words. One prominent theory is “semantic bootstrapping”, which posits that children possess a learning mechanism leading them to categorize names for objects as nouns, names for events as verbs, and so on (Grimshaw, 1981; Pinker, 1984). It is argued here that although children do use semantics to solve the categorization problem, semantic bootstrapping suffers from certain theoretical and empirical limitations. The alternative defended here is that children’s knowledge of language includes mappings between phrasal categories (e.g. “NP”) and semantic categories (e.g. “individual”). These mappings apply through a procedure that initially parses sentences into phrases and then uses further evidence to decompose them into specifiers and lexical categories. It is argued that this proposal can explain how children categorize pronouns, proper names, common nouns, expletives, and other parts of speech, and that it is consistent with plausible assumptions about how children learn the meanings of words.

### **Constrained Productivity in the Acquisition of NP-type Nouns**

Tracey Burns & Nancy Soja, Northeastern University

It has been proposed (Pinker, 1989) that children can be productive in their use of language, but only within certain constraints. This has been labelled ‘constrained productivity’. The present research finds evidence to support this proposal in a new domain: the acquisition of NP-type nouns. In two experiments, 5-year-olds were told stories containing a novel nominal and were then asked to judge the goodness of test sentences. It was found that the children categorized the novel nominal as an NP-type noun when given semantic information only. Syntactic support was not necessary. Thus these experiments provide further support for constrained productivity in the acquisition of nouns.

## **Segmental Deficits in Aphasia: The Regression Hypothesis in Light of Current Phonological Theory**

John Matthews, McGill University

In this study individuals with aphasia performed an identification task in which stimulus items contained two pictures whose names constituted minimal pairs. The hierarchy of contrasts encoded in Feature Geometry is taken to predict a specific pattern of vulnerability to impairment with the most structurally complex contrasts being the most susceptible to loss.

Aphasics with posterior lesions are found to exhibit the predicted pattern of segmental deficits, which reflects a mirror-image of the pattern observed in segmental development. Anterior aphasics do not exhibit such a consistent pattern. An explanation of this dichotomy is proposed and implications for the relationship between language acquisition and language impairment research are discussed.

## **Progressive Phonological Impairment in a Fluent Aphasic**

Mary Jack & Caroline Carrithers, Rutgers University

We present a mini-longitudinal study examining prosodic and segmental characteristics of speech errors, including position of the error within the syllable and location of the error with respect to the stressed syllable. Our results support the interdependence of phonological levels. We found an increased frequency of errors in coda position, which we interpret as a progressing deficit at a prosodic level of phonology with a concomitant deficit, but no progression at the segmental level. The lack of change in relative proportion of articulatory targets, together with the increased frequency of errors in coda position, support the hypothesis that the *presence* of the syllable level deficit is linked to a segmental level deficit, but the *severity* is not.

## **On the Proper Description of Comprehension Deficits in Agrammatic Aphasia**

Alan Beretta, Carolyn Harford, Janet Patterson, & Maria Pinango  
Michigan State University

This paper is concerned with the characterization of comprehension deficits in agrammatic aphasia. A significant claim (Grodzinsky 1990) holds that these deficits are characterizable in terms of current generative linguistic theory; specifically, that in an otherwise normal representation, only trace is lacking.

We examined this claim on six monolingual Spanish agrammatics. Spanish is an interesting test of the trace-deletion hypothesis (TDH) because its inversion properties permit a richer range of contrasting predictions than English over a range of structures. We consider the implications of our findings for the TDH and other trace-based accounts.

## **Inflectional Morphology in Hereditary Specific Language Impairment**

Michael Ullman, MIT

Myrna Gopnik, McGill University

Our investigation of the production of inflectional morphology in an extended family with an apparently hereditary language-specific impairment suggests the following: The language-impaired, but not the control family members, lack inflectional morphological rules and are also impaired in their production of stored correctly-marked forms. This disorder is explainable by a grammatical deficit - either in the formation of inflectional morphology paradigms, or in feature checking in the syntax. Moreover, rather than reliably producing the required inflected form in obligatory contexts, they appear to select forms as a function of their conceptual appropriateness in those contexts, suggesting a reliance on their conceptual rather than grammatical systems. Finally, we explore the similarity between the inflectional morphology of this impaired population and that of young normal children, and discuss implications for both groups.

## **Morphology in Children with Congenital Brain Deficits in the Left Hemisphere - Evidence from Children Learning Complex Morphology**

Yonata Levy, The Hebrew University

This paper presents findings concerning the acquisition of Hebrew morphology in children with different congenital brain pathologies. Hebrew has a rich inflectional and derivational morphology that is the interface of semantic and syntactic distinctions. The current work concentrates on the development of arbitrary morphological systems. This paper reports on the language of two hemiparetic children: S., a premature, DZ twin boy with a moderate enlargement of the ventricles, and T., a girl with left hemiatrophy and a large porencephalic area in the left parietal lobe. The profiles that emerge show good control of formal morphological systems, which is considerably more advanced than either syntax or meaning distinctions. These findings are parallel to the linguistic profiles found in previous work with children with developmental pathologies (Curtiss, 1989; Levy, Amir and Shalev, 1992) and are, in principal, similar to what is known about the acquisition of such systems in normal children, apart from a noticeable developmental delay. Such findings raise the possibility that the exact nature of the condition affecting learning is less critical than the fact that the child is learning language with a less than optimal cognition. Suggestions will be made concerning one possible strategy that may account for the ease with which arbitrary morphological paradigms seem to be acquired.

**Double Marking of Past Tense:  
Implications for the Development of Functional Categories**

Joe Allen, University of Southern California

At around three years of age, children produce structures with double past tense marking. An examination of tense doubling reveals an asymmetry between the doubling of past tense and the doubling of present tense. Adopting Stowell's (1994) claim that only [+PAST] is an operator in English, we investigate the possibility that the morphological realization of past tense may only be licensed in the scope of past tense operators. It is argued that doubling, in general, occurs only in the scope of such operators. The present study may provide evidence for children's early recognition of tense as a scope marker, as well as independent evidence that only past tense sentences project a tense operator in English.

**The Acquisition of Welsh Clause Structure**

Michelle Aldridge, Robert D. Borsley & Susan Clack  
University of Wales

Using longitudinal data from Kevin, a native Welsh-speaking child, from the age of nineteen months, we contribute to the debate about whether children's earliest clauses comprise none, some, or all functional categories. Kevin's earliest clauses comprise a subject and a verb-noun or a verb-noun and a complement. Prior to the age of two, his clauses contain no finite elements nor aspectual or predicative particles and negation is realised in clause initial/final position. Accordingly, we conclude that there are no functional categories at this stage and that our Welsh data lend support to the maturational theory of language acquisition.

**On the Verb Syntax of a 17-month German Child**

Bernhard Rohrbacher & Anne Vainikka, University of Pennsylvania

At the young age of 1 year and 5 months, Katrin (Wagner, CHILDES Database) clearly exhibits the finite/non-finite distinction in morphology, verb raising, and licensing null subjects. 77% of her finite verbs (main verbs with  $\emptyset$ -t, modals, copula) are clearly raised, while only 3% of her non-finite verbs (main

verbs with -n) are clearly raised. Furthermore, 65% of her finite clauses have an overt subject, while only 18% of the non-finite clauses do. We argue that Katrin's non-finite clauses consist of a bare VP-projection, while her finite clauses involve a left-headed IP-projection (without a CP). Similar results were obtained from Nicole (age 1;8, op.cit.).

### **Topicalization, CP and Licensing in the Acquisition of Swedish**

Lynn Santelmann, Cornell University

Early child Swedish provides compelling evidence for XP movement to the Spec,CP in both non-subject declarative topicalization and wh-question formation. However, adverbial topics are more frequent in declaratives and non-V2 structures, while rare in general, are more common in declaratives than in questions. These differences reflect the child's need to learn the language's specifics about movement to and licensing in the Spec,CP. Swedish children need to learn: (1) how to link non-operators (declarative topics) in the Spec, CP with their non-variable traces, (2) that R-expressions, as well as operators, are always licensed in an overt Spec-head relationship in their language.

### **Grammatical Mapping from UG to Language Specific Grammars: Deriving Variation in the Acquisition of German, Dutch and Swedish**

Katharina Boser, Lynn Santelmann, Isabella Barbier & Barbara Lust  
Cornell University

We examine verb raising, topicalization, and object-shift across three V2 languages (German, Dutch & Swedish) and show that these constructions demonstrate the interaction of universal principles with language specific grammar in acquisition. We argue, consistent with the Strong Continuity Hypothesis, that the interaction of UG with a process of grammatical mapping will account for (1) early acquisition when the language specific structure closely maps to UG principles, e.g. verb raising, and (2) development when the structure is language specific, e.g. object shift.

We test predictions regarding the variation in acquisition of these structures across these three child languages, based on the variation found in the corresponding adult languages.

**The Development of Nicaraguan Sign Language via the  
Language Acquisition Process**

Ann Senghas, MIT

A new sign language, Idioma de Senas Nicaraguense (ISN), is currently emerging from young children's contact with a 16-year-old signed pidgin, Lenguaje de Senas Nicaraguense (LSN). In the present study, morphological marking in signed narratives is examined with respect to three variables: age at first exposure, calendar year of first exposure, and number of years of exposure. Although the use of number and person agreement and object classifiers is variable in the signed pidgin, recent young signers use these forms systematically. Thus, younger signers exposed to impoverished input during their critical period are enriching the sign language, rather than just using it more proficiently.

**From Homesign to ASL:**

**Identifying the Influences of a Self-Generated Childhood  
Gesture System upon Language Proficiency in Adulthood**

Jill P. Morford, McGill University

Jenny L. Singleton, University of Illinois

Susan Goldin-Meadow, University of Chicago

Nearly twenty years ago, Goldin-Meadow and colleagues explored the self-generated gestural expressions of a deaf toddler who lacked exposure to a conventional language. The child, called "David", was observed intermittently throughout the next decade. Recently, we visited with David again, now a 23-year-old man. David now knows ASL. In this study, we ask whether David's adult ASL production is as impoverished as other late-learners of ASL, given the fact that his childhood homesign system exhibited considerable internal complexity. Our results suggest that David's signing is qualitatively, not quantitatively, different from other late-learners of ASL.

**The Interdependence Between Linguistic and Cognitive  
Performance among Bilingual Preschoolers with Differing  
Home Language Environments**

Rolando L. Santiago, University at Albany, State University of New York

This study was designed to investigate the interdependent structure between linguistic performance in Spanish and English, cognitive performance, and the home language environment among bilingual preschoolers with differing home language environments. The results of a common factor analysis (CFA) appropriate for small samples showed that three factors, English-Cognitive,

Spanish-Environmental, and Intensity of Language Exposure adequately explained interrelationships among 36 principal measures. It was concluded that bilingual preschoolers were probably using and acquiring English in contexts that fostered their cognitive development, such as the school. Spanish was used primarily to interact verbally with significant others in the home.

### **The Acquisition of Functional Categories: Evidence from Bilingual Children**

Johanne Paradis & Fred Genesee, McGill University

According to Pierce (1989, 1992) and Deprez and Pierce (1993), French child language and English child language differ with respect to the emergence of functional categories. These researchers offer evidence for their claims from monolingual children. The goal of the present study is twofold. First, we sought to cross-validate their findings using data from children learning French and English simultaneously. Second, we sought to identify any patterns in the acquisition of these functional categories which are unique to bilingual children. We looked at the emergence of finite verbs, subject pronouns and clitics, and negation in three French-English bilinguals for one year (age range 1;11 to 3;33). Our analyses support the claims of Pierce and Deprez and show that there is little difference between bilingual and monolingual children in the acquisition of these structures.

### **Patterns of Contact and Differentiation in Bilingual Children: A Syntactic Analysis**

Almeida Jacqueline Toribio & Barbara Brown  
University of California, Santa Barbara

In bilingual development, language mixing is most frequent during an early phase (cf. e.g. McLaughlin 1984, Redlinger & Park 1980, Volterra & Taeschner 1978, Swain 1972). However, as the child's level of competence increases, s/he demonstrates increased sensitivity to the constraints of UG which make reference to these features and the concomitant language differentiation of two systems (cf. e.g. Meisel 1994, Meisel 1989). Lastly, as the child acquires more communicative competence in the two languages, the language contact which is in evidence, if any, is manifested instead as code-switching, defined as language alternations which are constrained by properly syntactic principles (cf. e.g. Poplack 1981). Our purpose in this paper is to extend the Minimalist analysis put forth in Rubin & Toribio (forthcoming), based on Belazi, Rubin & Toribio (1994), for adult bilinguals to accommodate the data from child bilinguals.

## **'Bilingual' and 'Second-Language' Learning in a Recurrent Neural Network Trained on English and Spanish Sentences**

Oliver Rickard & Tom Scutt, University of Nottingham

A simple recurrent network was trained on two artificial grammars based on English and Spanish. Concurrent ('bilingual') learning was compared with the successive ('second-language') learning of English followed by Spanish. In the concurrent condition, it was found that equivalent English and Spanish words were clustered together, whereas in the successive condition the Spanish words formed a poorly-structured cluster. Comparing the development of these networks suggests that plasticity may be a maturational constraint on language acquisition. Also, in the 'bilingual' condition, the more complex Spanish grammar was learnt more easily than the English, indicating the importance of structure for distributional analysis.

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**Morphological Acquisition and SLI:  
Evidence from Children with Expressive Language Delay**

Julie Roberts, University of Vermont  
Leslie Rescorla, Bryn Mawr College

Using evidence from the language samples of 4-year-old children with expressive language delay (SLI-E) and MLU-matched and age-matched linguistically normal children, this study explored the fit of this data to current competing models of language impairment. Results revealed that the types of errors demonstrated by these SLI-E children were generally consistent with the Extended Optional Infinitive account (Rice, 1994). For these children, however, the Optional Infinitive stage appeared to be commensurate with MLU. In addition, sufficient individual variation was found to suggest that it may be difficult to fit a single model of language impairment to the diverse population of children with language delay.

**Compounding in Greek Developmentally Language  
Impaired Subjects**

Jenny Dalalakis, McGill University

Greek compounding requires two stems, the variable epenthetic vowel /o/, and a suffix, demanding both phonological and morphological level proficiency. We investigated the production of real and novel nominal compounds of (a) Greek Developmentally Language-Impaired (DLI) children, (b) age-matched controls, and (c) younger non-impaired controls. DLI subjects did poorest in selecting stems, using epenthesis, and producing novel compounds than either control group. DLI performance for real items was better. Novel compounds need to be generated using implicit compounding rules, and may be problematic because the morpho-phonological rules required in Greek compounding are affected for the DLI group.

**Extended Optional Infinitive (EOI) Account of  
Specific Language Impairment**

Mabel L. Rice, University of Kansas

At young ages normally developing children sometimes use infinitival forms of the verb where a finite form is required. This stage of Optional Infinitive (OI) use has been well studied in normally developing children. The question addressed in this study is the extent to which the predictions of the OI stage characterize the

later emergence of the morphosyntax of children with specific language impairment (SLI). The target morphemes were -ed-, -s, BE, and DO. The findings support an Extended Optional Infinitive (EOI) account of the grammar of children with SLI. Evidence and theoretical import will be discussed in this paper.

### **An Auditory Processing Deficit as a Possible Source of SLI**

Christiane Fellbaum, Princeton University

Steven Miller, Rutgers University

Susan Curtiss, UCLA

Paula Tallal, Rutgers University

We examine the major hypotheses proposed as causes of Specific Language Impairment in children, using data from a large population of children with SLI and age-matched controls. The children's receptive language behavior on tests involving grammatical features expressed by both bound and free morphemes shows no clear support either for a purely grammar-based nor for a perception-based account of SLI. We then examine the children's comprehension of two groups of linguistically meaningful and non-meaningful morphemes differing with respect to the presence of sound sequences involving rapidly changing acoustic information in stop formation and voicing distinctions. Results support an account of SLI in terms of an auditory processing deficit.

### **An Investigation of Children with Developmental Language Impairment's Ability to Use Everyday Knowledge in Comprehension**

Siobhan Wootton & Elizabeth Skarakis-Doyle

University of Western Ontario

This investigation sought to determine whether children, ages 3;0 to 4;5 with developmental language impairments differed from normally developing age matched peers in their understanding of the scriptal components believed to guide early comprehension and comprehension monitoring attempts. Using an online expectancy violation procedure, it was hypothesized that a child's identification of systematic violations of the obligatory aspects of scripted events in a story format would reveal the adequacy of the child's semantic-pragmatic based comprehension and monitoring attempts. Results suggest the potential of the procedure to reveal young children's online comprehension of scripted events and to identify young children with receptive language impairments.

## SATURDAY MORNING — SESSION A

### **The Emergence of Nominative Case Assignment in Child Catalan and Spanish**

John Grinstead, UCLA

A morphological study of four monolingual Catalan-speaking children and one Spanish-speaking child between 1;1 and 3;1 shows that there is a correlation between the emergence of overt subject use and the use of tense and number distinctions. It is proposed that morphological underspecification - crucially the lack of verbal tense and number - at an early stage causes nominative case assignment to fail. Later when tense and number emerge, overt subjects become possible. In the early stage, the overwhelming majority of verbal utterances occur as present tense and imperative forms. The quality of the morphological system then undergoes a dramatic change, as tense and number distinctions are added to make the system adult-like. As a result of the failure of nominative case-marking, big PRO is proposed to be the null subject used by Catalan and Spanish speaking children at the early stage.

### **Functional Categories and Objective Case Assignment in the Early Grammars of Bambara**

Oumarou Camara, Indiana University

Usha Lakshmanan, Southern Illinois University

Spontaneous production data gathered from eight monolingual Bambara-speaking children ranging in age from 1;8 to 3;0 were analyzed for evidence concerning the status of functional categories, word order properties of VPs, and objective Case assignment. The results of the analysis suggest that the functional categories of D, I, and C and their maximal projections are operative by the age of 25 months. As for the word order in VPs, the findings suggest that Bambara-speaking children know from the very beginning that in Bambara NP direct objects of the verb must precede the verb and that non-NP arguments and adjuncts follow the verb. It is argued that as in the case of the adult grammar of Bambara (see Koopman 1992), the NP direct object in the child grammars of Bambara is underlyingly in the postverbal position and that Case theoretic reasons force its movement to a preverbal position, which is either [Spec, VP] or [Spec, Agr-OP].

### **The Acquisition of Pronouns in Dutch and English: The Case for Continuity**

Susan Powers, Max Planck Institute

This is an empirical investigation of first person pronouns from five English children (1;6-4;0) and five Dutch children (1;9-3;10). The data reveal an adult-

like distribution of pronouns, thus supporting the hypothesis that children assign Case as adults do. The appearance of non-nominative subjects is not due to a defective or missing system of Case assignment and is not representative of a phrase-marker which differs from the adults. The large number and consistent use of nominative subjects by English and Dutch children is evidence for the Strong Continuity Hypothesis of Pinker (1984).

### **The Development of Relative Clauses in Serbo-Croatian**

Danijela Kudra & Helen Goodluck, University of Ottawa

Serbo-Croatian 'koga' (wh) and 'što' (that) relative clauses are formed by movement, obeying constraints on extraction; 'za koga' relatives require long distance binding and can violate constraints. Four six-year-olds were tested with elicited production and act-out comprehension tasks. In production children (unlike adults) strongly prefer 'što' relatives, in some instances relativizing into wh-islands. Relatives with pied-piped prepositions are eschewed in production, but are easy to comprehend. We argue for a non-movement analysis of children's early relatives, claiming that non-sensitivity to islands provides a better index of non-movement than absence of pied-piping or presence of resumptive pronouns (cf. Labelle 1990).

### **Maturation of Syntax: Preliminary New Evidence from the Acquisition of Unaccusatives in Russian**

Maria Babyonyshev, Ronald Fein, Jennifer Ganger,  
David Pesetsky, MIT  
Sergey Avrutin, University of Pennsylvania

We report the results of an experiment testing 23 Russian-speaking children under five years old to find out how they represent unaccusative verbs, using the genitive of negation construction as a probe for their knowledge. We found that although they have mastered genitive case and the genitive of negation construction, they did not always use it with unaccusative verbs with which it is required, thus performing in a strikingly non-adult manner and indicating that they do not have the correct representation of unaccusative verbs. These results provide new support for Borer & Wexler's (1987) maturation of A-chains hypothesis, which holds that the ability to use A-chains is not present in young children but matures around the age of four. Because unaccusatives require A-chains, this hypothesis predicts that young children will not have the correct representation of unaccusative verbs.

## SATURDAY MORNING — SESSION B

### **Strength of Evidence in the Subset Principle Debate in L2A: Distinguishing Logical from Developmental Predictions**

Robert Hamilton, University of South Carolina

Many L1A and some L2A researchers (e.g. Berent, 1994) have assumed that stagewise progression from subset to superset parameter values in acquisition may count as evidence for the Subset Principle (SP). I argue, however, that such developmental data are inherently ambiguous, likely reflecting factors other than the SP (e.g. parametric initial states, processing complexity). The operation of the SP can only be validated by studies testing whether learners avoid parameter values which generate a superset of the target grammar. Though most existing L2 studies of this sort are problematic (e.g. Finer & Broselow, 1986; White, 1989; Zobl, 1988; cf. Berent, 1994; MacLaughlin, in press), a reanalysis of preposition stranding and pied-piping data (Ayoum, 1994; Liceras, 1988; Tarallo & Myhill, 1983; White, 1987) in terms of E. Klein's (1993) parametric analysis provides suggestive evidence that the SP is not operative in L2A.

### **The L2 Acquisition of Unaccusative Constructions**

Makiko Hirakawa, McGill University

This paper investigates the acquisition of English unaccusative constructions in comparison with that of unergatives and passives by Japanese speakers. An unaccusative verb takes a D-structure object, which moves to the grammatical subject position in English (Burzio 1986 etc.). In contrast, it has been claimed that the D-structure object of an unaccusative verb stays in situ in Japanese, i.e. no movement is involved (Nishigauchi 1993, Kageyama 1993). It should be noted that syntactic NP movement is involved in Japanese (direct) passives, as in English passives. Results from a production task and a grammaticality judgement task show that learners make errors overgeneralizing passive morphemes as unaccusative morphemes (e.g. 'The moon was disappeared'), suggesting that they have difficulty in applying NP movement to English unaccusatives.

### **Tense/Aspect Marking by L2 Learners of Japanese**

Yasuhiro Shirai, Daito Bunka University

It has been observed that the development of tense/aspect morphology is strongly influenced by the inherent aspect of the verbs. Specifically, learners initially use past/perfective inflections predominantly with accomplishment and achievement verbs, while using progressive inflections predominantly with

activity verbs. This study investigates whether this pattern holds for the acquisition of Japanese by examining taped interviews with 3 Chinese learners of Japanese. The results show that L2 Japanese follows the pattern of previous studies; the past/perfective marking (-ta) by the learners is most frequently used with achievement verbs, while progressive/imperfective marking (-tei) is most frequently attached to activity verbs.

### **On the L2A of Deverbal Compounds: Evidence for Agreement**

Donna Lardiere, Georgetown University  
Bonnie D. Schwartz, University of Durham

In this paper, the development of English deverbal compounding (e.g. cookie-eater) by L1 Spanish speakers tests the extent of L1 influence in L2A. Whereas Spanish and English deverbal compounds hold basic commonalities (semantic compositionality, productivity, etc.), their structural and inflectional properties contrast. Experimental data, elicited from 34 native Spanish speakers grouped into 3 English proficiency levels, reveal 2 prevalent error types. Applying recent morphological approaches whereby (i) syntactic principles constrain lexical structures, and (ii) abstract morphosyntactic/semantic features are separated from their phonological realization as affixes, we show that analyses of these 2 error types can only be accommodated under "Absolute L1 Influence" (Schwartz & Sprouse 1994). In short, specific L2 errors provide evidence for a syntactic agreement relation - implicating both the existence of AGR and its L1 feature-values - at the word level.

### **Semantic Structure Theory and L2 Learning of English Adjectival Participles**

Chuming Wang, Chinese University of Hong Kong

This paper presents a project that applies the semantic structure theory to the SLA process of learning the prenominal use of the English adjectival -ed and -ing participles. The study has consistently disclosed that EFL learners are sensitive to the meaning components of 'change of state' in the formation of the -ed adjectives and 'manner' in the -ing adjectives. L1 semantics has been shown to have an effect on the mapping of the meaning components to the participial forms. The findings lead to the conclusion that learning a second language involves reorganization of the existing L1 semantic structure and this reorganization entails an awareness of the L2 semantic constraints in the form of the linguistically relevant meaning components.

## **SATURDAY MORNING — SESSION C**

### **Minimal Words in Early Acquisition**

**Katherine Demuth, Brown University**

It has long been noted that children's early speech is characterized by the lack of functional morphology and other unstressed syllables. Semantic, syntactic, rhythmic, and perceptual explanations have been proposed, but none provides a satisfactory account of this phenomena. This paper argues that early word structures can best be understood by appealing to phonological theory, specifically to prosodic units such as the mora, syllable, foot, and prosodic word. The paper shows that children's early words are linguistically well-formed Minimal Word units, providing a unified analysis of both the intra-linguistic and inter-linguistic variation found in the shape of children's early words.

### **Prosody Serves as a Linguistic Marker to Local Co-Occurrence Patterns in Ten-Month-Olds**

**Michele Shady, LouAnn Gerken, & Peter W. Jusczyk  
State University of New York at Buffalo**

Ten-month-olds heard two versions of a children's story produced by DECTalk. Unlike investigations using pause-insertion (Jusczyk et al., 1992), potential linguistic units were marked by changes in pitch. In "natural" versions, pitch changes occurred at typical prosodic boundaries (e.g. after a subject NP); in "unnatural" versions, the same pitch change occurred between an article and the following noun. Infants listened longer to "natural" than "unnatural" passages. These findings suggest that 10-month-olds are sensitive to the fact that highly frequent phonetic patterns such as the one in "the" do not occur at the ends of prosodic units.

### **Do Infants Use Stress as a Cue in Segmenting Fluent Speech?**

**Mary R. Newsome & Peter W. Jusczyk  
State University of New York at Buffalo**

By nine months, infants prefer to listen to strong/weak (S/W) words over weak/strong (W/S) ones and can segment one syllable words from fluent speech. Can they learn and recognize bisyllabic words as well? If they can segment such words from a passage of speech, do they do so using a whole-word representation, or might the strong syllable alone act as a cue?

Infants listened significantly longer to passages containing the S/W words they had been familiarized with. There were no significant differences, however, in the W/S condition. Additionally, infants' preference for S/W words seems to be based on a detailed, whole-word match since they did not false alarm to presentations of the strong syllables alone.

### **Speech Segmentation and the Bootstrapping of Lexical Acquisition**

Jenny R. Saffran, Elissa L. Newport, & Richard N. Aslin  
University of Rochester

One of the infant's first tasks in language acquisition is to discover the words embedded in a mostly continuous speech stream. Models of initial lexical segmentation have generally focused on the use of language-specific prosodic cues correlated with word boundaries. Lexical segmentation might also be achieved by noting the transitional probabilities between sounds. One plausible segmentation device is a clustering mechanism which computes the transitional probabilities between sounds and uses the relative strengths of these probabilities to hypothesize word boundaries at points of low transitional probability. Such a device might be further aided by language-specific prosodic cues correlated with word boundaries. To test this hypothesis, we briefly exposed adult subjects to an artificial language in which the only cues available for word segmentation were the transitional probabilities between syllables. Subjects were able to learn the words of this language. Furthermore, the addition of certain prosodic cues enhanced performance. Implications for models of infant lexical segmentation will be discussed.

### **Is the Right Hemisphere Functionally Specialized to Process Prosodic Information from Birth?**

Valerie L. Shafer, CUNY Graduate Center  
David Shucard, SUNY Buffalo

Recent research suggests that infants may be sensitive to the prosodic structure of their native language at an earlier age than the segmental structure. In adults, the right hemisphere is claimed to be more active than the left in processing prosodic information. Thus, we hypothesized that similar hemispheric specialization for prosodic information would be found in infants during the earliest stages of language acquisition. Using an electrophysiological technique, both the left and right hemispheres of 3-month-olds were found to be active in discriminating English from Italian (languages with different prosodic structure) and English from Dutch (languages with similar prosodic structure).

**Picking Up Particles**

Hans Bennis, Marcel den Dikken & Peter Jordens,  
Holland Institute of Generative Linguistics  
Rijksuniversiteit Leiden

Susan Powers & Jurgen Weissenborn, Max Planck Institute

Hyams, Johnson & Schaeffer (1993) and Broihier, Hyams, Johnson, Pesetsky, Poeppel, Schaeffer & Wexler (1994) have recently claimed that acquisition data provide support for an analysis of verb particle constructions in which the verb and the particle start out as parts of one complex verb. In this paper we argue against this claim, showing that the arguments presented in its favor are theoretically inadequate and empirically incorrect. Our alternative analysis in which the particle heads its own projection, i.e. is a (small clause) predicate in its own right, will be shown to account accurately for the acquisition facts of English, German and Dutch.

**The Acquisition of Datives, Particles,  
and Related Constructions**

Karin Stromswold, Rutgers University  
William Snyder, MIT

This paper presents evidence that children consistently acquire English datives, verb-particle constructions, 'put'-locatives, and causative/perceptual constructions all as a group. This finding favors a parametric model of acquisition, in which the acquired knowledge is not construction-specific; and favors analyses in which all the constructions belong to a single syntactic class. We argue (from ordering effects) that acquisition of the entire class depends on acquisition of two parametric properties. One property (A) allows the grammar to generate double object datives, causative/perceptual constructions, 'put'-locatives, and V-NP-Particle constructions. V-Particle-NP constructions and 'to'-datives depend on the combination of A with a second property, B.

**German Ø-Subjects and Ø-Objects:  
Discourse Identification and Feature Transfer**

Cornelia Hamann, University of Geneva

German has two empty subject constructions, topic-drop and empty expletives in subordinate clauses, where 'pro' is licensed by C<sup>0</sup> under government. For the acquisition of German, topic-drop approaches to child null-subjects seem more adequate than agreement oriented approaches because no discontinuity ensues to adult topic-drop. They cannot explain, however, that German three-year-olds show a quantitative and qualitative difference in object- and subject-drop:

show a quantitative and qualitative difference in object- and subject-drop:

- a decrease in subject-drop (from 20% to 4%) not found in object-drop (10-40% throughout)
- the occurrence of postverbal empty subjects (11%) not matched by the occurrence of in-situ empty objects (3%).

These data are best explained if German three-year-olds have both strategies

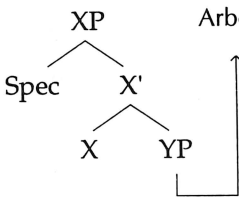
- topic drop
- and the licensing of 'pro' in government configurations.

### Null Subjects in Wh-Phrases: Evidence for Parameter Setting

Hilary Sara Bromberg, MIT

Rizzi (1992) predicts that null subjects in early English should not occur in wh-phrases (e.g. \*Where going?). Our account, which takes into consideration the Optional Infinitive Stage (Wexler, 1992), predicts that null subjects will be found in early English wh-phrases. Analyses of null-subject wh-utterances from CHILDES (see MacWhinney & Snow, 1985) reveal that (1) null subjects do occur in wh-phrases, (2) the percentages of both wh-nulls and baseline nulls follow similar patterns across time, and (3) the wh-null and baseline null percentages drop dramatically over a short period of time. We discuss possible theoretical accounts not only for the production of wh-nulls but for the striking parametric shift.

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**The Acquisition of Negative and Stylistic Inversion  
by German Learners of English:**

**A Case of Parameter-resetting, Overgeneralisation and Recovery**

Daniel Robertson, Antonella Sorace & Ellen Gurman Bard  
University of Edinburgh

The research which is reported in this paper is motivated by the existence of characteristic 'residual verb-second' word order patterns in the written English of German learners. We report some results from a study of grammaticality judgements which show that the superficial word order properties of English are acquired relatively early, but that there are some aspects of English word order (notably negative and stylistic inversion) which present problems to all learners, including the most advanced. These results are explained by positing three developmental mechanisms: resetting the values of directional parameters, lexical learning, and change in the feature composition of functional categories.

**A Crosslinguistic Study of the Age Factor  
in Second Language Acquisition**

Naomi Bolotin, Harvard University

A central question in language acquisition research is whether there is a critical period for learning a second language. This study addressed such an issue by comparing children and adults from three language groups on a grammaticality judgment task involving English relative clauses: those whose L1 exhibits no movement (Arabic), those whose L1 exhibits optional movement (Hebrew), and those whose L1 is like English in exhibiting movement. Results show similar patterns for the children and adults of each language type, suggesting that age is not a limiting factor with respect to acquiring core properties of syntax.

*Saturday Afternoon Session B continued on page 30*

**Session A**  
Auditorium

**Session B**  
East Balcony

**Session C**  
Terrace Lounge

9:30	S. EISENBEISS, M. PENKE & H. CLAHSSEN, Connections between the Acquisition of DP and AGR in Early Child German	J. M. SISKIND, Robust Lexical Acquisition Despite Noisy Input	J. MATTHEWS, Segmental Deficits in Aphasia: The Regression Hypothesis in Light of Current Phonological Theory
10:00	J. SCHAEFFER, On the Acquisition of Scrambling in Dutch	R. BERMAN, Word Formation as Evidence	M. JACK & C. CARRITHERS, Progressive Phonological Impairment in a Fluent Aphasic
10:30	W. SNYDER & D. DAS, The Syntactic Representation of Degree and Number in Children's English: Evidence for Delayed Parametric Learning	S. BARTKE, G. MARCUS & H. CLAHSSEN, How Children Learn German Noun Plurals	A. BERETTA, C. HARFORD, J. PATTERSON & M. PINANGO, On the Proper Description of Comprehension Deficits in Agrammatic Aphasia
11:00	Break		
11:20	T. SANO, Negation in Child Japanese	P. BLOOM, The Role of Semantics in Solving the Bootstrapping Problem	M. ULLMAN & M. GOPNIK, Inflectional Morphology in Hereditary Specific Language Impairment
11:50	T. GUASTI, R. THORNTON & K. WEXLER, Children's Negative Questions	T. BURNS & N. SOJA, Constrained Productivity in the Acquisition of NP-type Nouns	Y. LEVY, Morphology in Children with Congenital Brain Deficits in the Left Hemisphere: Evidence from Children Learning Complex Morphology
12:20	Lunch Break		
1:00	HUMAN LANGUAGE FILM SERIES, EPISODE 1, Conference Auditorium (closed captioning provided)		

2:30	<p>A. SENGHAS, The Development of Nicaraguan Sign Language via the Language Acquisition Process</p> <p>J. P. MORFORD, J. L. SINGLETON &amp; S. GOLDIN-MEADOW, From Homesign to ASL: Identifying the Influences of a Self-Generated Childhood Gesture System Upon Language Proficiency in Adulthood</p> <p>R. L. SANTIAGO, The Interdependence between Linguistic and Cognitive Performance among Bilingual Preschoolers with Differing Home Language Environments</p>	<p>J. ROBERTS &amp; L. RESCORLA, Morphological Acquisition and SLI: Evidence from Children with Expressive Language Delay</p> <p>J. DALALAKIS, Compounding in Greek Developmentally Language-Impaired Subjects</p>
3:00	<p>J. ALLEN, Double Marking of Past Tense: Implications for the Development of Functional Categories</p>	
3:30	<p>M. ALDRIDGE, R. BORSLEY &amp; S. CLACK, The Acquisition of Welsh Clause Structure</p>	
4:00	Break	
4:20	<p>B. ROHRBACHER &amp; A. VAINIKKA, On the Verb Syntax of a 17-Month-Old German Child</p>	<p>M. L. RICE, Extended Optional Infinitive (EOI) Account of Specific Language Impairment</p>
4:50	<p>L. SANTELMANN, Topicalization, CP and Licensing in the Acquisition of Swedish</p>	<p>C. FELLBAUM, S. MILLER, S. CURTISS &amp; P. TALLAL, An Auditory Processing Deficit as a Possible Source of SLI</p>
5:20	<p>K. BOSER, L. SANTELMANN, I. BARBIER, &amp; B. LUST, Grammatical Mapping from UG to Language Specific Grammars: Deriving Variation in the Acquisition of German, Dutch and Swedish</p>	<p>S. WOOTTON &amp; E. SKARAKIS-DOYLE, An Investigation of Children with Developmental Language Impairment's Ability to Use Everyday Knowledge in Comprehension</p>

8:00 P.M. Grand Ballroom

ANDREW RADFORD, University of Essex:

*Children: Architects or Bricks?*

Keynote Address

**SATURDAY, November 5th**

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

**Session A**  
Auditorium**Session B**  
East Balcony**Session C**  
Terrace Lounge

9:00 J. GRINSTEAD, The Emergence of Nominative Case Assignment in Child Catalan and Spanish

R. L. HAMILTON, Strength of Evidence in the Subset Principle Debate in L2A: Distinguishing Logical from Developmental Predictions

K. DEMUTH, Minimal Words in Early Acquisition

9:30 O. CAMARA & U. LAKSHMANAN, Functional Categories and Objective Case Assignment in the Early Grammars of Bambara

M. HIRAKAWA, The L2 Acquisition of Unaccusative Constructions

M. SHADY, L.A. GERKEN, & P. JUSCZYK, Prosody Serves as a Linguistic Marker to Local Co-occurrence Patterns in Ten-Month-Olds

10:00 S. POWERS, The Acquisition of Pronouns in Dutch and English—A Case for Continuity

Y. SHIRAI, Tense/Aspect Marking by L2 Learners of Japanese

M. R. NEWSOME & P. JUSCZYK, Do Infants Use Stress as a Cue in Segmenting Fluent Speech?

10:30

Break

10:50 D. KUDRA & H. GOODLUCK, The Development of Relative Clauses in Serbo-Croatian

D. LARDIERE & B. D. SCHWARTZ, On the L2A of Deverbal Compounds: Evidence for Agreement

J. R. SAFFRAN, E. L. NEWPORT & R. N. ASLIN, Speech Segmentation and the Bootstrapping of Lexical Acquisition

11:20 M. BABYONYSHEV, R. FEIN, J. GANGER, D. PESETSKY & S. AVRUTIN, Maturation of Syntax: New Evidence from the Acquisition of Unaccusatives in Russian

C. WANG, Semantic Structure Theory and L2 Learning of English Adjectival Participles

V. L. SHAFER & D. SHUCARD, Is the Right Hemisphere of the Brain Functionally Specialized to Process Prosodic Information from Birth?

11:50 Lunch Break

12:30 HUMAN LANGUAGE FILM SERIES, EPISODE 2, Conference Auditorium (closed captioning provided)

2:00	H. BENNIS, M. DEN DIKKEK, P. JORDENS, S. POWERS & J. WEISSENBORN, Picking up Particles	D. ROBERTSON, A. SORACE, & E. G. BARD, The Acquisition of Negative and Stylistic Inversion by German Learners of English: A Case of Parameter-Resetting, Overgeneralisation and Recovery	R. MAYBERRY & C. CHAMBERLAIN, How Ya Gonna Read the Language if Ya Don't Speak It? Reading Comprehension in Relation to Sign Language Comprehension
2:30	K. STROMSWOLD & W. SNYDER, The Acquisition of Datives, Particles, and Related Constructions: Evidence for a Parametric Account	N. BOLOTIN, A Cross-linguistic Study of the Age Factor in Second Language Acquisition	C. KATO, D. VANN & R. J. BRACEWELL, Translation from ASL (L1) to Written English (L2) by Deaf Students
3:00	Break		
3:20	C. HAMANN, German 0-Subjects and 0-Objects: Discourse Identification and Feature Transfer	A. FELDMAN, Effect of Phonological Configuration on Lexical Preference in Second Language Acquisition	D. M. HARDISON, Integrating Auditory and Visual Cues in Speech Perception: Perspectives on the Role of Compellingness from Cross-language Studies
3:50	H. S. BROMBERG, Null Subjects in Wh-phrases: Evidence for Parameter Setting	M. R. BRENT & T. A. CARTWRIGHT, Segmenting Speech without a Lexicon: The Effects of Phonotactic Information and Speech Target	C. W. HAYNES, Does Evidence Support a Retrieval Hypothesis for Developmental Dyslexia?

Sherry Reception—Small Ballroom

5:30 P.M. Grand Ballroom

Plenary Address

**JILL DE VILLIERS, Smith College: *On Questioning Minds & Answering Machines***

# SUNDAY, November 6th

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

## Session A Auditorium

## Session B East Balcony

## Session C Terrace Lounge

9:00	S. AVRUTIN & K. WEXLER, Children's Knowledge of Subjunctive Clauses: Evidence from Obviation in Russian	G. HUNTLEY-FENNER, S. CAREY & L. KLATT, Infant Representations of Objects vs. Non-solid Substances	J. REILLY, M. L. MCINTIRE & D. ANDERSON, Look Who's Talking! Point of View and Character Reference in Mothers' and Children's ASL Narratives
9:30	L. CONWAY & S. CRAIN, Children's Understanding of Donkey Sentences: Dynamic vs. Unselective Binding	F. XU & S. CAREY, Do Children's First Object Names Map onto Adult-like Conceptual Representations?	Y. D. HYTER & A. IGLESIAS, A Cross-Channel Description of Character Reference in Oral Narratives
10:00	K. MATSUOKA, Case-Marking in Conjoined NPs and Binding Conditions in Young Children's Grammar	P. BLOOM, D. KELEMEN, A. FOUNTAIN, & E. COURTNEY, The Acquisition of Collective Nouns	
10:30	Break		
10:50	A. R. SCHMAUDER & M. A. BELL, EEG, Brain and Language Development: A Case Study	S. WAXMAN, Characteristics of Word-Learners: Before and After the "Vocabulary Explosion"	D. PESCO & M. CRAGO, "We Went Home and Told the Whole Story to Our Friends": Children's Narratives in an Algonquin Community
11:20	J. L. WAKEFIELD & M. J. WILCOX, Brain Maturation and Language Acquisition: A Theoretical Model and Preliminary Investigation	R. M. GOLINKOFF, M. P. SELKE & K. HIRSH-PASEK, Novel Verb Comprehension: Immediate Extension to New Agents	Y. MAENO, Acquisition of Oral Narrative Skills by Foreign Language Learners of Japanese
11:50	Lunch Break		
12:15	HUMAN LANGUAGE FILM SERIES, EPISODE 3, Conference Auditorium (closed captioning provided)		

1:30	H. SUSSMAN, F. MINIFIE, C. STOEL-GAMMON, E. BUDER & J. SMITH, Developmental Changes in C-V Interdependencies: Canonical Babbling vs. Early Word Attempts	B. Z. PEARSON, A. M. NAVARRO & V. M. GATHERCOLE, Assessing Phonetic Differentiation in Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA)	R. BURNS-HOFFMAN, S. FRADD & O. LEE, Patterns of Anaphora in Children's Expository Discourse
2:00	P. F. MACNEILAGE & B. L. DAVIS, Articulatory Bases of Babbling and (Therefore) Early Words	J. ROBERTS, Learning to Talk Philadelphia: The Acquisition of Short-a by Preschool Children	D. REID, Framing and Syntactic "Footwork" in Child Discourse
2:30 Break			
2:40	S. BOYCE, The Speech Movement Timing in Four- to Six-Year-Old Children	E. J. FEE, The Mora in Phonological Acquisition	E. HOFF-GINSBERG, The Independence of Communication and Grammar in Development
3:10	K. L. MARKEY, L. MENN & M. C. MOZER, A Developmental Model of the Sensorimotor Foundations of Child Phonology	M. A. MACKEN, Harmony	A. KUNTAY & D. I. SLOBIN, Listening to a Turkish Mother: Some Puzzles for Acquisition

## **Effect of Phonological Configuration on Lexical Preference in Second Language Acquisition**

Andrea Feldman, University of Colorado

This study examines the effect of unfamiliar phonologies on Japanese ESL students' lexical acquisition. Aural and written tests of common English words were given to the ESL students and a native English-speaking control group. The test words contained sound patterns similar to Japanese words (easy) or different from them (hard). This phonotactically-based classification was confirmed by two norming experiments with both Japanese and English judges. The ESL students missed significantly more hard than easy words on both tests. These results support the conclusion that ESL vocabulary is affected by the phonological rules of the learner's first language.

## **Segmenting Speech without a Lexicon: The Effects of Phonotactic Information and Speech Target**

Timothy Cartwright & Michael Brent, Johns Hopkins University

How can infants extract word sounds from continuous speech? Informally, "distributional regularity" refers to the intuition that sound sequences that occur frequently and in many contexts are better candidates for the lexicon than those that occur rarely and in few contexts. By applying a computer simulated segmentation model to transcripts of child directed English, we show that exploiting either distributional regularity or phonotactic constraints alone can improve segmentation significantly, and exploiting both can improve it further still. By applying the model to matched samples of speech by mothers to their children and to an interviewer, we show that some segmentation strategies perform much better on child-directed speech than on adult-directed speech while others are unable to exploit the difference.

**How Ya Gonna Read the Language If Ya Don't Speak It?  
Reading Comprehension in Relation to  
Sign Language Comprehension**

Rachel Mayberry & Charlene Chamberlain, McGill University

The hypothesis that reading development is tied to sign language development in deaf children was tested. Subjects were 48 deaf children ranging in age from 7 to 15, half had deaf parents. Subjects answered questions about short stories given in print, American Sign Language, and manually coded English, decided whether sentences given in the same conditions were true or false, and took a speech test. Reading comprehension was highly correlated to comprehension of both ASL and MCE ( $r = .68$ ) but not to speech skill. The implications of these findings for theories of reading development in deaf and hearing children are discussed.

**Translation from ASL (L1) to Written English (L2)  
by Deaf Students**

Carolyn K. Kato, Donna Vann, & Robert J. Bracewell  
McGill University

Deaf native signers (L1=ASL) at a residential school for the deaf translated sentences (presented in sign language via videotape) into written English. Target structures were 8 conjunctive relations (e.g. because, then). Each was presented twice: once as a manual sign and once using ASL non-manual features or other structures. Most targets were translated correctly; but for some targets, performance was better with ASL non-manual features or other structures. These results suggest that for these targets, subjects were better able to derive meaning from ASL features than from manual signs linked to English glosses.

**Integrating Auditory and Visual Cues in Speech Perception:  
Perspectives on the Role of Compellingness  
from Cross-Language Studies**

Debra M. Hardison, Indiana University

Experiments explored factors affecting the influence of visual (lip-read) information on speech perception, the "McGurk effect". Experiment 1 involved 70 advanced ESL learners of four L1s and 20 native speakers (NS). Stimuli were matched and mismatched audiovisual combinations of /pa/, /fa/, /wa/, /ra/, /ta/, /ka/ on videotape. Significant visual effects were noted for nonnatives, but occurred only in noise for NS. Experiment 2, using only /p,t,k/ presented to NS, revealed significant visual effects with and without noise ( $p < .001$ ). Thus, compellingness of the stimulus situation (degree of discordance between cues) is a factor in the McGurk effect. The native/nonnative contrast in perceptual categories influences the relative weighting of each cue and determination of compellingness.

**Does Evidence Support a Retrieval Hypothesis for  
Developmental Dyslexia?**

Charles W. Haynes

Massachusetts General Hospital, Institute of Health Professions

This session reports an investigation of differences between name recognition vs. name retrieval abilities in relationship to reading performance in second ( $n=80$ ) and fourth ( $n=80$ ) graders and in "reading-matched" samples of dyslexic adolescents at second ( $n=26$ ) and fourth grade ( $n=47$ ) reading levels. When name retrieval is experimentally isolated from name recognition, the capacity of retrieval, per se, to predict dyslexics' reading abilities is found to be non-significant. It is suggested that measures of rapid, continuous naming, like R.A.N. and R.A.S., may best identify retrieval deficits in dyslexia.

## **SUNDAY MORNING — SESSION A**

### **Children's Knowledge of Subjunctive Clauses: Evidence from Obviation in Russian** Sergey Avrutin, University of Pennsylvania Kenneth Wexler, MIT

The pronoun in subject position of a subjunctive clause in Russian (and in a number of other languages), cannot be coindexed with the matrix subject. No such restriction exists for the object pronouns, or for subject pronouns in indicative clauses, or for subject pronouns in subjunctive clauses with no subject-verb agreement. Avrutin and Babyonshev (1994) argue that the so-called obviation in subjunctive clauses is a consequence of a complex interaction of various factors, namely the operator-like character of the subjunctive complementizer, the pronominal nature of AgrS in Russian, LF movement of V to I to C, and Principle B. In this paper, we present results of an acquisition experiment with 18 Russian-speaking children (ages 4;1 - 5;10, mean age 5;0) regarding their knowledge of these linguistic factors. Analyzing children's interpretation of pronouns in subject position of subjunctive clauses with and without agreement, pronouns in the object position and pronouns in indicative clauses, we argue that children at this age possess all relevant knowledge required for the correct interpretation of subjunctive clauses. We also present a learnability model that allows children to figure out the correct setting of relevant parameters from the positive data only.

### **Children's Understanding of Donkey Sentences: Dynamic vs. Unselective Binding** Laura Conway & Stephen Crain, University of Connecticut

Recent theories of donkey anaphora (e.g. Kamp, 1981; Heim, 1982; Kamp & Reyle, 1993) claim (a) that conditional donkey sentences (If a farmer owns a donkey, he beats it) and relative clause donkey sentences (Every farmer who owns a donkey beats it) have the same truth conditions, and (b) that both of these sentences entail that all of the farmers beat all of the donkeys they own. Our research findings from English-speaking children challenge both of these claims. Instead, the findings support the proposal by Chierchia (1993), who maintains that relative clause donkey sentences are interpreted by the same mechanisms of dynamic binding which establish anaphoric relations in discourse.

### **Case-marking in Conjoined NPs and Binding Conditions in Young Children's Grammar** Kazumi Matsuoka, University of Connecticut

We present results of a Truth-Value Judgement Task used with 19 young children, which revealed that a group of the children rejected (1), but accepted (2) (in a situation in which every mermaid washed herself).

- (1) Every bear<sub>1</sub> washed him<sub>1</sub>
- (2) Every mermaid<sub>1</sub> scratched the frog<sub>2</sub> and her<sub>1</sub>

The result is not readily explained by simply assuming a version of Condition B that excludes local binding of bound variable pronouns (Chien and Wexler 1990, Grodzinsky and Reinhart 1993).

We assume that Binding Condition B applies to binding relationships between the binder and directly Case-marked arguments. We discuss the possibility that young children mistakenly assume that the pronoun in (2) is not directly Case-marked by the main verb. Other theoretical implications of the data are also discussed in comparison to previous research such as Chien and Wexler (1990) and Grimshaw and Rosen (1990).

### **EEG, Brain and Language Development: A Case Study**

A. Rene Schmauder & M.A. Bell, University of South Carolina

Weekly 3 minute EEG recordings from a single female infant were made, beginning at 26 weeks of age, as she observed bouncing balls in a toy, using a stretch cap with electrodes in the 10/20 system (Jasper, 1958). Spectral power increased with age at all frontal leads and at T3, T4, possibly reflecting increased neuronal electrical activity (Nunez, 1981). F7/T3 and F3/T3 coherence increased with age, possibly indicating increased connections between underlying frontal and temporal areas (Thatcher, Krause, & Hrybryk, 1986). The subject's language acquisition progressed steadily: Canonical syllable production (Oller & Seibert, 1988) increased as did vocabulary acquisition as measured by the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory (1989).

### **Brain Maturation and Language Acquisition:**

#### **A Theoretical Model and Preliminary Investigation**

Jennie L. Wakefield and M. Jeanne Wilcox, Arizona State University

The nativist view of language, in which there is a direct and causal relationship between neural processes and linguistic phenomena, implicitly assumes that language acquisition follows a course that is largely predetermined by the maturation of the brain. In keeping with this view, the current study includes a theoretical model designed to explain transitional phenomena in acquisition as well as the distinct rates of acquisition of the various lexical and functional categories as they relate to specific parameters of neural maturation. The model is accompanied by an investigation that provides preliminary support for the rate-related aspects of the model.

**Infant Representations of Objects vs. Non-solid Substances**

Gavin Huntley-Fenner & Susan Carey, MIT

Laura Klatt, University of Pennsylvania

Count nouns label kinds of individuals. Mass nouns refer to kinds of non-individuated entities. Knowledge of this distinction helps children learn the meanings of nouns. Physical objects are good candidates for individuated entities while non-solid substances are good candidates for non-individuated entities. We determine whether the distinction between objects and non-solid substances has implications for the inferences made by 8-month-olds. Infants recognize that both are material entities but they fail to individuate portions of non-solid substance even when given explicit evidence about distinct locations of those portions. Implications for lexical knowledge are discussed.

**Do Children's First Object Names Map onto Adult-Like  
Conceptual Representations?**

Fei Xu & Susan Carey, MIT

Sortal concepts, which provide criteria for individuation and tracing identity, underlie count nouns in the adult language. Previous studies have shown that 10-month-old infants are not able to use the differences between a toy truck and a toy elephant to infer that there must be two distinct objects, suggesting that they do not yet represent 'truck' or 'elephant' as sortals. The present study uses the same task but a different set of objects - objects that are judged by some parents to be understood by 10-month-old infants and highly familiar to them. When we divided the infants into two groups based on parental report of noun comprehension, we found a strong correlation between success at the task and comprehension score: infants who understood 2 or more words (out of 4) succeeded at the task whereas infants who only understood 0 or 1 word failed. We conclude that it is only when infants figure out that a bottle and a ball are two different kinds of objects, they start to comprehend names for these objects. Thus, children's first object names map onto adult-like conceptual representations.

**The Acquisition of Collective Nouns**

Paul Bloom, Deborah Kelemen, Amy Fountain & Ellen Courtney

University of Arizona

Many nominals that children and adults know do not refer to kinds of whole objects, but instead describe abstract individuals, as with "family" and "story". What is the nature of the category "individual", and how are such nominals

acquired? We explore these questions through experiments in which subjects were taught words for collections of objects. These experiments manipulated several factors, including the syntactic frame of the words, the perceptual grouping of the collections, and the explanatory motivation for viewing the collections as single entities. Results suggest that the notion of "individual" is linked to the word learner's ontological commitments as to which kinds of causal entities exist; these commitments might develop through the elaboration of naive theories.

**Characteristics of Word Learners:  
Before and After the "Vocabulary Explosion"**

Sandra Waxman, Northwestern University

This paper represents a synthesis of two lines of research, both of which examine normally-developing word-learners before and after the period known as the "vocabulary explosion". First, we examined 16- and 22-month-olds as they mapped novel nouns onto novel objects in a naturalistic setting. Second, we examined 12- and 28-month olds' expectations concerning the meaning of novel words (nouns and adjectives). Our results reveal that an initial expectation that novel words will refer to members of like kinds is available prior to the vocabulary explosion and guides early lexical acquisition. This initial expectation is tuned by subsequent linguistic experience.

**Novel Verb Comprehension:  
Immediate Extension to New Agents**

Roberta Michnick Golinkoff & Maria P. Selke, University of Delaware  
Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Temple University

Part of what is involved in learning the meaning of a novel verb is knowing that it can be extended to a new agent who may perform the action somewhat differently. We performed an experiment and a control study in which the same actions performed by two agents were shown on videotape in the "preferential looking paradigm" (Golinkoff et al., 1987). Would children (24-28 and 39-50 months), seeing a novel action performed just a few times by one actor, extend its name immediately in comprehension to a second actor? Results indicated that only the older children were able to extend a novel verb to a new agent.

**Look Who's Talking! Point of View and Character Reference in Mothers' and Children's ASL Narrative**

Judy S. Reilly, San Diego State University  
Marina L. McIntire, Northeastern University  
Diane S. Anderson, San Diego State University

Narrative abilities continue to develop beyond the preschool years. One aspect that is both conceptually and linguistically complex is the ability to control shifting point of view. In American Sign Language (ASL), this entails integrating various communicative channels. In addition to manual linguistic means, e.g. pointing at and naming characters, point of view can also be signalled by body shifts, eye gaze and the use of facial expressions. Stories from 15 Deaf children and six Deaf mothers were analyzed to explicate both how adults signal and shift point of view in narratives and how children acquire these behaviors.

**A Cross-Channel Description of Character Reference in Oral Narratives**

Yvette D. Hyter, Wichita State University  
Aquiles Iglesias, Temple University

Using oral narratives as a measure of language production has gained considerable popularity over the years, however existing literature on narratives is limited in scope. This literature has primarily focused on the lexical channel, only one of the three communicative channels used by speakers to transmit information. Hyter (1994) identified prosodic and kinesic cues used during references to characters in the oral narratives of pre-adolescents and suggests that these communicative channels also provide information to the listener. A cross-channel (lexical, prosodic, and kinesic) description of reference produced by speakers of African-American English (AAE) will be provided.

**We Went Home and Told the Whole Story to Our Friends:  
Children's Narratives in an Algonquin Community**

Diane Pesco & Martha Crago, McGill University

This paper reports on structural and interactional features of personal experience narratives by Algonquin children aged 10-13 years and L2 speakers of English. The narratives were elicited in peer groups. Using high point analysis (Peterson & McCabe, 1983), we found that the children's inclusion of certain narrative elements compared to data reported for non-Aboriginal children. However, the positioning of these elements and the low incidence of others resulted in differences in the overall structure of the narratives. Children's choice and organization of theme, the contributions of the children to each others' storytellings, and sociocultural influences on the narratives will also be discussed.

**Acquisition of Oral Narrative Skills by Foreign Language  
Learners of Japanese**

Yoshimi Maeno, Harvard University

Foreign language (FL) learners of Japanese have trouble producing Japanese oral narratives which sound "natural" to native speakers. This paper investigates the oral narrative skills of Japanese FL learners by analyzing narratives of their earliest memory in English (L1) and in Japanese (FL).

Two different types of narrative analysis— Stanza analysis and High Point analysis —were used to explore whether native speakers of English have acquired Japanese narrative structure. FL learners of Japanese in the advanced level seem to have acquired some of the characteristics of the Japanese narrative structure even though they did not get explicit instruction about it.

**Developmental Changes in C-V Interdependencies:  
Canonical Babbling vs. Early Word Attempts**

Harvey M. Sussman, University of Texas

Fred D. Minifie, Carol Stoel-Gammon, Eugene Buder & Jason Smith  
University of Washington

Locus equations, regression fits to frequency coordinates formed by plotting F2 transition onsets in relation to F2 offsets measured at the vowel midpoint, were used to provide a quantitative metric to assess C-V coarticulation. Locus equation scatterplots of CV babbling (C=/b,d,g/) were derived from a female child at 12 months. At 21 months, CV sequences were similarly analyzed, but now as initial segments of early first words. Counter-intuitively, the more phonologically mature word utterances revealed greater scatter about the regression lines for all stops and a reduction in coarticulatory extent for alveolar and velar stops. Results are discussed in terms of articulatory control and segmental independence.

**Articulatory Bases of Babbling and (Therefore) Words**

Peter F. MacNeilage & Barbara L. Davis

University of Texas, Austin

Six babbling infants, producing 25,000 syllables, showed the predicted lack of independence of individual consonants and vowels from the "Frame" provided by rhythmic mandibular oscillation, in the form of three sets of consonant-vowel co-occurrence constraints: 1. Tongue-front consonants with front vowels ("Fronted Frames"), 2. Tongue-back consonants with back vowels ("Backed Frames"), and 3. Labial consonants with central vowels ("Pure Frames"; i.e. mandibular oscillations with no independent tongue movement). In variegated babbling, all subjects, as predicted, showed significantly more "Vertical" (mandible dependent) articulatory variation than "Horizontal" (tongue dependent) variation in both consonants and vowels. The simplest frame (Pure) showed an increment in preference in early words.

## **Development of Articulatory Movement Timing in 4- to 6-year-old Children**

Suzanne Boyce, Boston University and MIT

Variability in children's speech may reflect either inability to consistently achieve an intended articulatory target or uncertainty concerning the correct duration and timing of articulatory movements in different contexts. For two 4-year-old children and one 6-year-old child, the movement of lips and jaw for lip-rounded vowels were tracked over time along with the acoustic signal. For all three, the timing of the lip-rounding peak was relatively stable. However, the 4-year-old children's movement durations were more variable than those of the 6-year-old child. This suggests that 4-year-old children have timing control for movement peaks, but lack a stable strategy for coarticulation.

## **A Developmental Model of the Sensorimotor Foundations of Child Phonology**

Kevin L. Markey, Lise Menn & Michael C. Mozer  
University of Colorado

HABLAR ("Hierarchical Articulatory Based Language Acquisition by Reinforcement learning") is a computational model of the sensorimotor foundations of early childhood phonological development. It is intended to explain systematic patterns of sound substitutions and deletions and other characteristics of normal phonological development. It models a complete sensorimotor system and its linguistic environment. HABLAR's behavior emerges from the interaction of auditory perception and hierarchical motor control. Its auditory perception is specialized to segment and categorize continuous acoustic feedback into discrete phonetic events which closely correspond to discrete gestures learned by the vocal tract's articulatory apparatus. To imitate words, for example, HABLAR need not solve the hard problem of relating continuous speech sound and continuous vocal tract motion. It learns the correspondence between one discrete sequence of events and another. The model's properties are summarized and simulations are presented.

**Assessing Phonetic Differentiation in Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA)**

Barbara Zurer Pearson, Ana M. Navarro, University of Miami  
Virginia Mueller Gathercole, Florida International University

We propose criteria for assessing the degree of differentiation between two emerging phonologies in 6 infants learning Spanish and English simultaneously. Audio-recordings between 18 and 30 months were transcribed to find the first appearance of language-specific phonetic elements which could potentially mark an utterance as belonging to one language or the other, as for example, aspirated voiceless stops and intervocalic voiced (bilabial or velar) spirants. By 24 months, 4 children appeared to be learning the correct distributions for each language; one showed no signs of differentiation in these features; and the final child showed what might be called "contamination" or "foreign accent". The analyses combine target-dependent and target-independent methods for comparing the children's phonetic production to the languages they are learning.

**Learning to Talk Philadelphian:  
The Acquisition of Short-A by Preschool Children**

Julie Roberts, University of Vermont

Through an examination of the acquisition of the Philadelphia pattern of tensing and raising short-a by eighteen 3- and 4-year-old children, this study explores the transmission of features undergoing sound change in progress across generations. Although the children had generally acquired this feature, underscoring the learning of dialect features along with other language forms, the exceptions highlight two important issues in sound change transmission. The first was that the degree of immersion in the speech community was critical to the level of acquisition. Secondly, the extension of the children's use of tense short-a beyond that of adults demonstrates their active participation in ongoing sound change.

## The Mora in Phonological Acquisition

E. Jane Fee, Dalhousie University

Longitudinal data from children aged 1;1 to 2;4, acquiring Hungarian or English, were analyzed to determine vocalic inventories, vowel substitutions, and syllable and word shapes. Results show that at the time children had acquired several long or tense vowels, their syllable and word shapes began to appear, monosyllabic forms became more frequent, and consonant and vowel harmony became less frequent. It is argued that these acquisition patterns suggest that the child has realized the mora is a prosodic unit which plays an important role in phonological organization.

## Harmony

Marlys A. Macken, University of Wisconsin

This paper examines the consonant-consonant constraints in children's grammars: harmony; melody, where place and manner features are linearly ordered across C1 and C2 positions; and C-V interactions, e.g. where C1 could be agreeing in place with the adjacent V or with the non-string adjacent consonant. A unified explanation is sought that conforms with (1) the strong identity thesis that one universal phonological capacity is shared by children and adults (and phonological theory must explain both the similarities and differences between children and adults); and (2) the locality principle whereby processes operate on elements that are adjacent at the relevant level of representation. Four possible analyses are evaluated against the acquisition data; (i) underspecification; (ii) feature geometry; (iii) planar segregation; (iv) C-V assimilation. The data are from children, aged 1;0 to 3;0 acquiring English, Spanish, French and Dutch. A wide range of acquisition facts, including those of harmony and melody templates, shows consonants and vowels are independent. Planar segregation provides the best account for these facts within the constraints of (1) and (2).

### **Patterns of Anaphora in Children's Expository Discourse**

Rebecca Burns-Hoffman, Sandra H. Fradd, & Okhee Lee  
University of Miami

In hands-on instructional activities, two discourse formats are involved - conversation to accompany the task and conversation to explicate the task. These two discourse formats differ in their basic patterns of anaphora (Fox 1987) in such a way that participants are required to make use of contrasting rules of speech. This study examines the patterns of full NP versus pronoun use in the science discourse of 32 fourth graders of different language backgrounds and different English proficiencies (English n=16, Spanish n=8, Haitian Creole n=8) engaged in a hands-on lever activity.

### **Framing and Syntactic Footwork in Child Discourse**

David Reid, University of South Carolina

Erving Goffman's notions of interactive frames and footings were developed to illustrate how people use multiple participation frameworks to understand "events" even as they construct those events. It has been suggested that the ability to shift and embed footings effectively may be a late attainment and that such early inability marks discourse as immature. Recent research, however, has shown children as young as 8 and 9 to be adept at managing footing and framing shifts. In this paper, I make the case that children as young as 4 are able to deftly shift and even embed footings as they frame their discourse - the skills Goffman attributes to a "dexterous speaker".

### **The Independence of Communication and Grammar in Development**

Erika Hoff-Ginsberg, University of Wisconsin

According to functionalist views, children acquire language in order to communicate. According to the "autonomy of syntax" view, acquisition of grammar is independent of the communicative use of language. The present study addresses the dispute between these two views, providing evidence of the dissociability of communicative and linguistic development.

The conversational skill and syntactic development of 33 first-born and 30 later-born children of equivalent mean ages (24 months) were compared. The later-borns were significantly more advanced in conversational skill, while the first-

borns were marginally more advanced in syntactic development. Apparently, the experiences and internal developments that lead to communicative skill do not guarantee syntactic development.

### Listening to a Turkish Mother: Some Puzzles for Acquisition

Aylin Küntay & Dan I. Slobin  
University of California, Berkeley

This paper addresses the questions of the role of simplicity or complexity of the "motherese" register by analyzing Turkish input to a child during the period 1;8 - 2;4. A database of 3,377 utterances is examined with regard to a number of theoretical issues:

*Pragmatic functions of word-order variation and complex constructions:* We analyze the co-occurrence of complex clauses with simpler constructions, and the reordering of various linguistic entities within single stretches of discourse.

*Relative frequency of nouns and verbs:* We address claims in the literature with regard to the predominance of nouns in early input.

*Linguistic socialization practices:* We explore the functions of rhetorical questions and metalinguistic devices.

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