

The 21st Annual
Boston University

Conference on
Language
Development



November 1, 2 & 3, 1996

The Twenty-First Annual

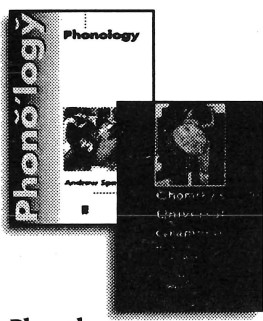
Boston University

Conference on Language Development

November 1, 2, and 3, 1996

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Welcome

We would like to join in welcoming all of you to the Twenty-First Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development.

We are honored to have Eve Clark, of Stanford University, as our Keynote speaker on Friday evening. The title of Professor Clark's address is "Speaker perspective, lexical acquisition, and semantic constraints." We are also pleased to have Luigi Rizzi, of the University of Geneva, delivering the Plenary address on Saturday evening. Professor Rizzi's talk is entitled "Remarks on early null subjects." There will be a reception following both talks.

The rest of the program is made up of a wide range of papers chosen from over 260 abstracts submitted to the Conference this year. Each abstract was sent out to at least five reviewers for anonymous review, and the Conference program was selected based on their ratings. We would have liked to include more of the many excellent submissions we received, but time and space are unfortunately limited.

Once again this year we will be publishing the Proceedings of the Conference. Information about ordering copies is available in your registration folders and at the Cascadilla Press table during the book exhibit.

We hope you will enjoy the conference.

The 1996 Conference Committee

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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 each year by graduate students from the Program in Applied Linguistics. The University does not provide us with financial support, and we therefore rely entirely on registration and exhibition fees to cover all of the costs involved with running the Conference. We are extremely grateful to all of our participants, and especially to those who have been attending the Conference on a regular basis for many years, for providing the support which allows us to continue to host the Conference.

We would like to thank the many graduate students who took time out from their studies and volunteered to help with the Conference throughout the year as well as during this weekend. We would also like to thank the Applied Linguistics faculty for their ongoing advice, encouragement and support, and we are indebted to the Program in Applied Linguistics (GRS) and to the School of Education for resources made available to us throughout the year.

This year we are fortunate to have the guidance of two faculty advisors. Professor Cathy O'Connor has once again been an invaluable source of wisdom during all stages of conference planning, and we are extremely grateful for all she has done. We are also indebted to Professor Marco Haverkort for his help and advice throughout the year, and we would like to thank both of them for the sacrifices they have made for the Conference.

We would also like to acknowledge the support of the Office of Conference Services and the Office of Disabilities Services here at BU. Donna Andrews of Conference Services has once again helped us through the dizzying task of making sure we have enough seats, audiovisual equipment, and coffee to keep everyone happy, and we very much appreciate her skills. Paul Hostofsky of Disabilities Services has also been of great assistance in providing sign language interpreters throughout the Conference.

Finally, we would like to thank our reviewers for reading and rating the many abstracts we received. The high quality of the submissions this year made it especially difficult to put together a program of just 90 papers, and their thoughtful and insightful comments provided invaluable guidance. We are grateful for their ongoing support.

Richard N. Aslin	Catherine Harris	Elissa Newport
Ruth Berman	Marco Haverkort	Cathy O'Connor
Maria Brisk	Lowry Hemphill	Ann M. Peters
Ellen Broselow	James Hodgson	Ljiljana Progovac
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General Information

REGISTRATION AND SESSION LOCATIONS

All paper 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** starting at 8:00 AM. 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

Eve Clark will deliver the Keynote Address on Friday at 8:00 PM in the Auditorium on the first floor of the new **School of Management Building**, 595 Commonwealth Ave., directly west of the Kenmore Square Howard Johnson's. A reception will immediately follow in the Atrium outside the Auditorium. Parking is available in the parking garage under the building.

Luigi Rizzi will give the Plenary Address on Saturday afternoon at 5:00 PM, in the **Grand Ballroom** of the **George Sherman Union**. There will be a wine reception following the address in the Small Ballroom.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parking is available in the lot at 766 Commonwealth Avenue (across from the George Sherman Union) for \$12 per day. A less expensive lot is located behind the Armory, one block west of 881 Commonwealth Avenue (\$8 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 made available next to the registration desk. The luggage area will be staffed during the conference sessions only. Although a student volunteer will be watching the area, participants leave their luggage at their own risk.

Publishers' Exhibits will be held in the second floor Ziskind Lounge on Saturday and Sunday. For a list of exhibitors, see page 60.

Refreshments will be served in the second floor Ziskind Lounge during breaks. A list of local restaurants can be found on page 31 of this bulletin, 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 22nd Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development is tentatively scheduled to be held on October 31st, November 1st and 2nd, 1997, at Boston University.

*Friday 9:00 AM**East Balcony***English-Learning Infant Discrimination
of Dutch and French Word Lists**

Michael L. Tucker and Ann Marie Jusczyk, SUNY Buffalo
Peter W. Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University

Studies suggest that six-month-olds focus primarily on prosodic rather than phonetic or phonotactic information when discriminating native from non-native words. Might infants distinguish two unfamiliar foreign languages on the basis of word stress alone? Or are their abilities more limited, discriminating English from non-English prosody exclusively? To address this question, lists of Dutch and French words were presented to 30 six-month-olds in a modified version of the Head Turn Preference Paradigm. Infants successfully discriminated the word lists, indicating that word-level prosodic discrimination is not limited to native versus non-native language distinctions. Rather, in learning about native language words, infants may grasp the typical prosodic characteristics before they discover features that distinguish these words from prosodically similar non-native words.

*Friday 9:30 AM**East Balcony***7.5-month-old Infants' Segmentation of
Multi-Syllabic Words in Fluent Speech**

Lynn Santelmann, SUNY Buffalo
Derek Houston, Peter Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University

This study investigates whether 7.5-month-olds can segment units larger than a trochaic foot. Infants were familiarized with pairs of trisyllabic words, e.g., *cantaloupe*, and then heard four passages, two of which included the familiarized words. Infants listened significantly longer to passages containing the familiar trisyllabic words, suggesting that they can segment them from a stream of speech. Alternatively, infants could be segmenting just the initial trochaic foot or final string syllable, rather than the full trisyllabic word. We are currently investigating these possibilities. In one study infants are familiarized with just the initial trochaic foot, and in the second with the final strong syllable. Then they hear four passages, two of which include the entire trisyllabic word. If infants segment the initial trochaic foot or the final strong syllable, they should listen longer to the passages with the familiar words, even when familiarized with only part of these words.

**What Discontinuous Dependencies Reveal About the
Size of the Learner's Processing Window**

Lynn Santelmann, SUNY Buffalo
Peter W. Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University

This study examines the size of the processing space in language learners, by exploring whether 18-month-olds are sensitive to discontinuous dependencies. To recognize these dependencies, infants must have a large enough processing window to compute the co-occurrence of morphemes over several syllables. Infants were presented with matched passages using the Head Turn Preference Paradigm. In the "natural" passages, the auxiliary *be* appears with the *-ing* form of the verb (...*is singing*); in the "unnatural" passages, the modal *can* appears with *-ing* (...*can singing*). In Study 1, only the verb root separates the dependent morphemes. Infants significantly preferred the natural passages over the unnatural ones, indicating sensitivity to this dependency. In Study 2, five syllables separate the dependent morphemes (...*is almost always singing*). If infants' processing windows are narrow, as suggested by Newport (1991) and Elman (1993), then increasing the window over which this dependency appears may interfere with infants' ability to detect it.

B R E A K : 1 0 : 3 0 — 1 1 : 0 0

Phonological Constraints and Morphological Development

Joseph Paul Stemberger, University of Minnesota
Barbara Bernhardt, University of British Columbia

Phonological constraints can shape the form of inflectional affixes or determine whether an affix is present. We address this phenomenon for first language acquisition from the perspective of Optimality Theory, using data from three typically-developing English-learning children. As compared to tautomorphic clusters, the constraints on heteromorphic clusters may be (a) the same, (b) more restrictive, (c) less restrictive, or (d) equally restrictive but different. Relevant constraints are faithfulness to input, phonological constraints limiting output, morphological parsing, and single correspondence (of segments or affixes). Six distinct patterns were observed in the data. Four patterns reflect high versus intermediate versus low ranking of **M-Parse** relative to other constraints. Two patterns reflect violations of single correspondence. Implications for phonological representations and/or constraints are discussed. Phonological constraints play a strong role in the shaping of the phonological form of inflectional affixes in first language acquisition, just as in adult languages.

**Syllable Omissions in the Acquisition of Spanish:
A Case Study**

Silvia Gennari, Brown University

This work addresses the questions of children's sensitivity to prosodic structure and prosodic speech planning. I analyzed longitudinal spontaneous productions of a child learning Spanish and found support for prosodic theories. The child's sensitivity to prosodic information was evidenced by two facts: (a) the percentage of omissions varied with the prosodic category involved, there were more omissions in Phonological Words (PW) than Clitic Groups (CG) and Phonological Phrases (PP); (b) structured patterns of syllable omissions were observed: SwSw and wSw targets reduced to wSw and Sw productions. In addition, the development of these patterns shows that: (a) there are production constraints on prosodic complexity at early acquisition stages; and (b) isolated words develop target prosodic structures later than CG/PPs because their PP-level parsing is delayed. Thus, the data show that the child is sensitive to prosodic information and plans her productions on prosodic grounds.

**Word Truncation in Early Phonological Development:
Evidence from French Two-Year-Olds**

Joanne Paradis, Sophie Petitclerc, and Fred Genesee, McGill University

Researchers have observed that adult target words are frequently and systematically truncated in the speech of young children; however, they do not agree on the dominant pattern of preservation in children's truncation or its underlying mechanisms. An important shortcoming of the previous research is that it has been connected mainly with children acquiring English or Dutch, which are prosodically similar languages. In order to provide a contrast with previous research, we have studied truncation patterns in French-speaking two-year-olds. Children were asked to repeat 10 four-syllable nonsense words that were designed to test whether syllable stress, syllable position or syllable weight would influence their preservation patterns. Stress and position in the target stimuli played a significant role in their preservation patterns, but weight did not. These results suggest that production mechanisms, possibly target-language specific rather than general perceptual mechanisms account for children's truncation patterns.

*Friday 9:00 AM**Conference Auditorium***Family Histories of Children with
Extended Optional Infinitives**

Mabel L. Rice and Karla J. Rice, University of Kansas
Kenneth Wexler, MIT

Family histories were obtained from the families of a group of 31 children with SLI known to show an EOI grammatical limitation as preschoolers as compared to families of a control group of 67 unaffected children. The likelihood of a nuclear family member having a positive history of speech/language impairment was much higher in the EOI/SLI group than in the controls: 22% compared to 7%. Fathers were more likely to be affected (29%) than mothers (6.5%); brothers and sisters were similarly affected (26% versus 29%); male probands showed a higher percentage of affected family members (25%) than did female probands (16%). The findings are significant because they constitute the first documentation of familiarity of language disorders with probands known to have a highly specified grammatical limitation. Thus, individual variation in acquisition of tense-marking is tied to a positive family history of language impairments.

*Friday 9:30 AM**Conference Auditorium***Tense and Agreement in Specific Language Impairment:
A Comparison of English and German**

Harald Clahsen, University of Essex
Susanne Bartke, University of Cologne
Sandra Kubli, University of Essex

One important problem in the recent theoretical debate on SLI is that most of the SLI accounts have not yet been tested cross-linguistically. As a step towards a crosslinguistic characterization of SLI, we directly compare data from 9 English and 6 German SLI subjects in this paper. We found (i) that all SLI subjects achieve low scores for subject-verb agreement, (ii) that the correctness scores for past tense marking are significantly higher than for subject-verb agreement, and (iii) that SLI children produce structures, e.g., non-finite verbs raised to second position in German, which have been reported to be absent from the speech of unimpaired children. We argue that features which do not have a semantic interpretation, i.e. [-interpretable] according to Chomsky (1995), cause acquisition problems for SLI children. It will be shown that this accounts for the empirical findings.

Friday 10:00 AM

Conference Auditorium

**German-speaking Children with SLI:
Evidence of an Extended Optional Infinitive Stage**

Mabel L. Rice, Karen Ruff Noll, and Hannelore Grimm, University of Kansas

Finiteness-marking was examined in eight German-speaking children with SLI, aged 4;0-4;8, and compared to a control group of younger language-matched unaffected children, aged 2;1-2;7. Spontaneous language samples were examined for the children's use of infinitives in matrix clauses, finiteness and word order, agreement marking on the lexical verb and on *sein*, use of *sein* in obligatory contexts, and the subject agreement with the lexical affixes *-t* and *-st*. The findings conform to the predictions of the Extended Optional Infinitive account, in which young SLI children are (a) more likely than controls to use infinitival forms, (b) at the same time know that finite verbs must raise to V2, (c) are more likely to omit *sein*, but (d) show agreement on surface forms of *sein*, and (e) show subject agreement with *-t* and *-st*. Theoretical implications are discussed.

B R E A K : 1 0 : 3 0 — 1 1 : 0 0

Friday 11:00 AM

Conference Auditorium

**A Test of Assumptions of Some Recent Accounts of
Specific Language Impairment (SLI)**

Carol A. Miller and Laurence B. Leonard, Purdue University

The Missing Agreement hypothesis of morphological deficits in children with SLI claims that these children have a faulty subject-verb agreement system. Even so, correct productions of verbal inflections can sometimes occur. These productions will have one of two possible sources: (1) they are learned by rote; or (2) the child randomly inserts an inflection, sometimes happening to be correct. If (1) is true, then for a given inflection, any one word type is either always or never inflected correctly. If (2) is true, then for word types that are sometimes inflected, the frequencies of correct, incorrect, and omitted inflections should be equal. We examined transcripts from 18 children with SLI, analyzing two inflectional morphemes. More word types than predicted were only sometimes correctly inflected. These "sometimes" word types were not randomly distributed among correct inflection, incorrect inflection, and omission. The children use agreement productively but inconsistently. Implications for other theories of SLI are discussed.

Language Impairment in Sotho and Nguni

Katherine Demuth, Brown University
Susan Suzman, University of Witwatersrand

This paper presents preliminary findings on the language-delayed speech of South African children learning Bantu languages. Acquisition studies of the southern Bantu languages Sesotho and Zulu indicate that normally developing children have acquired productive nominal morphology (noun class prefixes) by around the age of 3 (Connelly 1984, Demuth 1988, 1992, Suzman 1992). However, recent findings from language delayed Sesotho-, Xhosa-, and Zulu-speaking children indicate that many of these children have problems with nominal morphology. This is especially interesting given that problems with grammatical morphology have been frequently mentioned in the literature on Specific Language Impairment in other languages (cf. Rice 1994). The data indicate, however, that the use of nominal morphology for some of the children is random (sometimes appearing, sometimes not), unlike their younger, normally developing peers. The paper concludes with a discussion of the theoretical issues raised, and identifies directions for further research.

**Atypical Diminutive Formation and Judgment in Greek
Developmentally Language Impaired Children**

Jenny Dalalakis, McGill University

The present study compares the performance of unimpaired children with that of children with Developmental Language Impairment (DLI), a language disorder characterized by difficulties in both language production and comprehension most readily observable on the morphological level. More specifically, our study focused on diminutive production and comprehension skills of Greek-speaking unilingual children. We used a comprehension (pointing task) and an elicited production task that probed real and novel diminutives (nonce word plus real suffix). Results show that unimpaired children tend to abstract diminutive formation rules which they overgeneralize, at first, whereas DLI children tend to treat diminutives as simple forms. The findings are discussed in terms of the DLI subjects' relative insensitivity to word-internal structure, to morpheme features and to specific rule restrictions, as these are evidenced in the subjects' atypical performance. Finally, the implications of this atypical performance for lexical representation and process are outlined.

Friday 9:00 AM

Terrace Lounge

V-raising as a Property of all L2 GrammarsLynn Eubank, Janine Cheré Bischof, April L. Huffstutler, Patricia A. Leek
and Clinton West, University of North Texas

We present experimental results on whether L2 grammars permit verb raising when neither NL nor mature L2 allows it. We examine English NS and Mandarin/Cantonese-speaking learners of English (all assumed to be non-raising) with a truth-value task that takes advantage of an ambiguity in “V-raised” contexts. Specifically, in sentences like *Jane watched quietly landing airplanes*, English NS are expected to represent *quietly* only as a modifier of *landing* while an L2 speaker with a verb-raising grammar may represent *quietly* as a VP modifier. For the truth-value task, this ambiguity translates into expected NS responses of FALSE, but expected L2 responses of TRUE or FALSE. Results show that NS responses fall on FALSE (91.1%); L2 responses indicate less preference for FALSE (74.2%). Present findings confirm predictions for raising from Vainikka & Young-Scholten (1996a, 1996b) and Eubank (1996). They also confirm overall results of Eubank & Grace (1996) and Beck & Eubank (1996), but with a far less controversial means of elicitation.

Friday 9:30 AM

Terrace Lounge

Parametric Variation in L2 French Speakers

Julia Herschensohn, University of Washington

A significant parametric difference between French and English is verb raising in the former but not the latter. Hawkins et al. (=H) present data indicating that this parameter is reset by advanced L2 learners (ALLs), although intermediates seem to *misanalyze* the data, piecing together a grammar that produces many superficially correct forms. In this paper I present new empirical data strengthening H's observations concerning ALLs, but oppose their misanalysis treatment, showing that the conception of *parameter resetting* must be revised. Using a minimalist framework, I argue that parameters do not have two mutually exclusive values, but rather involve potentially variable feature strength of functional categories. My treatment argues that ALLs virtually reset to a strong V feature correlated with their acquisition of verb morphology, thus accounting for longitudinal and clustering variability, while providing a linguistically motivated and consistent account of the data.

Friday 10:00 AM

Terrace Lounge

**Psycholinguistic Investigations of Clitic Placement in
Second Language Acquisition**

Nigel Duffield, Philippe Prévost, and Lydia White, McGill University

A central question in SLA is whether properties of UG not activated in the L1 can be accessed for the L2. The L2 acquisition of pronominal clitics by learners of languages without clitics provides a suitable test case.

In this paper, we report on an experiment investigating adult L2 acquisition of French clitic placement by native speakers of English (which lacks clitics) and Spanish (where clitics contrast in certain respects with French). The Sentence-Matching procedure (Freedman & Forester 1985) was used. Intermediate and advanced English and Spanish learners of French were tested, together with a control group.

The experiment comprised ten counterbalanced conditions involving clitics in different constructions. The French controls results show a very clear overall effect of grammaticality ($F 59.98, p < 0.0001$). L2 speakers reveal a broadly similar pattern of overall results as well as an effect of proficiency. Advanced learners of French behave like the L1 controls, suggesting that properties of L2 clitics can be successfully acquired even when the L1 lacks clitics.

B R E A K : 1 0 : 3 0 — 1 1 : 0 0

Friday 11:00 AM

Terrace Lounge

**Why Second Language Acquisition Theory Has No Sense of
its Own History, Why We Should Do Something About It,
and What We Should Do**

Margaret Thomas, Boston College

Current L2 acquisition theory erroneously believes that its relevant history started sometime in the 1970s. This presentation seeks to identify and analyze the nature of the entrenched conviction that SLA theory goes back only 20- or 30-some years. The origins of the field's lack of historical self-awareness may include its drives to separate itself from language pedagogy and cleave to theoretical linguistics, and misapplication of Kuhn's views of the history of science. Among benefits which would follow from abandoning ahistoricity are opportunities to redefine foundational issues of the field, and abatement of disciplinary isolation and of the truncated shelf-life of the field's intellectual commodities. I conclude with some remarks about how greater appreciation of the true (long, varied) past of human inquiry into the nature of second language learning might be achieved.

**On the Transfer of Morphological Parameter Values
in L2 Acquisition**

Donna Lardiere, Georgetown University

Two universal constraints proposed in recent morphological theory, the Head Application Default and the Base Rule Ordering Principle, have been argued by Beard (1995, 1996) to combine in making the following accurate predictions for English: (a) that English deverbal nominal compounds will exhibit Modifier-Head rather than Verb-Complement order (e.g. *wine-drinker* vs. **drink-winer* or *drinker-wine*) and (b) that deverbal nominalizing affixes must attach to the head but should never surface compound-internally as a suffix in head-initial compounds (e.g. **drinker-wine*). However, L2 production data of English neologistic compounds by native speakers of Spanish (Lardiere & Schwartz 1995) report a highly robust error type (**eater-flies*, cf. *fly-eater*) which appears to disconfirm these predictions for L2 acquisition. I present arguments and additional data showing that this error type cannot be attributed to simple word order transfer from Spanish compounding (which has Head-Modifier ordering) as one might expect, but rather should be explained in terms of the transfer of the L1 parameter value setting for the Base Rule Ordering Principle and feature, rather than affix, transfer.

**L2 Acquisition by a Turkish-speaking Child:
Evidence for L1 Interfluence**

Belma Haznedar, University of Durham

In this paper, longitudinal data from a 4;3-year-old Turkish child are examined from the onset of English production to address the issue of the L2 initial state.

Findings:

- the initial XV pattern — compatible with the head-final Turkish VP — is abruptly replaced by VX;
- initially, *no* always appears after nouns/verbs, again consistent with patterns of Turkish negation; this XNEG pattern is similarly abruptly replaced by NEGX, where *not* occurs after auxiliaries/modals but before lexical verbs.

Analysis:

- (i) the head-final VP transfers and switches to head-initial;
- (ii) XNEG transfers and later NegP switches to head-initial.

Assuming NegP is a functional projection, the initial appearance of the XNEG patterns argues against "Minimal Trees" (Vainikka & Young-Scholten 1994), according to which only lexical projections transfer. We also examine the development of *do*-support and discuss the issue of transfer in terms of "Weak Transfer" (Eubank 1993/1994) and "Full Transfer/Full Access" (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996).

LUNCH BREAK: 12:30 — 2:00

Boston University
Programs in Deaf Studies
Graduate Program in Education of the Deaf

The oldest Deaf Studies program in the United States offers a Master's Degree in Education of the Deaf. The EdM program is based on a bilingual/bicultural philosophy. Coursework is focused on the role of American Sign Language and English in learning, teaching practice, and assessment of Deaf children. **Financial aid is available to qualified applicants.**

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This program is partially funded by the USDOE.

*Friday 2:00 PM**East Balcony***An Iterative Strategy for Learning Metrical Stress in Optimality Theory**

Bruce Tesar, Rutgers University

This paper presents simulation results investigating an iterative strategy for the learning of metrical stress systems. The learner starts with an initial grammar and uses it to assign hypothesized descriptions to surface forms by selecting, from descriptions having exactly the observed surface form, the one that is most harmonic with respect to the learner's grammar. The learner then uses the hypothesized descriptions to infer a new grammar, using the constraint demotion algorithm of Tesar and Smolensky. The learner iterates this procedure repeatedly. The simulation results show that the iterative algorithm converges to the correct grammar quite frequently. A couple of interesting cases of local optima, where the algorithm fails to converge to the correct grammar, will be illustrated. The procedure is quite fast, typically converging after very few iterations on a small number of surface forms.

*Friday 2:30 PM**East Balcony***Prosodic Domains and Morphological Development**

Katherine Demuth, Brown University

Recent research on the acquisition of phonology has begun to focus on the prosodic structure of children's early words (e.g., Fikkert 1994, Demuth & Fee 1995, Demuth 1996). In particular, Demuth & Fee (1995) have proposed that English- and Dutch-speaking children pass through several stages of prosodic word development, and that these might be universal. However, the studies to date have focused on monomorphemic words from stress-accent languages; it is not clear if and/or how these proposals generalize to more morphologically rich languages. This paper extends and adapts the prosodic word proposals made by Demuth & Fee (1995) to account for languages with pervasive multimorphemic words. Acquisition evidence is drawn especially from Romance and Bantu languages. The paper shows that children are aware of different prosodic domains at an early age and use this knowledge to organize the structure of their early words and utterances.

**Lexical Familiarity Effects on Children's
Weak Syllable Omissions**

Diane Ohala and LouAnn Gerken, University of Arizona

Previous research has demonstrated that children are more likely to omit function morphemes from sentences containing novel nouns or verbs than those containing all familiar words. The current study asked whether the familiarity effect is syntactically or metrically based. Young children were asked to repeat sentences containing the object noun "giraffe" and either a novel or familiar verb. If lexical familiarity in the previous studies caused children to be confused about the syntactic structure required for unfamiliar words, omission of non-morphemic weak syllables should not be affected. In contrast, if lexical familiarity affects overall processing demands, causing children to omit more weak syllables, children should omit the first syllable of "giraffe" more frequently in sentences with unfamiliar verbs than sentences with familiar verbs. The second prediction was borne out. The results suggest that the lexical familiarity effect on function morpheme omissions found in previous studies was metrically based, not syntactically based.

B R E A K : 3 : 3 0 — 4 : 0 0

Statistical Language Learning by 8-month-old InfantsJenny R. Saffran, Richard N. Aslin, and
Elissa L. Newport, University of Rochester

To what extent does language acquisition involve learning? We used the familiarization-preference procedure to investigate 8-month-old infants' use of the statistical properties of language input to discover aspects of its structure, in this case novel words in continuous speech. Infants were first familiarized with two minutes of a continuous speech stream, consisting of multi-syllabic nonsense words spoken by a speech synthesizer. No acoustic or prosodic cues to word boundaries were present. The only cues to word boundaries were the sequential statistics of syllable strings. Listening preferences for "words" versus "non-words" (the same syllables in novel orders) or "part-words" (syllable strings spanning word boundaries) were then assessed. Infants significantly preferred the novel (non-word and part-word) sequences, suggesting that they used the statistical properties of the input to discover word-like units. Moreover, this learning was based on only two minutes of exposure, suggesting that infants have access to a powerful mechanism for the computation of statistical properties of the language input. Implications for theories of language acquisition will be discussed.

Starting Small or Starting Sharp: Which is Important?

James L. Morgan, Brown University

Theories of phonological bootstrapping suggest that prosody and allied properties of speech assist early acquisition in part by providing clues to syntactic bracketing of input utterances. Such clues might indirectly aid acquisition by probabilistically signaling to learners stretches of input within which distributional and sequential analyses may be effectively deployed. Elman's (1993) modeling results show that syntactic learning is facilitated if learners are initially limited to performing computations over relatively small input sequences. Simulated SRN learning of two linguistic systems explored the extent to which such small sequences must correspond to syntactic constituents. As accuracy of input bracketing begins to decline, successful learning of syntax requires proportionally greater amounts of training. However, when accuracy falls below about 55%, learning of certain aspects of syntax fails. Therefore, simply starting small—without regard to whether computational domains correspond to syntactic constituents—is not sufficient. The ability to carve linguistic input at its syntactic joints—starting “sharp”—is also important, although perfectly accurate bracketing is not necessary. Rather, the level of accuracy required for successful learning in these simulations comports well with that found in recent analyses of infant-directed speech.

**Artificial Grammar Learning in One-Year-Olds:
Evidence for Generalization to New Structure**Rebecca L. Gomez, New Mexico State University
LouAnn Gerken, University of Arizona

Existing language acquisition research focuses on sensitivity to structure in language but does not address how infants *acquire* such sensitivity. In order to begin addressing this issue, 11- and 12-month-olds were trained on novel syllable strings produced by a finite-state grammar. The preferential listening technique was used to measure response time during training and test. Experiment 1 showed that after about 1 minute of exposure to grammatical strings during training, infants listened significantly longer to old grammatical strings than nongrammatical strings. Infants also generalized to *new* syllable strings. In Experiment 2, infants listened longer to new grammatical strings than nongrammatical strings. The results attest to the feasibility of this approach and more importantly suggest that one-year-olds are capable of learning the rudiments of an artificial grammar. We discuss the implication of this research for theories of how learners acquire linguistic structure and which kinds of structure are most easily learned.

*Friday 2:00 PM**Conference Auditorium***The Development of the INFL System in
Children with Hemispherectomy**

Susan Curtiss and Jeannette Schaeffer, UCLA

We studied the developmental status of the INFL(ection) system (I-system) in the grammars of twelve children who had undergone hemispherectomy in control of catastrophic epilepsy. We compared three groups: children with left hemispherectomy, right hemispherectomy, and pair-wise matched normal controls. The hemispherectomy groups were studied longitudinally, with a normal control for each data point. We adopted a Principles & Parameters framework, and a split-Infl analysis, and examined overt, phonetically non-null occurrences of auxiliaries, T(ense)P, AGR(eement)P, ASP(ect)P, NEGP, and subject case marking. Preliminary analysis suggests that all three groups are developing grammars which embody I-system structures, indicating that the right hemisphere is capable of supporting some grammatical development, and that child grammars, like adult grammars, are characterized by quite specific grammatical categories instantiated in quite specific structures.

*Friday 2:30 PM**Conference Auditorium***The Diagnostic Implications of the Double-Deficit
Hypothesis: An Investigation of Fifth-Grade Readers
Classified by Phonological Awareness and
Visual Naming Speed**

Cynthia H. Krug, Tufts University

This study explored the diagnostic implications of the *double-deficit hypothesis*, which states that deficits in phonological awareness and visual naming speed represent independent causes of reading impairment (Bowers & Wolf, 1993b). Four subgroups of fifth-grade readers were identified according to phonological awareness and visual naming speed: the "double-asset" (n=16); "double-deficit" (n=5); "phonological-deficit" (n=4); and "rate-deficit" (n=8) subgroups. The children were given a battery of reading and cognitive tests, and their oral reading was analyzed. The results supported the double-deficit hypothesis. Double-asset readers achieved the highest scores on most cognitive and reading tests, while double-deficit readers attained the lowest scores. Single-deficit readers generally performed more poorly than double-asset readers but better than double-deficit readers. One striking exception to this pattern was that all double-deficit readers did exceptionally well on a visual-spatial problem-solving task.

Friday 4:00 PM

Conference Auditorium

Children's Split "Whose-Questions" and the Structure of Possessive NPs

Rosalind Thornton, University of Maryland
Lena Gavrusseva, Georgetown University

This paper discusses the result of an elicited production experiment that examined 5-year-old children's extraction of 'whose-NP' phrases in long distance questions such as (1).

- (1a) Whose hat do you think is on the table?
- (1b) Whose sunglasses do you think Pocahontas tried on?

Some children were found to produce non-adult structures as in (2) and (3):

- (2) Whose do you think um the elephant washed his car?
- (3a) Who do you think ['s fish] is in there?
- (3b) Who do you think Pocahontas tried on ['s sunglasses]?

The paper draws on recent proposals in the literature concerning the structure of DPs to explain the data.

Friday 4:30 PM

Conference Auditorium

The Acquisition of the "What's X Doing Y" Construction

Christopher Johnson, University of California at Berkeley

I present longitudinal corpus data on the acquisition of the "What's X doing Y?" construction, e.g. *What are you doing barefoot?* They suggest that children learn this construction on the basis of *wh*-questions through a process resembling pragmatic reanalysis. Early potential uses of WXDY by adult to child are also possible cases of genuine *wh*-questions and are interpreted as such by the child, e.g. *Adult: What's he doing with all these books? Child: He's reading them.* The child passes through a stage of interpreting clear cases of WXDY as actual questions, e.g. *Adult: Is this her hairbrush? Child: Yeah. Adult: Here? What's it doing sitting there? Child: Sitting there.* The data are theoretically interesting because they trace the acquisition of a conventional implicature, suggest that ambiguity plays a useful role in acquisition, and support the view that semi-idiomatic constructions inherit general grammatical patterns.

On Assessing the Distinctive Properties of Developing Grammars: The Case of Relative Clause Production in French

Cathy Fragman, University of Montreal

This study compares the ability of French children to produce relative clauses with that of mature speakers. Previous reports (Labelle, 1990; Guasti & Shlonsky, 1995; Perez-Leroux, 1995) postulate deficiencies in the grammar of francophone learners on the basis of semi-elicited utterances obtained only from children when, in fact, equivalent adult data could prove similar. In the present study, twenty-five Francophones aged 4 to 7 and an equal number of adults answered the same questions which were formulated so as to encourage the production of subject and object relatives. Results show that adults as much as children produced subject relatives with ease but tended to avoid object relatives using various strategies. Children differed from adults mostly in their capacity to apply these strategies successfully. They used resumptive pronouns but only in those contexts which presented difficulties for all subjects, adults included. These results suggest peripheral lacunae in children's metalinguistic skills and global processing power rather than deficiencies within their grammar proper.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON: SESSION C**TERRACE LOUNGE**

*Friday 2:00 PM**Terrace Lounge***The L2 Acquisition of Backward Binding
with English Psych Predicates**

Dongdong Chen, McGill University

This paper investigates the L2 acquisition of backward binding in English psych predicates including verbs like *amuse* and adjectives like *amusing* by Chinese- and French-speaking adults. The issue to be addressed is whether L2 learners are able to acquire the subtle properties of backward binding with psych predicates which are unlikely to be taught in the classroom. Results obtained from an experiment on 91 Chinese-speaking and 24 French-speaking learners of English indicated that when L2 learners of English recognized the presence of zero CAUS with the verb *amuse* and the adjective *amusing*, they were able to realize that these classes of psych predicates allowed an anaphor to be bound by its antecedent backwards. The findings suggest that while the phenomenon of backward binding is underdetermined by L2 input, it is learnable.

Logophoric Binding and Condition A in Adult L2A

Robert L. Hamilton, University of South Carolina

Previous studies of reflexive-pronoun binding (e.g. Hirakawa, 1990; Matsumura, 1994; Thomas, 1995) have found a substantial amount of nonlocal binding in L2 English. I investigate (a) whether such data might reflect *logophoric* rather than structural binding, and (b) whether such binding reflects a *UG-illicit grammar*, given that Universal Grammar (UG) disallows polymorphemic reflexives from taking nonlocal antecedents (either structurally or logophorically) when the reflexive is directly subcategorized by a predicate (Reinhart & Reuland, 1993; Pollard & Sag, 1994).

In this pilot study I tested 27 Japanese learners of L2 English and 27 adult native speakers of English. After screening out those subjects who did not recognize the polymorphemic/anaphoric status of English reflexives, I employed a Truth-Value Judgment task to measure nonlocal binding, where cartoon drawings forced either a local or nonlocal binding interpretation. A logistic regression analysis showed (a) a near-significant indication that nonlocal binding by the L2 learners was sensitive to logophoric constraints ($p < 0.057$), and (b) no significant difference in the amount of nonlocal binding with subcategorized versus nonsubcategorized reflexives ($p < 0.562$). I argue that both results undermine the claim that adult L2 learners have direct access to UG.

**Some Consequences of Null Subjects:
The Case of Resumptive Pronouns
in Second Language Acquisition**

Ianthi-Maria Tsimpli, University of Cambridge

This paper concentrates on certain effects of the null subject property in L1 on structures of English (L2) involving matrix and embedded wh-interrogatives, resumptive pronouns and inversion in embedded wh-CPs; these structures constitute the test material. The subjects were 16 adult Greek learners of English, at Intermediate level (2-2.6 years of training in classroom setting). They were presented with 30 sentences on which they were asked to provide grammaticality judgments as well as suggestions on improvement. Results indicate that (a) resumptive pronouns are part of the Greek-English interlanguage in both subject and object position; (b) in cases where inversion in the interlanguage grammar is allowed, it does not involve movement to C but postverbal subjects (in SpecVP); (c) accepted strong and weak island violations are due to the non-target-like nature of the wh-dependency which affects the syntax/spellout properties but not the LF representation. More precisely, the interlanguage makes use of a wh+pronominal dependency whereas the target grammar requires a non-pronominal empty category. The pronominal/non-pronominal choice is determined by identification and, in particular, the UG requirement on Recoverability.

Friday 4:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

**The Sensitive Periods for the Acquisition of L2
Lexico-Semantic and Syntactic Systems**

Eun Joo Kim, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The present study addresses the issue of the sensitive period hypothesis (SPH) for L2 acquisition in relation to the acquisition of L2 lexico-semantic and syntactic systems. Two experiments, a lexical-decision test with semantic priming and a grammaticality-judgment test, were conducted to test whether or not there is a sensitive period for second-language acquisition. More specifically, the experiments were designed to test the possibility of multiple sensitive periods for processing different components of language. 10 native speakers of English and 70 Korean-English bilinguals who differed in their ages at onset of exposure to English (0-2, Marginal 0-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-11, 12-14, and 15+), participated in both semantic and syntactic experiments. The results indicated that there are sensitive periods for the acquisition of L2 lexico-semantic and syntactic systems. However, the exact nature of the effects of the sensitive periods were different, depending upon the linguistic component and the task under examination.

Friday 4:30 PM

Terrace Lounge

**Minimal Projection and Derivation in
Second Language Acquisition**

Rakesh Bhatt, University of Tennessee
Barbara Hancin-Bhatt, University of South Carolina

In this paper, we present evidence to claim that not all functional categories are present in early adult second language (L2) syntax acquisition, thus arguing against the Strong Continuity Hypothesis. The results of our study of 125 adult Hindi-speakers learning English suggest that Complementizer Phrases (CP) are acquired via a developmental sequence. The data from a wh-question formation task suggest that our learners begin with minimal (IP) projections (Grimshaw 1995/6) and derivations based on their L1, as the adjunction of the wh-phrase to IP suggests; constituent questions in Hindi are formed by QR at LF (Mahajan 1990). In a second task, early learners' ambiguous interpretations of adverb placement further supports the non-availability of CP initially. With increased input, a CP projection is established to host operator movements -- this is empirically supported by well-formed English questions and correct adverb interpretations only in advanced learners.

Friday 5:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

**Level-Ordering and Dual Mechanisms as Explanations
of L2 Grammars**

Victoria A. Murphy, McGill University

Pinker and Prince's (1988) dual-mechanism model claims that regular inflection is a rule-governed process while irregular inflection is governed by processes of associative memory. Kiparsky's (1983) model of level-ordering claims there are constraints on morphological processes. Subjects' productions of novel compounds (e.g., *rat-eater*) have been used as evidence to support both the dual-mechanism model and the level-ordering model. In this study, francophone ESL subjects were given a written compounding task to determine whether they are sensitive to a distinction between regular and irregular inflection. The results indicate that indeed they do show such a sensitivity (a result which supports the dual-mechanism model), yet they did produce regular plurals inside their compounds (a result which is problematic for the level-ordering model). These results are discussed in terms of the suitability of these models as accounts of the development of L2 grammars.

D I N N E R B R E A K : 5 : 3 0 — 8 : 0 0

KEYNOTE ADDRESS 8:00 PM

**AUDITORIUM, NEW SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT
595 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE**

**Eve V. Clark
Stanford University**

**SPEAKER PERSPECTIVE, LEXICAL ACQUISITION,
AND SEMANTIC CONSTRAINTS**

Reception to follow in the Atrium

*Saturday 9:30 AM**Grand Ballroom***Developmental Change in the Lexicalization of Cause**

Phillip Wolff, Northwestern University

Verbs are picky about the events they encode. In English, for example, there is a verb meaning "cause to break" (the lexical causative *break*), but no verb meaning "cause to laugh." It's been argued that verbs only encode events involving direct causation (e.g., Pinker, 1989). Direct causation is frequently characterized as causation between objects that physically touch. In Experiment 1, children and adults watched 3D animations of marbles hitting one another and answered questions like "What did the red marble *dax*?" Four-year-olds and adults preferred to form verbs between objects making physical contact rather than between objects that did not. The results for three-year-olds were less clear. In Experiment 2, the initiating marbles from Experiment 1 were replaced with people. Under these conditions, all age groups were more willing to form verbs between non-contacting objects. The encoding of causal events may involve learning about more than one kind of direct causation.

*Saturday 10:00 AM**Grand Ballroom***Learning a System of Mappings:
The Acquisition of Color Terms**

Catherine M. Sandhoffer and Linda B. Smith, Indiana University

This research examines the difficulty children encounter when acquiring color words and suggests that understanding word acquisition as a system of mapping tasks may explain this difficulty. Three types of mappings are considered: word-to-word maps, e.g., mapping the word color to specific color words, property-to-property maps, e.g. mapping one instance of red to another instance of red, and word-to-property maps, e.g., mapping the word red to the property red. Children were followed longitudinally as they acquired color words. Progress was charted on three different tasks: 1) a production task, used to assess both word-to-word maps and word-to-property maps; 2) a comprehension task, used to assess word-to-property maps; and 3) an abstraction task, used to assess property-to-property maps. Results are discussed in terms of patterns of acquisition and relevance of applying systems of mapping to word acquisition.

Saturday 10:30 AM

Grand Ballroom

**Quantification of Solids and Nonsolid Entities:
The Role of Perceived Arbitrariness of Structure**

Jane Burger and Sandeep Prasada, Dartmouth College

The crucial factor that distinguishes adults' conceptions of objects and amounts of solid material is perceived arbitrariness of structure. Prasada (1995) showed that entities perceived to have nonarbitrary structure are more likely to be construed as objects and quantified discretely than entities perceived as having arbitrary structure. The cues adults use to infer (non)arbitrariness of structure include the coherence (solidity) of the entity, regularity of the form (chunk of stuff versus artifact-like shapes), and the repeatability of the form. In the current study, 3 experiments investigated whether perceived arbitrariness of structure underlies children's representation of the count-mass noun distinction also. The experiments suggest that cohesiveness is the strongest cue to nonarbitrariness of structure and neither the use of regular forms or repetition of forms can lead children to conceive of the entity as other than some stuff. Given that an entity is cohesive, regularity of form is critical to viewing an entity as an object -- solid entities that have irregular forms are seen as bits of stuff rather than as an instance of some kind of object. Rigidity and repetition of form play a smaller role and can modulate but not change preferred interpretations. These data are discussed within the context of previous research and a general theory of the development of the count-mass noun distinction.

B R E A K : 1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0

Saturday 11:30 AM

Grand Ballroom

**Complementing Cognition: The Relationship Between Language
and Theory of Mind**

Jill de Villiers and Jennie Pyers, Smith College

The study explored the claim that understanding the embedded nature of complements makes possible a representational form for false beliefs. It is towards clarifying the possible relationships among false belief understanding and syntax mastery that the present longitudinal study was addressed. Over the course of a school year, 20 children aged 3-4 in several day care and nursery school settings were followed on an extensive battery of novel tasks designed to tap into these competencies. The language tasks were various but included tests of understanding of false complements by checking children's ability to answer such questions as "What did the mother say she bought?" after hearing a story in which the mother bought one thing but said she bought something else. Results confirm very high correlations among the false belief and the language measures involving understanding of complement structures. Path analyses confirm that the direction of effect is from mastery of complementation to ability on false belief tasks.

Saturday Morning

Page 22

9:30 AM — 12:30 PM

**It's the Thought that Counts:
The Influence of Mental State Attribution on
Young Children's Inductions of Proper Noun Reference**

Cristina M. Sorrentino, MIT

Children as young as two years readily learn a proper noun (PN) for an object which looks like a person or an animal (Katz, Baker & Macnamara, 1974; Gelman & Taylor, 1984) but not for non-animals, like shoes or boats (Hall, 1994). Do children only apply PNs to objects which look like people or animals? We examine the role of an abstract cue to animacy, mental state attribution, or PN interpretation. Two-year-old children were taught a label for an unfamiliar non-animal described as having thoughts. Children were more likely to take the label as a PN for the object than they were when the labeled toy was a stuffed animal described neutrally. We conclude that children can use mental state attribution to infer that an object is an animal stand-in and that this is sufficient for PN interpretation in the absence of perceptual cues to animacy.

SATURDAY MORNING: SESSION B

CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM

Saturday 9:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

**Children's Acquisition of Reciprocal Sentences
with Active and Stative Predicates**

Ayumi Matsuo, University of Connecticut

This paper presents the results of three experiments on reciprocal sentences with stative and active predicates. Experiment 1 examined whether children know the semantics of *each other*. Experiment 2 investigated whether children can successfully distinguish active predicates from stative predicates. Experiment 3 examined whether children have the ability to distinguish different interpretations in (1) & (2) combining the two types of basic knowledge examined in Experiments 1 & 2.

- (1) The men in the room are hitting each other.
- (2) The men in the room know each other.

The result of Experiments 1 & 2 suggested that children know the semantics of *each other*, and can distinguish different types of predicates. Experiment 3 was on the combination of the two forms of knowledge and the results ($p = 0.1235$) revealed that children and adults do not differ; hence, children have knowledge of subtle differences in the possible interpretations in (1) & (2).

Children and Reflexivity

Sergey Avrutin and Jennifer Cunningham, Yale University

In this study, we compared children's interpretation of reflexives in two types of constructions: reflexives that are coarguments with their antecedents and reflexives that are not coarguments. The rationale for this study was to use the acquisition data as a test for two approaches to binding: one proposed by Chomsky (1986) and the other offered by Reinhart and Reuland (1993) (the Reflexivity account). 21 children participated in the Truth-Value Judgment Task where they were presented with sentences of types (1), (2) and (3). Children's responses to sentences of type (1) were significantly better than responses to type (2). When presented with sentences of type (3), children demonstrated a significantly better performance on the idiomatic reading (the reflexive and its antecedent are coarguments). The results support the Reflexivity account as formulated by Reinhart and Reuland.

- (1) The woman next to the girl tickled herself.
- (2) The woman next to the girl drew a circle around herself.
- (3) The boy next to the cat took a picture of himself.

The French 'Delay of Principle B' Effect

Cornelia Hamann and Odette Kowalski, University of Geneva
William Philip, Utrecht University

In an experiment using the methodology of Chien and Wexler (1990), 20 French 5-years-olds are observed to show adult-like performance 89% of the time or better with sentences such as (1), (3), (4) and (5) but only 45% of the time with sentences such as (2).

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| (1) <i>La fille la seche</i> | 'The girl is drying her off' |
| (2) <i>La fille la voit danser</i> | 'The girl sees her dance' (in a mirror) |
| (3) <i>Chaque fille la seche</i> | 'Every girl is drying her off' |
| (4) <i>La fille se seche</i> | 'The girl is drying herself off' |
| (5) <i>La fille se voit danser</i> | 'The girl sees herself dance' (in a mirror) |

We argue, contra McKee (1992), that the absence of delay of Principle B effects in the case of sentences like (1) is due to (Principle B and) the inability of a syntactic clitic to enter into local coreference relations generally: the pragmatic rule blocking the coreferential interpretation of counter-indexed NPs never breaks down because it is never invoked (cf. Chien & Wexler 1990; Grodzinsky & Reinhart 1993). We explain the delay of Principle B effect observed with sentences like (2) by extending Philip and Coopmans' (1995)

proposal -- formulated in the Reinhart and Reuland (1993) 'Reflexivity' framework -- that incomplete lexical acquisition of the feature specification of pronominals can give rise to well-formed A-chains in the child grammar that happen to be excluded in the adult grammar.

B R E A K : 1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0

Saturday 11:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

**Grammatical Asymmetries in the
Delay of Principle B in Norwegian**

Arild Hestvik, University of Norway
William Phillip, University of Utrecht

In this talk we present experimental evidence that Norwegian children show an absence of 'delay of Principle B' effects in their comprehension of simple sentences like *En pike peker pa henne* 'The girl is pointing at her' — just like Italian children — but show very strong 'delay of Principle B' effects with sentences like *En pike ser henne hoppe tau* 'The girl sees her jump rope' --- just like Dutch children. We explain this asymmetry in adult-like performance by combining an LF-movement analysis of Norwegian pronouns (Hestvik 1992) with Reinhart and Reuland's (1993) analysis of Principle B and A-Chain Condition effects, and by adopting Philip and Coopmans' (1995) proposal that incomplete lexical acquisition of the feature specification of pronouns can give rise to well-formed A-chains in the child grammar in contexts where (Reinhart and Reuland's) Principle B does not apply.

Saturday 12:00 NOON

Conference Auditorium

Subject Omission in Child Danish

Cornelia Hamann, University of Geneva
Kim Plunkett, University of Oxford

The study addresses the phenomenon of subject omission in Danish child language and investigates whether this is a grammatical or a pragmatic phenomenon. The longitudinal natural production data of two Danish children are analyzed from the age of 1 year to almost 6 years. It emerges that both children omit subjects in finite clauses at the average of 20% and a maximum of 50% between the ages of 1.7 and 2.6, and 1.10 and 2.10 respectively. It is shown that optional infinitives occur to 30% when subject omission is at its peak and vanish at the same time as missing subjects. On the other hand, no correlation between the omission of a subject and its presence in the previous discourse could be established. The clear profile of the phenomenon in Danish,

its coincidence with other grammatical phenomena and the absence of a discourse correlation argue against a pragmatic account which allows the omission of given information. However, the last result is problematic also for any grammatical account which relies on discourse identification of the missing subject.

SATURDAY MORNING: SESSION C

TERRACE LOUNGE

Saturday 9:30 AM

Terrace Lounge

Children's Pseudo-Licensing of Negative Polarity Items

Sjoukje van der Wal, University of Groningen

This paper addresses the question how Dutch children acquire restrictions on negative polarity items (NPIs). Particular attention is given to the 'no negative evidence problem': do children overgeneralize NPIs to non-licensing environments?

A spontaneous speech study shows that the two earliest appearing NPIs in Dutch child language —'hoeven' (have to/need) and 'meer' (anymore)—sometimes occur in environments which do not conform to adult licensing rules, but nevertheless have a licensing 'flavor'.

It will be argued that the children use NPIs restrictedly, according to a basically correct principle. The development towards completely adult-like usage then does not depend on negative evidence to unlearn overgeneralizations, but involves adjusting the set of environments to which NPIs already are restricted, until these are in complete accordance with correct licensors in adult discourse. The data indicate that this process goes hand in hand with the acquisition of negation.

Saturday 10:00 AM

Terrace Lounge

**The Acquisition of Negative Concord in
Non-Standard English**

Alison Henry, Rose Maclaran, John Wilson, and Cathy Finlay,
University of Ulster at Jordanstown

Many non-standard varieties of English allow optional negative concord:

- (1) They didn't do nothing/They did nothing/They didn't do anything

This paper studies the acquisition of negative concord in two such varieties (Wells' Bristol data from CHILDES and new data on Belfast English). It is found that by age 3;0, children in the Bristol study show evidence of acquisition of

negative concord, whereas the Belfast children still do not use negative concord by 4;6. The paper explores explanations for this, including syntactic differences between the two varieties (the possibility that in Belfast English, negative concord involves a difference in parameter setting (negative marker in head or SPEC of NegP) whereas in Bristol it involves merely the lexical categorization of *n*-words as optional NPIs) and frequency in the input. It is argued that by comparing acquisition patterns across similar dialects, the key factors affecting acquisition may be illuminated.

Saturday 10:30 AM

Terrace Lounge

The New Passive in Icelandic

Joan Maling, Brandeis University
Sigridur Sigurjonsdottir, University of Iceland

In this paper, we discuss a new passive that is developing in the language of Icelandic children and adolescents. The new passive takes the form in (1):

- (1)
- a. *thath var lamid mig*
there was hit me-ACC (“I was hit”)
 - b. *thath var hrint stelpunni*
there was pushed the.girl-DAT (“The girl was pushed”)

The new passive is consistent with two competing hypotheses within the GB-framework: (i) the canonical passive, with an empty category *e* in the subject position but no NP-movement, or (ii) an impersonal construction, with a phonologically null *pro* subject. The crucial difference between the two hypotheses is whether or not a theta role is assigned to subject position. If the *pro*-subject is assigned both a thematic role and nominative case, the appearance of accusative case on the postverbal object is entirely expected, as is the observed lack of the Definiteness Effect. Under hypothesis (ii), we make the further predictions listed in (2):

- (2)
- a. No agentive *by*-phrase is possible (Theta-Criterion Violation)
 - b. Binding of reflexives by the *pro*-subject should be possible
 - c. Subject control of participial adjuncts should be possible
 - d. No 1AEX effects—“passive” not restricted to agentive predicates

We asked 50 Icelandic youngsters, age 14-15, to judge various constructions with the new passive. Our results are consistent with the predictions listed in (2). Thus our study supports the hypothesis that the new passive is an impersonal construction with a phonologically null thematic subject.

Saturday 11:30 AM

Terrace Lounge

Acquiring Verb Morphology: German Past Participles

Hilke Elsen, Universität München

The acquisition of regular and irregular morphology is the subject of several recent investigations. Traditionally, symbolists assume rule as well as rote learning. These two different types of processing explain, among others, U-shaped behaviour patterns, which were also found when connectionist models mimicked the acquisition of the English past tense with the help of a single associative learning mechanism.

In this paper, some predictions of connectionist models are investigated using data on one German girl, compiled continuously over a period of about two years.

This investigation yields several results similar to those found in Marchman and Bates (1994) for the acquisition of the English past tense, as predicted by Plunkett and Marchman's (1993) critical-mass hypothesis. The following findings are consistent with a one-mechanism approach: (a) wave-like development of overregularization patterns, coinciding with non-linear rate of verb vocabulary composition; (b) rather late appearance of irregularizations of regular forms; (c) simultaneous appearance of first overregularizations and changes in the composition of the verbal lexicon.

Saturday 12:00 NOON

Terrace Lounge

Maturation in Inflectional Morphology

Tetsuya Sano, Meiji Gakuin University

I explain two phenomena in child languages by single maturation of morphology.

I propose that affixes having phonetically null realizations are adjoined to V-roots (e.g., AGR of German; [[V]af] raises to I for checking in this case), and that other affixes are heads of I, which incorporate V-roots by overt raising (e.g., AGR of Italian and T of Japanese). By our definition, both the Japanese Irrealis affix (-a/null) in negation and the finite affixes of non-pro-drop languages are adjoined affixes. With the maturation of the adjunction-affixation, I explain why Japanese negation errors are rare with vocalic verbs and why the root infinitives (cf. Wexler 1994) are rare in the acquisition of pro-drop languages. In addition, I will report a recent finding of accentuation in negation errors, which refines a structural analysis in Sano (1995).

Lunchtime Workshop and Discussion

Conference Auditorium: 12:30 — 2:00

Bridging the gap between the social pragmatic and lexical constraints views of word learning: Is it possible?

In the early 1980s Eve Clark and Ellen Markman (among others) introduced the "constraints" view of early word learning. Since then, the question of how children acquire words so quickly and effortlessly has been a central topic in the field of psycholinguistics. The constraints view posits that children are biased to entertain certain hypotheses over others when they link words to meanings. These biases are in the mind of the child. An alternative view, the social pragmatic perspective, suggests that children's word-learning biases emerge within the social communicative context as veteran language users guide their young apprentices towards the relevant word-to-world mappings.

In this workshop/panel discussion, researchers working with social pragmatic data will consider whether the social pragmatic and constraints perspectives can be viewed as compatible. After a series of short position papers by members of the panel, moderator Paula Menyuk will lead a (hopefully lively) group discussion in which all are invited and encouraged to participate.

Presentations (10 minutes each)

- Hirsh-Pasek, K., Golinkoff, R., Rehill, J. and Heberle, J.
Reexamining the role of social input in early word learning:
Where social theories meet constraints.
- Hoff-Ginsberg, E. & Naigles, L. The relation between properties of input and lexical development: Implications for constraints on lexical development.
- Tomasello, M. The pragmatics of early word learning.
- Baldwin, D. Constraints and socio-pragmatic skills: Distinct but compatible accounts of meaning acquisition.
- Menyuk, P. Discussant and Moderator

Group Discussion (30 minutes)

**Snacks and coffee will be served.
All conference attendees are welcome.**

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Session A East Balcony

Session B Conference Auditorium

Session C Terrace Lounge

9:00	TUCKER, M.; JUSCZYK, A.; JUSCZYK, P.: English-Learning Infant Discrimination of Dutch and French Word Lists	RICE, M.; RICE, K.; WEXLER, K.: Family Histories of Children with Extended Optional Infinitives	EUBANK, L.; BISCHOF, J.; HUFFSTUTLER, A.; LEEK, P.; WEST, C.: V-raising as a property of all L2 Grammars
9:30	SANTELMAUN, L.; HOUSTON, D.; JUSCZYK, P.: 7.5-month-old Infants' Segmentation of Multi-Syllabic Words in Fluent Speech	CLAHSEN, H.; BARTKE, S.; KUBLI, S.: Tense and Agreement in Specific Language Impairment: Comparison of English and German	HERSCHENSOHN, J.: Parametric Variation in L2 French Speakers
10:00	SANTELMAUN, L.; JUSCZYK, P.: What Discontinuous Dependencies Reveal About the Size of the Learner's Processing Window	RICE, M.; NOLL, K.; GRIMM, H.: German-speaking Children with SLI: Evidence of an Extended Optional Infinitive Stage	DUFIELD, N.; PREVOST, P.; WHITE, L.: Psycholinguistic Investigations of Clitic Placement in Second Language Acquisition
10:30		B r e a k	
11:00	STEMBERGER, J.; BERNHARDT, B.: Phonological Constraints and Morphological Development	MILLER, C.; LEONARD, L.: A Test of Assumptions of Some Recent Accounts of Specific Language Impairment (SLI)	THOMAS, M.: Why Second Language Acquisition Theory Has No Sense of Its Own History, Why We Should Do Something About It, and What We Should Do
11:30	GENNARI, S.: Syllable Omissions in the Acquisition of Spanish: A Case Study	DEMUTH, K.; SUZMAN, S.: Language Impairment in Sotho and Nguni	LARDIERE, D.: On the Transfer of Morphological Parameter Values in L2 Acquisition
12:00	PARADIS, J.; PETITCLERC, S.; GENESEE, F.: Word Truncation in Early Phonological Development: Evidence from French Two-Year-Olds	DALALAKIS, J.: Atypical Diminutive Formation and Judgment in Greek Developmentally Language Impaired Children	HAZNEHDAR, B.: L2 Acquisition by a Turkish-speaking Child: Evidence for L1 Influence

Lunch Break: 12:30 — 2:00

2:00	TESAR, B.: An Iterative Strategy for Learning Metrical Stress in Optimality Theory	CURTISS, S.; SCHAEFFER, J.: The Development of the INFL System in Children with Hemispherectomy	CHEN, D.: The L2 Acquisition of Backward Binding with English Psych Predicates
2:30	DEMUTH, K.: Prosodic Domains and Morphological Development	KRUG, C.: The Diagnostic Implications of the Double-Deficit Hypothesis: An Investigation of Fifth-Grade Readers Classified by Phonological Awareness and Visual Naming Speed	HAMILTON, R.: Logophoric Binding and Condition A in Adult L2A
3:00	OHALA, D.; GERKEN, L.: Lexical Familiarity Effects on Children's Weak Syllable Omissions	(SESSION B ENDS AT 3:00)	TSIMPLI, I.: Some Consequences of Null Subjects: The Case of Resumptive Pronouns in Second Language Acquisition
3:30		B r e a k	
4:00	SAFFRAN, J.; ASLIN, R.; NEWPORT, E.: Statistical Language Learning by 8-month-old Infants	THORNTON, R.; GAVRUSEVA, L.: Children's Split "Whose-Questions" and the Structure of Possessive NPs	KIM, E.: The Sensitive Periods for the Acquisition of L2 Lexico-Semantic and Syntactic Systems
4:30	MORGAN, J.: Starting Small or Starting Sharp: Which is Important?	JOHNSON, C.: The Acquisition of the "What's X doing Y" Construction	BHATT, R.; HANCIN-BHATT, B.: Minimal Projection and Derivation in Second Language Acquisition
5:00	GOMEZ, R.; GERKEN, L.: Artificial Grammar Learning in One-Year-Olds: Evidence for Generalization to New Structure	FRAGMAN, C.: On Assessing the Distinctive Properties of Developing Grammars: The Case of Relative Clause Production in French	MURPHY, V.: Level-Ordering and Dual-Mechanisms as Explanations of L2 Grammars
8:00 P.M. SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AUDITORIUM (For location and parking arrangements see General Information, pg. 1)			KEYNOTE ADDRESS
EVE CLARK, Stanford University			
<i>Speaker Perspective, Lexical Acquisition, and Semantic Constraints</i>			
Wine Reception to follow in the Small Ballroom			

SATURDAY, November 2nd

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

Session A	Session B	Session C
Grand Ballroom	Conference Auditorium	Terrace Lounge

9:30	WOLFF, P.: Developmental Change in the Lexicalization of Cause	MATSUO, A.: Children's Acquisition of Reciprocal Sentences with Active and Stative Predicates	VAN DER WAL, S.: Children's Pseudo-Licensing of Negative Polarity Items
10:00	SANDHOFER, C.; SMITH, L.: Learning a System of Mappings: The Acquisition of Color Terms	AVRUTIN, S.; CUNNINGHAM, J.: Children and Reflexivity	HENRY, A.; MACLARAN, R.; WILSON, J.; FINLAY, C.: The Acquisition of Negative Concord in Non-Standard English
10:30	BURGER, J.; PRASADA, S.: Quantification of Solids and Nonsolid Entities: The Role of Perceived Arbitrariness of Structure	HAMANN, C.; KOWALSKI, O.; PHILIP, W.: The French 'Delay of Principle B' Effect	MALING, J.; SIGURJONSDOTTIR, S.: The New Passive in Icelandic
11:00	B r e a k		
11:30	DE VILLIERS, J.; PYERS, J.: Complementing Cognition: The Relationship Between Language and Theory of Mind	HESTVIK, A.; PHILIP, W.: Grammatical Asymmetries in the Delay of Principle B in Norwegian	EISEN, H.: Acquiring Verb Morphology: German Past Participles
12:00	SORRENTINO, C.: It's the Thought that Counts: The Influence of Mental State Attribution on Young Children's Inductions of Proper Noun Reference	HAMANN, C.; PLUNKETT, K.: Subject Omission in Child Danish	SANO, T.: Maturation of Inflectional Morphology

Lunch Break: 12:30 — 2:00

Lunchtime Workshop and Discussion
Conference Auditorium 12:30 - 2:00

Bridging the gap between social pragmatic and lexical constraints views of word learning: Is it possible?
 Presentations and group discussion. All conference attendees are welcome. Snacks and coffee will be served.

2:00	XU, F.: What is the Mechanism Underlying Infants' Construction of Sortal Concepts Between 10 and 12 Months of Age?	JAKUBOWICZ, C.; MULLER, N.; RIEMER, B.; RIGAUT, C.; KANG, O.: Parameter Setting, Aspectual Properties and Morphological Spell Out: The Case of Subject and Object Omissions in French and German	MINTZ, T.; NEWPORT, E.; BEVER, T.: Grammatical Categories Can Be Derived From Speech to Young Children
2:30	ULLER, C.; XU, F.; CAREY, S.; HAUSER, M.: Is Language Needed for Constructing Sortal Concepts? A Study with Non-Human Primates	SCHONENBERGER, M.; WEISSENBORN, J.; PENNER, Z.: Recent Theories of Object Placement and Early German Grammar	SAXTON, M.: Longer-Term Effects of Corrective Input: An Experimental Approach

B r e a k

3:00	RUBIN, E.; TORIBIO, A.: Feature Specification in Lexical Acquisition	SCHAEFFER, J.: Object Scrambling, Object (-Clitic) Drop and Nominal Specificity in Dutch Child Language	ZHENG, M.; GOLDIN-MEADOW, S.: Lexical Patterns in the Expression of Motion Events in a Self-Styled Gesture System
4:00	BORER, H.; ROHRBACHER, B.: Features and Projections: Arguments for the Full Competence Hypothesis	CAMACHO, J.; SANCHEZ, L.; PAREDES, L.: Null Objects in Bilingual Andean Spanish	HOFFMEISTER, R.; DE VILLIERS, P.; ENGEN, E.; TOPOL, D.: Relations Among Measures of English Literacy and ASL Skills in Deaf Students

B r e a k

5:00 P.M. Grand Ballroom	LUIGI RIZZI, University of Geneva <i>Remarks on Early Null Subjects</i> Wine Reception to follow in the Small Ballroom	Plenary Address
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SUNDAY, November 3rd

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

Session A

East Balcony

Session B

Conference Auditorium

Session C

Terrace Lounge

9:30	RISPOLI, M.: The Default Case for Subjects in the Optional Infinitive Stage	SANDALO, F.; GORDON, P.: Acquisition and Creolization of Condition C "Violations" in Kadiweu and Portuguese	MELZI, G.: Maternal Narrative Styles in Two Cultures
10:00	HOEKSTRA, T.; HYAMS, N.; BECKER, M.: The Underspecification of Number and the Licensing of Root Infinitives	CASWELL, L.: The Acquisition of TMA Particles in Capeverdean Creole: Testing the Language Bioprogram Hypothesis	AMORRORTU, E.: The Acquisition of Communicative Competence: The Use of Basque Standard/Basilect in 8 and 10 Year Olds
10:30	AVRUTIN, S.: Root Infinitives in Child and Adult Grammars	SENGHAS, A.; NEWPORT, E.; COPPOLA, M.; SUPALLA, T.: The Emergence of Argument Structure in Nicaraguan Sign Language	UCCELLI, P.: Temporality, Causality, and Evaluation: How are These Dimensions Expressed in Andean Spanish-speaking Children's Narratives?
11:00	B r e a k		
11:30	HAZNEHDAR, B.; SCHWARTZ, B.: Optional Infinitives in Child L2 Acquisition —Really?	VAN HOUT, A.: Learning Telicity: Acquiring Argument Structure and the Syntax/Semantics of Direct Objects	CRAGO, M.; ALLEN, S.: Linguistic and Cultural Aspects of Simplicity and Complexity in Inuktitut (Eskimo) Child-Directed Speech
12:00	PREVOST, P.: Truncation in Second Language Acquisition of French	WAGNER, L.: Children's Comprehension of Viewpoint Aspect	JAKE, J.; MYERS-SCOTTON, C.: Relating Interlanguage to Codeswitching: The Composite Matrix Language
12:30	STROMSWOLD, K. Does the VP-Internal Subject Stage Really Exist?	SLABAKOVA, R.: L2 Acquisition of the Null Telic Morpheme -- A Psycholinguistic Investigation	DWIVEDI, V.; HOOVER, M.: Processing the French Clitic Construction by Highly Fluent Bilinguals

1:00

Lunch Break: 1:00 — 2:30

2:30	SNYDER, W.; SENGHAS, A.: Agreement Morphology and the Acquisition of Noun-Drop in Spanish	WHITE, L.; MONTRUL, S.; CHEN, D.; BRUHN-GARAVITO, J.: L2 Psych Verbs and the T/SM Restriction: The Status of a Zero Causative Morpheme	GENESE, F.; NICOLADIS, E.: Negotiating Language Choice in Bilingual Families
3:00	BURNS, T.; SOJA, N. The Role of the Determiner in the Semantic Interpretation of NP-Type Nouns	DEKYDTSPOTTER, L.; SPROUSE, R.; ANDERSON, B.: The Interpretation of Dyadic Nominals in English-French Interlanguage: The Syntax-Lexical Semantics Interface in SLA	COMEAU, L.; GENESEE, F.; NICOLADIS, E.; VRAKAS, G.: Can Young Bilingual Children Identify Language Choice as a Cause of Breakdown in Communication?
3:30	PHILIP, W.: Strong Continuity and the Acquisition of Semantic Principles	SHARPE, D.; PURDY, D.; CHRISSTE, E.: Acquiring the Logic of Natural Language Negation: Structured Objects and Dimensional Predicates	NICOLADIS, E.; GENESEE, F.: Long-Term Effects of Parental Code-Mixing on Bilingual Children's Code-Mixing

Saturday 2:00 PM

Grand Ballroom

What is the Mechanism Underlying Infants' Construction of Sortal Concepts Between 10 and 12 Months of Age?

Fei Xu, University of Pennsylvania; Rutgers University

Sortal concepts provide criteria for individuation and numerical identity; sortals underpin natural language count nouns. Infants acquire sortal concepts *cup* and *ball* between 10 and 12 months of age (Xu & Carey, 1996; Wilcox & Baillargeon, 1995; Xu, Carey & Welch, 1996). The present paper attempts to give a two-part explanation about the mechanism underlying this change. The first part is a brain maturational process that allows the infant to integrate information about object location with information about object properties; the second part argues that after two types of information are integrated, distinct labeling gives the infant pointers to sortal concepts and by 12 months of age, infants have abstracted that certain property changes, e.g., shape, signal distinct sortals while other property changes, e.g., color, do not.

Saturday 2:30 PM

Grand Ballroom

**Is Language Needed for Constructing Sortal Concepts?
A Study with Non-Human Primates**

Claudia Uller, MIT

Fei Xu, University of Pennsylvania; Rutgers University

Susan Carey, New York University

Marc Hauser, Harvard University

Some philosophers and psychologists of language have argued that different grammatical classes express different types of concepts. The term "sortal" has been coined to refer to concepts which provide criteria for individuation and numerical identity.

Using the preferential looking technique, Xu & Carey (in press) found that young infants represent one sortal concept, namely *object*, early on, whereas more specific sortals, e.g., *cap* and *ball*, are acquired some time between 10 and 12 months. These researchers have speculated that perhaps acquiring language plays a causal role in the construction of sortal concepts. One possible test of this linguistic hypothesis is to conduct a similar study with nonhuman primates.

This study seeks to replicate Xu & Carey with rhesus macaques (*Macaca mulatta*) using the same task and the same dependent measure. The results provide evidence that nonhuman primates may represent sortal concepts in the absence of language. We conclude that language is not *necessary* for constructing sortal concepts. However, it is still possible that language plays a role in infants' construction of sortals.

*Saturday 3:30 PM**Grand Ballroom***Feature Specification in Lexical Acquisition**

Edward J. Rubin, University of Utah

Almeida J. Toribio, University of California at Santa Barbara

The role of functional categories within the computational system is of great theoretical significance since these categories are thought to be central to explanation of parametric variation and typology. Accordingly, the development of functional categories has figured prominently in recent acquisition research. Drawing on data from children acquiring two languages simultaneously —children who present, in a single subject, the perfect matched pair for cross-linguistic research —we defend a view intermediate between Strong Continuity and Weak Continuity: the Feature Specification Hypothesis. Our examination expands the empirical domain of the Lexical Learning Hypothesis (Borer 1984) and motivates a revision of the Functional Projection Hypothesis (Lust 1994). On our view, the child grammar is endowed with functional structure, but the functional categories may remain unspecified for abstract functional features, e.g., [person], [number], [nominative], [+wh], etc; similarly, lexical categories may also remain unspecified for these abstract lexical features in the child's grammar. Our Feature Specification Hypothesis provides further support for the general view that the lexicon encapsulates crucial aspects of syntactic phrase structure (cf. Chomsky 1989, 1993, 1995).

*Saturday 4:00 PM**Grand Ballroom***Features and Projections: Arguments for the Full Competence Hypothesis**

Hagit Borer, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

Bernhard Rohrbacher, Brown University

This paper argues for the Full Competence Hypothesis in language development, comparing the latter with agrammatism. Whereas agrammatic adults use inflected forms randomly, suggesting functional structure has been lost, children never overuse agreement, suggesting that functional structure is present from the start. Pre-functional theories can account for the failure to randomize in the early grammar only by assuming that forms such as /pleyd/ are inherently marked [+past], and that the child avoids any form thus marked. Such theories cannot explain how the past tense morpheme /t-/d/ can be extracted from a form such as /pleyd/ in the absence of the interpretationally relevant functional structure.

Data from Greek show that functional morpho-phonology checked in the minimal well-formed syntactic domain is acquired first. Contrary to theories which propose that the acquisition of functional morphology guides the acquisition of functional projections, this suggests that it is a universal functional hierarchy which guides the acquisition of functional morphology.

*Saturday 2:00 PM**Conference Auditorium*

**Parameter Setting, Aspectual Properties and Morphological
Spell Out: The Case of Subject and Object
Omissions in French and German**

Celia Jakubowicz, l'Université de Paris
Natascha Müller, Beate Riemer, University of Hamburg
Catherine Rigaut, Ok-Kyung Kang, l'Université de Paris

In this paper we provide an analysis of the patterns of subject and object omissions in the speech of 2-year-old French (12) and German (12) children. A quantitative analysis of the production data (S(pontaneous) I(nteraction) and an E(licited) P(roduction) T(ask)) shows an interesting difference between French and German speaking children. In the French SI data, children with MLU values under 3.5 omit more frequently subjects than objects (42.9% versus 11.4%). However, in the EPT data, the same children produce about 85% subjects (i.e. nominative clitics) but omit the object 75% of the time. In contrast to the French children, the opposite pattern is found in German-speaking children with low MLU values in both SI and EPT data: objects are omitted more frequently than subjects (72.3% versus 13.4%). Subject and object omissions are no longer attested in the speech of children with higher MLU values (French: 3.5% for subject omissions and 4.6% for object omissions; German: 1.1% for subject omissions and 4.5% for object omissions). Furthermore, subject omissions are much more frequent with T(ransitive) than with I(ntransitive) verbs in both languages in children with lower MLU values (French: 19.6% for I. verbs and 56% for T. verbs; German: 4.4% for I. verbs and 12.8% for T. verbs). Finally, the object omissions in German already are pragmatically correct in the lower MLU group, and 83.5% of these omissions are found with telic verbs.

We argue that the attested behaviour can be explained by assuming a specific interaction between children's linguistic knowledge (based on crosslinguistic differences between French and German) and their performance systems; namely, by a conspiracy between parameter setting, aspectual properties of verbs and morphological spell out.

**Recent Theories of Object Placement
and Early German Grammar**

Manuela Schönenberger, University of Geneva
Jürgen Weissenborn, University of Potsdam
Zvi Penner, University of Bern

We argue that early child language supports the hypothesis that the *Head Directionality Parameter* is needed as a primitive of X-bar Theory and cannot be dispensed with as argued by advocates of the *Universal Base Hypothesis*. Our acquisition data show that from the beginning of the multiword stage the rate of erroneous object-placement patterns in German does not exceed 2% in both normal and SLI children. While at the initial multiword stage only 5% of nominal objects are preceded by determiners, about 50% of nominal subjects occur with a determiner. Given this asymmetry, we propose that the child initially treats nominal objects in most cases on a par with so-called "light nouns", which are standardly assumed to be exempted from the Case requirement and do not undergo scrambling. This can be interpreted as showing that preverbal objects in the German child data must be located in their base-position.

B R E A K : 3 : 0 0 — 3 : 3 0

**Object Scrambling, Object (-Clitic) Drop and Nominal
Specificity in Dutch Child Language**

Jeannette Schaeffer, UCLA

This paper reports the results of an experimental study on the acquisition of object scrambling in Dutch. We argue that while scrambling is close to adult-like by age 3, at age 2 scrambling is optional for children even where it is obligatory for adults. We propose that the optionality of object scrambling parallels the optionality of verb raising associated with the 'Root Infinitive' phenomenon. Both result from the optional specification of 'specificity'. This also explains the dropping of object clitics in Dutch 2- and 3-year olds.

Sportiche (1992) proposes a unification theory of scrambling and clitic placement, in which specific objects (XPs) and (inherently specific) clitics (Xs) need to be licensed under spec-head agreement in a functional phrase (FP), just below TP. According to this theory, lexical objects cannot scramble and clitics cannot be overtly realized if 'specificity' is not specified, which is precisely what young Dutch children do.

Saturday 4:00 PM

Conference Auditorium

Null Objects in Bilingual Andean Spanish

Jose Camacho and Liliana Sanchez, University of Southern California
Liliana Paredes, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

In this paper, we will analyze the evolution of null objects in subsequent stages of L2 Spanish (L2S) acquired by native speakers of Southern Quechua (SQ) both from a sociolinguistic perspective and from a syntactic perspective. We argue that unexpected results in the sociolinguistic analysis of the initial stages of acquisition can be explained by transfer from SQ. These results involve a correlation between null objects and [-animate] on the one hand, and full clitics

and [+human] on the other. SQ shows a similar asymmetry: objects are marked on the verb only when they are [+human], not when they are [-human].

Subsequent stages of L2S show a pattern closer to Standard Spanish, where null objects are only possible if the referent is non-specific.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON: SESSION C

TERRACE LOUNGE

Saturday 2:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

**Grammatical Categories Can Be Derived from
Speech to Young Children**

Toben H. Mintz and Elissa L. Newport, University of Rochester
Thomas G. Bever, University of Arizona

Grammatical categories, such as Noun and Verb, are the universal primitives for grammars of any natural language. Knowledge about grammatical categories and the words that make them up is therefore an important prerequisite for a young child learning language. Most proposals concerning how children acquire this knowledge assume that the child's linguistic input could not contribute substantially to this process, and rely instead on either innate linguistic knowledge, or on inferences from non-linguistic input. This paper presents evidence that, on the contrary, English speech directed at young children contains robust distributional information from which a learner could induce the major grammatical categories Noun and Verb. Furthermore, the paper argues that the cognitive mechanisms necessary to form grammatical categories from information in the linguistic input are the kinds of mechanisms that would be involved in other, non-linguistic, domains of learning.

**Longer-term Effects of Corrective Input:
An Experimental Approach**

Matthew Saxton, University of London

This paper compares the longer-term effects of positive versus negative evidence on the acquisition of irregular past tense verb forms over a period of five weeks. Three-year-old children were taught two novel verb forms designated as irregular by the experiment (*streep/strept, pell/pold*). For one of the verbs, children were exposed to the correct irregular past tense form as positive input only, while for the other verb, exposure to the correct form was via negative evidence only. In ten testing sessions, spread over a period of five weeks, past tense forms were elicited from children via a puppet narrative in which the novel actions features. It was found that children became progressively more accurate over time with the verb for which negative evidence had been supplied as compared against the verb for which positive input had been supplied. These findings are shown to be consistent with the Contrast Theory of negative input advanced recently in Saxton (1996; forthcoming).

B R E A K : 3 : 0 0 — 3 : 3 0

**Focusing Attention: The Lexical Patterns in the Expression
of Motion Events in a Self-Styled Gesture System**

Ming-yu Zheng and Susan Goldin-Meadow, University of Chicago

Previous studies have found that children acquire language-specific lexical patterns from the onset of language development. The language-specific expressions a child acquires seem to focus his attention on the elements that are highlighted by his language. The present study investigates the aspects of motion events that a child would attend to when conventional language models are not available. It is found that a deaf child who is not exposed to conventional linguistic input is able to emphasize Path in the form of gestures for spontaneous motions but not for caused motion. In addition, he uses lexical devices to refer to caused motion but morphological devices to refer to spontaneous motions. The results reveal the child's predisposition to communicate about certain aspects of motion events in a language-like fashion even without exposure to language models. These predispositions of focusing attention are then shaped by the language to which the child is exposed.

**Relations Among Measures of English Literacy and
ASL Skills in Deaf Students**

Robert Hoffmeister, Boston University

Peter de Villiers, Smith College

Elizabeth Engen and Deborah Topol, Rhode Island School for the Deaf

This study investigated the relations among several measures of 51 deaf students' comprehension and production of written text and "through-the-air" English, and the same students' ASL skills. Step-wise regression analyses determined the significant predictors of the students' SAT reading comprehension and global ratings of the quality of their written narratives. Writing skills were best predicted by scores on an elicited production test of complex English sentences "through-the-air", though age and reading comprehension levels added significant predictiveness. None of several measures of ASL comprehension and production was differentially predictive of English writing. For SAT reading comprehension, the best predictor was comprehension of complex English sentence structures (e.g., initial adverbial clauses and embedded relative clauses). However, the students' ASL comprehension skills, and, more particularly, performance on tasks involving judgments of correct ASL (of sign synonyms and antonyms and the correctness of plural and quantifier forms) predicted a significant additional portion of the variance in English reading achievement. The ways in which intensive ASL exposure might enhance metalinguistic awareness of language structure and so facilitate skills on decontextualized reading tasks are discussed.

B R E A K : 4 : 3 0 — 5 : 0 0

PLENARY ADDRESS SATURDAY 5:00 PM

GRAND BALLROOM, GEORGE SHERMAN UNION

Luigi Rizzi
University of Geneva

REMARKS ON EARLY NULL SUBJECTS

Reception to follow in Small Ballroom

*Sunday 9:30 AM**East Balcony***The Default Case for Subjects in the Optional Infinitive**

Matthew Rispoli, University of Arizona

This paper investigates why some children in the Optional Infinitive Stage prefer to replace *I* with *me* whereas others prefer to replace *I* with *my*. The data for the paper come from the language samples of twelve children who were observed for one hour per month from 1;0 to 3;0. The percent of subject pronoun errors in which *me* replaced *I* (the *me*-error rate) was positively correlated with the correct production of *me* as an objective pronoun (the *me*-total). In contrast, the *me*-error rate was unrelated to the correct production of either *I* or *my*. The relationship between the *me*-error rate and *me*-total was curvilinear with rapid acceleration of the *me*-error rate at low levels of the *me*-total. It is concluded that in order for *me* to become the predominant replacement for *I*, the frequency of the correct production of objective *me* tokens must reach a minimal threshold. The predominant replacement for *I* is a matter of individual experience with the production pronoun case forms, and not the result of a difference in underlying grammars.

*Sunday 10:00 AM**East Balcony***The Underspecification of Number and
the Licensing of Root Infinitives**Teun Hoekstra, Leiden University
Nina Hyams and Misha Becker, UCLA

In this paper we use evidence from English and German child language (at the so-called Root Infinitive stage) to explore the correlation between underspecification of the functional head Number in the nominal and verbal domains. We show that when Number is specified in the verbal domain (i.e. the verb bears morphosyntactic finiteness (person/number/tense) marking, or the copula is finite), Number is also specified in the nominal domain. Nominal "finiteness" is manifested by the presence of an overt definite determiner on the subject DP, or in the expression of (subject) nominal plurality. Nominal "nonfiniteness" is expressed either by a null subject (a radically empty DP), or, if there is a lexical subject, by the lack of an overt determiner (i.e. bare N) and plural marking. Our data show clearly that, with the exception of arguably dislocated constituents, children do not produce overt determiners in nonfinite clauses. Additionally, our German data show that plural subjects occur only with finite verbs (those raised to V2 position). We argue that root infinitives are not truly optional, but rather that they are licensed through spec-head agreement and hence contingent on properties of the subject.

Root Infinitives in Child and Adult Grammars

Sergey Avrutin, Yale University

It is well known that children in many (non-pro-drop) languages pass through a stage when they incorrectly use infinitives in main clauses. These constructions have been called "optional infinitives" because the child grammar allows these structures as a grammatical option. One question that immediately arises is whether optional infinitives are compatible with the Universal Grammar, and if so, whether we can find similar constructions in adult languages. In this paper, I present analyses of a particular construction in adult Russian that exhibits properties similar to the optional infinitives. This construction is exemplified in (1).

- (1) Tzarevna xoxotat'
 queen to-laugh
 'The Queen started to laugh' (right after something funny happened)

The questions I address are: how does the subject receive NOM case in these structures? What are the requirements imposed on the subject in this construction? What are the similarities and differences between these structures and children's optional infinitives? The differences between children and adults are argued to be characterizable in terms of the syntax-discourse interface conditions rather than in purely syntactic terms.

B R E A K : 1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0

Optional Infinitives in Child L2 Acquisition — Really?

Belma Haznedar and Bonnie D. Schwartz, University of Durham

This paper asks whether the Optional Infinitive (Wexler 1994)//Root Infinitive (Rizzi 1993/94) stage proposed for early L1 English characterizes early **child L2** English as well. Longitudinal data from a 4;3-year-old Turkish child are examined from the onset of English production. The findings:

- (i) the development of verbal inflection is **gradual**;
- (ii) irrespective of the uninflected/inflected status of the verb: (a) early on, subjects are consistently overt (cf. Sano & Hyams 1994); (b) case-marking (nominative) on subjects is virtually error-free (cf. Powers 1995);
- (iii) in contrast to (i), the change to obligatory overt subjects is **discrete**, which is of particular interest given that the L1, Turkish, is a null-subject language.

Taken together, these facts suggest that infinitive-like verb forms in child L2 acquisition call for an explanation **distinct from** what's been proposed for L1 acquisition. Our analysis will address issues related both to syntactic-deficiency and maturational accounts of L1 development as well as to transfer in L2 acquisition.

Sunday 12:00 NOON

East Balcony

Truncation in Second Language Acquisition of French

Philippe Prévost, McGill University

In this paper, I propose that initial L2 grammars are constrained by an "underspecified" UG, i.e. L2 learners initially have access only to certain universal principles and not to the full-fledged UG. In particular, I hypothesize that the Root Principle which states that main declarative sentences are CPs (Rizzi 1994) is not operative in early L2 systems, as suggested by Rizzi (1993/1994) for L1 acquisition. This predicts the projection of "truncated structures" from which certain functional categories, such as CP and TP, are absent. Importantly, I assume that functional categories are present in initial L2 grammars. Longitudinal spontaneous production data from two anglophone children learning L2 French confirm the hypothesis, which leads to a reconsideration of theories of second language acquisition invoking categorial deficiency (Vainikka & Young-Scholten 1996) and Full Transfer of L1 properties to the L2 (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996). Underspecified principles are proposed to emerge via a growing need to accommodate newly acquired L2 data.

Sunday 12:30 PM

East Balcony

Does the VP-Internal Subject Stage Really Exist?

Karin Stromswold, Rutgers University

In "Negation and Functional Projections in Early Grammar," Deprez and Pierce (1993) present acquisitional data from English and other languages that they argue show that subjects surface internal to the VP in the early grammar. I will show that D&P's analyses of the English data are fundamentally flawed: most of D&P's examples of Neg-initial utterances are examples of negative utterances without overt subjects, anaphoric negatives, quantifier negatives, and unclear or stuttered negatives. Once these examples are excluded, there is no evidence that children go through an early stage during which negation appears to the left of subject noun phrases. In addition, contrary to Deprez and Pierce's claims, during the purported VP-internal subject stage, children do not incorrectly invert subject and auxiliary in declarative utterances, *how come* questions, or embedded questions. When the VP-internal subject stage purportedly ends, children do not begin to make subject-Aux inversion errors in matrix questions. An alternative account of the negation and auxiliary placement data will be presented.

*Sunday 9:30 AM**Conference Auditorium***Acquisition and Creolization of Condition C “Violations”
in Kadiweu and Portuguese**

Filomena Sandalo, MIT
Peter Gordon, University of Pittsburgh

This study reports on the acquisition of binding in children of the Kadiweu tribe in southern Brazil. Since Kadiweu is a pronominal argument language, r-expressions are adjuncts, thus licensing apparent violations of Condition C as in (1) and (2).

- (1) *e* said that JOHN washed the dishes (Subject)
- (2) *e* said that the car hit JOHN (Object)

Kadiweu children learn either Kadiweu, Portuguese or both. In tests of binding we found that Kadiweu-speaking children readily allowed binding in (1) and (2) although the rate was double in the Subject condition (1) over the Object condition (2). The Portuguese-speaking Kadiweu children exhibited almost the same pattern of data with Portuguese, where binding should be disallowed. This pattern of data was not found in Portuguese-speaking children from Sao Paulo. We consider several explanations for the asymmetries, such as parallel function and Rizzi's (1996) suggestion that early pro-drop in children is Topic-drop.

*Sunday 10:00 AM**Conference Auditorium***The Acquisition of TMA Particles in Capeverdean Creole:
Testing the Language Bioprogram Hypothesis**

Linda J. Caswell, Harvard University

Bickerton's (1984a) Language Bioprogram Hypothesis (LBH) is based on the claim that creole grammars are direct reflections of the “inner core grammar” (Chomsky, 1981a) of language. One of the implications of the LBH is that if the core grammar etched in the mind is a creole grammar, children should have an easier time acquiring a creole language than other languages (Bickerton, 1983). For example, tense, mood, and aspect (TMA) particles, characteristic of creole languages, should appear early and easily. Using longitudinal data from a monolingual Capeverdean Creole-speaking child, followed from the age of 2;4 to 2;7, we tested this hypothesis. Our findings suggest that TMA particles neither appear early nor are easy to learn. Instead, we posit that cultural beliefs regarding adult-child interactions, combined with certain linguistic characteristics of creole languages as used by adults, contribute to the absence of TMA particles in this child's early language.

Sunday 10:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

**The Emergence of Argument Structure in
Nicaraguan Sign Language**

Ann Senghas, Elissa Newport, Marie Coppola and Ted Supalla
University of Rochester

A new sign language has emerged among deaf children in Nicaragua over the past 16 years. We compare native speakers from the first and second generations of this signing community to examine the process of language nativization and creolization. Previous work (Senghas, 1995) has shown that the younger, second generation is enriching their language grammatically as they learn it.

The present study examines the development of argument structure and case marking. Creoles generally have strict word order and little morphology. However, sign languages universally are found to have rich spatial morphology systems for indicating argument structure (Supalla, 1995).

We elicited sentences from 4 first-generation and 4 second-generation signers. The groups differed syntactically and morphologically. We argue that second-generation children have reanalyzed various morphological devices to form a structured, narrower system in which referents, particularly objects, are specified more precisely. This change allows the syntax to permit more movement of elements, resulting in a greater range of word orders.

B R E A K : 1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0

Sunday 11:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

**Learning Telicity: Acquiring Argument Structure and the
Syntax/Semantics of Direct Objects**

Angeliek van Hout, University of Massachusetts at Amherst

This paper introduces a new perspective on children's acquisition of verb-argument structures by examining their aspectual interpretation of transitive and intransitive clauses. An experimental study with Dutch children shows that, like adults, children interpret intransitives (e.g., *hij at* 'he ate') to refer to telic and atelic events. However, they do not restrict their interpretation of transitives (e.g. *hij at een broodje* 'he ate a sandwich') to telic events only, as adults do, but also allow for atelic readings. Children seem to initially assign a more general meaning to a quantized, referential object and also allow for partitive or non-referential readings. They have to learn that a particular syntactic form (DP) is associated with a particular semantics (quantized and referential) and that direct objects of that form yield event type-shifting to a telic event.

Sunday 12:00 NOON

Conference Auditorium

Children's Comprehension of Viewpoint Aspect

Laura Wagner, University of Pennsylvania

This study investigates a phenomenon found in young children's production data; initially, children appear to use viewpoint aspect (perfective/imperfective) morphology to mark situation aspect (telicity). The current study uses a comprehension task to determine if children can distinguish situation aspect from viewpoint aspect at the linguistic level (do children assign the right meaning to the morphology?) and at the conceptual level (do children understand the concepts behind the viewpoint aspect?). Preliminary work using a sentence-to-scene matching task with the imperfective paradox has found that children younger than 2;6 cannot distinguish the two using cues from verbal morphology alone, though their performance improves with the addition of open class cues. Thus this study tentatively supports the consensus view in the literature that children use viewpoint aspect to mark situation aspect and furthermore suggests that the problem is linguistic and not conceptual in origin.

Sunday 12:30 PM

Conference Auditorium

L2 Acquisition of the Null Telic Morpheme: A Psycholinguistic Investigation

Roumyana Slabakova, McGill University

Snyder (1994) reports that in the speech of English children a family of constructions -- the double object dative and the particle construction -- appeared at approximately the same age. Comparative syntactic research adds the resultative secondary predicate to this syntactic family. Snyder argues that children are acquiring a parametric property of English, the null telic morpheme. Slavic languages differ from English in that their telicity morpheme, the perfective preverb, is overt; consequently, the related constructions are ungrammatical. This paper examines the L2 acquisition of this family of constructions and relates it to learners' knowledge of the null telic morpheme. We use a sentence-matching on-line procedure. Participants include 15 Polish, Russian, and Bulgarian native speakers, intermediate and advanced learners of English, and 10 native English speakers as controls. We predict that knowledge of the null telic morpheme will correlate with knowledge of its syntactic reflexes. We interpret this as evidence for learners' access to Universal Grammar and for the clustering effect of the proposed parameter not only in L1 but in L2 as well.

*Sunday 9:30 AM**Terrace Lounge***Maternal Narrative Styles in Two Cultures**

Gigliana Melzi, Boston University

This study examines cultural differences in mothers' discourse when eliciting personal narratives from their children. Sixteen Central American and fifteen Anglo-American mothers were asked to engage in a conversation with their children (ages 4;0 - 5;2), to elicit personal narratives involving two shared and two unshared experiences. Mothers' discourse was coded for type and function of prompts used, and narrative components requested. Both groups of mothers were comparable on the number and length of narratives, and type of narrative elements requested. Results of MANOVAs revealed an overall effect of culture in the prompt types ($F(5,23) = 3.84, p < .01$) and functions ($F(4,24) = 3.86, p < .05$) in the unshared narrative condition only. Differences in the effect of culture by narrative type are discussed in terms of the interaction of the demand each task places on the participants and their cultures' ideas about parenting and socialization goals.

*Sunday 10:00 AM**Terrace Lounge***The Acquisition of Communicative Competence:
The Use of Basque Standard/Basilect in 8 and 10 Year Olds**

Estibaliz Amorrortu, University of Southern California

This paper focuses on the social distribution of two varieties, standard and basilect Basque, in the speech of eight and ten year olds. I present data collected by a 'controlled improvisation' (role playing with puppets) technique to demonstrate that children not only have formal knowledge of the two varieties, but also are aware of the social rules that regulate their use. The data show dramatic age differences. The older children used basilectal features with decreasing frequency across contexts from: 1) a home setting; to 2) a school conference (with a teacher, student and parent); to 3) a classroom setting. They also used more basilectal features in speech among family members when compared to speech addressed by and to teachers. In contrast, the younger children had more difficulties distinguishing between these registers. The data also showed a very high frequency of standard frequencies in the role playing in general, in comparison with free conversation (by the same children).

**Temporality, Causality, and Evaluation:
How are these Dimensions Expressed in
Andean Spanish-Speaking Children's Narratives?**

Paola Uccelli, Harvard University

This study offers an analysis of the expression of temporality, causality and evaluation in narratives told by Spanish-speaking preschoolers and first-graders from the Andes of Peru. Results indicate that, contrary to the sequentiality and one-narrative/one story scheme characteristic of US Caucasian English-speaking children, these Andean children's narratives present a distinctive feature, called here "structural evaluation". Structural evaluation takes two forms: either 1) a functional deviation from the timeline of real events; or 2) a chain of independent episodes or stories within a single narrative text. These evaluative strategies affect both the temporal organization of events and the complexity of causal relations displayed in a text. Deviations from the timeline are usually described as indicators of language pathology or immaturity for US-Caucasian-English-speaking children. In these Andean children's narratives, conversely, departures from the timeline serve a rhetorical function that reflects a complex narrative ability.

B R E A K : 1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0

**Linguistic and Cultural Aspects of Simplicity and
Complexity in Inuktitut (Eskimo) Child-Directed Speech**

Martha B. Crago, McGill University

Shanley E. M. Allen, Max Planck Institut für Psycholinguistik

Speech directed to children tends to be different from speech directed to adults in a variety of ways (e.g., Snow & Ferguson, 1977; Gallaway & Richards, 1994), including a unique prosodic emphasis, phonological and grammatical simplification, pronoun replacement, altered semantic and pragmatic features, and a baby word vocabulary. Analysis of spontaneous speech data from eight Inuit children ages 1;0 through 3;6 and their caregivers (Crago, 1988; Allen, in press) indicates that child-directed speech (CDS) in Inuktitut shares many of these features, but not others. Two of the most striking features of Inuktitut CDS are a baby word vocabulary and a high degree of inflection. This paper focuses on the simplicity of the baby word vocabulary on the one hand, contrasting it with the relative complexity of inflections on the other, offering both linguistic and cultural explanations for this interaction between simplicity and complexity.

**Relating Interlanguage to Codeswitching:
The Composite Matrix Language**

Janice Jake and Carol Myers-Scotton, University of South Carolina

This paper demonstrates that the principles underlying the Matrix Language Frame (MLF) model of code-switching (CS) and its extensions apply to SLA (Myers-Scotton 1993, Myers-Scotton and Jake 1995). While SLA interlanguage is not the same as CS, interlanguage's structure depends on the constructs of 'Matrix Language' versus 'Embedded Language' and content versus system morphemes.

In CS, 'Embedded Language' content morphemes occurring in a mixed constituent must be sufficiently congruent with a 'Matrix Language' counterpart at three levels of lexical structure: lexical-conceptual structure, predicate-argument structure, and morphological realization patterns. In regard to interlanguage, considering lexical structure at three levels shows how features of L1 lexical structure contribute to IL lexical entries. The resulting concept of a composite ML leads to precise predictions about the nature of IL structure. These arguments are supported with SLA data.

**Processing the French Clitic Construction by
Highly Fluent Bilinguals**

Veena D. Dwivedi and Michael L. Hoover, McGill University

In this study we examine highly fluent anglophone speakers of French to determine whether they employ the same processing strategies as do native speakers of French.

Native and bilingual subjects read causative and non-causative sentence pairs with and without clitics using a self-paced word-by-word reading task. Both native and bilingual subjects spent significantly longer time reading the second verb in causative versus non-causative constructions in sentences with clitics, but not in sentences without clitics, as predicted by the Minimal Chain Principle of De Vincenzi (1991).

Furthermore, bilinguals whose processing was less automatic exhibited an English-like increase in processing time at the end of sentences with clitics. Taken together these findings indicate that highly fluent bilinguals employ the same processing strategies as do native speakers. However, there remain—at least among less automatic bilinguals—traces of L1 processing strategies.

LUNCH BREAK : 1 : 0 0 — 2 : 3 0

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*Sunday 2:30 PM**East Balcony***Agreement Morphology and the Acquisition of
Noun-Drop in Spanish**

William Snyder, University of Connecticut
Ann Senghas, University of Rochester

Spanish exhibits a DP-internal counterpart (“Noun-drop”) to the well-known null-subject (“pro-drop”) phenomenon. Barbiere (1991), Bernstein (1993), and Kester (1994) derive the possibility of N-drop directly from the “richness” of agreement morphology within the DP, thus predicting that children acquiring a N-drop language will use N-drop as soon as they master agreement morphology. This prediction was tested with the Montes (“Koki”; 1987, 1992) and Linaza corpora from the CHILDES database (MacWhinney & Snow 1985, 1990). By 2;2 Koki was using a considerable variety of masculine and feminine, singular and plural determiners, and was also using gender and number morphology on adjectives and number-marking on nouns. Yet, Koki’s first use of N-drop does not occur until 2;6, and follows some seven uses of full ‘D N A’ DPs in the transcripts for 2;2-2;5. When N-drop finally appears, it predominates over full ‘D N A’ DPs by a ratio of 13:1. Our findings are thus inconsistent with the “rich morphology” hypothesis.

*Sunday 3:00 PM**East Balcony***The Role of the Determiner in the Semantic
Interpretation of NP-type Nouns**

Tracey C. Burns and Nancy N. Soja, Northeastern University

Determiners play an important role in the identification and categorization of nominals, yet children’s knowledge of the function of the determiner has not been fully studied. This issue has implications for NP-type nouns (e.g., *school*), which are nouns that alternate between a count noun and a noun phrase use. We argue that in their noun phrase construction NP-type nouns act as lexical noun phrases, which are distinct from their count noun use. In two experiments we tested adults’ and 4-year-olds’ interpretations of the same nouns in the two constructions, and found evidence that both groups interpret the nominal differently as a function of the construction in which it appears. These findings demonstrate that young children are sensitive to the function of the determiner in the interpretation and comprehension of nominals.

**Strong Continuity and the Acquisition of
Semantic Principles**

William Philip, Utrecht University

The Strong Continuity Hypothesis (SCH) is widely accepted in contemporary acquisition theory. Recently, in some acquisition research the domain of application of the SCH has also been tacitly extended so that it applies to the acquisition of semantic as well as syntactic principles, even though learnability considerations do not support this extension. In this talk experimental evidence will be presented that casts doubt on the validity of this extension of the SCH. Using as a test case a semantic principle called the "Strongest Meaning Hypothesis" (Dalrymple et al. 1995), which regulates the assignment of truth conditions to reciprocal sentences, it is shown that children even as old as eight years do not consistently apply this adult semantic principle in their comprehension of simple reciprocal sentences such as *The cats are tickling each other*. Rather, the SMH is seen to be acquired gradually.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON: SESSION B

CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM

Sunday 2:30 PM

Conference Auditorium

**L2 Psych Verbs and the T/SM Restriction:
The Status of a Zero Causative Morpheme**

Lydia White, Silvina A. Montrul, Dongdong Chen and
Joyce L. Bruhn-Garavito, McGill University

Pesetsky (1995) points out that, in the case of object experiencer (OE) verbs, there is a prohibition (the T/SM restriction) against the cause of the emotion occurring in the same predicate with the target or subject matter of the emotion, as shown in (1).

(1)

- (a) The newspaper article angered me
- (b) *The newspaper article angered me at the government
- (c) The newspaper article made me angry at the government

Pesetsky argues that OE verbs are bimorphemic, containing a phonologically null causative morpheme. Properties of this morpheme account for the T/SM restriction.

We investigate whether L2 learners observe the T/SM restriction. 15 francophones, 19 Malagasy-speaking and 17 Spanish-speaking learners of English were tested. The majority of L2 learners were significantly less likely than native speakers to recognize T/SM violations, even when they were

accurate on other properties of OE verbs. We suggest that L2 learners (like L1 acquirers) fail to identify the bimorphemic nature of OE verbs; as a result, there is nothing to block T/SM violations in their grammars.

Sunday 3:00 PM

Conference Auditorium

The Interpretation of Dyadic Nominals in English-French Interlanguage: The Syntax-Lexical Semantics Interface in Second Language Acquisition

Laurent Dekydtspotter, Rex A. Sprouse and Bruce Anderson, Indiana University

This study provides evidence that the UG-governed syntax-semantics interface constrains the development of English-French Interlanguage grammars early on. The morphosyntax of the French nominal system is sensitive to the result-process distinction. French result nominals allow multiple *de*-phrases (1). French process nominals do not (2) (Milner 1975; Zubizaretta 1987).

- (1) La version de Karajan de la 9e (2) * La destruction de Godzilla de Tokyo
(3) * The version of Karajan of the 9th (4) * The destruction of Godzilla of Tokyo

Although this property does not arise in English where multiple *of*-phrases are never possible (3, 4) (Valois 1991; Bernstein 1991; Mallen 1996), there is clear evidence in the aggregate data taken from a judgment task given to 70 English-speaking adult learners of French enrolled in elementary and intermediate university-level French classes that their English-French interlanguage systems display sensitivity to the result/process distinction ($t = -9.79$, $df = 69$, $p < .0005$).

Sunday 3:30 PM

Conference Auditorium

Acquiring the Logic of Natural Language Negation: Structured Objects and Dimensional Predicates

Dean Sharpe, Dan Purdy and Elisabeth Christe, McGill University

Natural language negation is not readily modelled by classical logic because objects may be neither completely in nor completely not in a set (e.g., If I love one part of a toy but hate another, then I neither love nor hate the toy as a whole) and predicates may have mid-range values (e.g., Mary may be neither tall nor short, but medium-height). We describe experiments testing preschoolers' grasp of the logic of natural language negation when object structure is relevant (e.g., whether or not one likes a toy) and when it is not (e.g., whether or not one is tall). Results argue against an exclusively classical model of natural language negation and suggest the early relevance of a non-classical model that can handle object structure and predicate dimensionality.

*Sunday 2:30 PM**Terrace Lounge***Negotiating Language Choice in Bilingual Families**

Fred Genesee and Elena Nicoladis, McGill University

A variety of explanations of bilingual children's code-mixing (that is, the use of two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation) have been proposed. The present research examined the possibility that bilingual children's code-mix more or less depends on the specific discourse styles of their parents (Lamza, 1992). Conversations between five French-English children and their parents were collected longitudinally from 1;6 to 2;6 years. Analyses of the data revealed that use of different types of speech acts had little impact on the children's code-mixing either overall or immediately following specific types of parental speech acts -- the children continued to code-mix regardless of parental discourse style. These results suggest that bilingual children of this age do not understand the complex implicatures of parental discourse for negotiating language choice and that code-mixing by young bilingual children is largely child-driven and not parent-driven, as proposed by the parental discourse hypothesis.

*Sunday 3:00 PM**Terrace Lounge***Can Young Bilingual Children Identify Language Choice as a Source of Breakdown in Communication?**Liane Comeau, Fred Genesee, Elena Nicoladis and
Georgia Vrakas, McGill University

Research on two-year-old bilingual children has shown that they are able to use their languages differentially and appropriately with different interlocutors. The purpose of the present study was to investigate in what other ways young bilingual children can control the use of their languages in dyadic interactions. More specifically, the goal was to examine whether these children could identify the use of the inappropriate language as the cause of a breakdown in communication when interacting with a monolingual stranger.

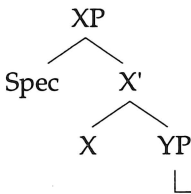
Two pairs of children of different ages (girls aged 1;11 and 2;2 as well as boys aged 2;11 and 3;6) were videotaped during an interaction with a monolingual stranger. Breakdowns in communication, as well as children's repair strategies following these breakdowns, were transcribed and coded. The results show that the children did not identify language choice as the cause of the breakdowns, as they used the same repair strategies whether a breakdown was due to the inappropriate language or not. It is suggested that these results can be explained by a lack of theory of mind at this age.

Long-term Effects of Parental Code-Mixing on Bilingual Children's Code-Mixing

Elena Nicoladis and Fred Genesee, McGill University

The few studies that have systematically examined the relationship between parental and child rates of code-mixing within a conversation have had equivocal results. The purpose of this study was to examine the possibility that parents' rates of code-mixing would be correlated with their children's rates of code-mixing six months later. The analyses were based on conversations of seven French-English bilingual children with their parents. The families were observed when the children were 2;0, 2;6, 3;0, and 3;6. The results showed that children's rates of code-mixing were positively and significantly correlated at the older ages (3;0 and 3;6) with the parents' rates of code-mixing six months before (2;6 and 3;0 respectively). One possible interpretation of these results is that children's rates of code-mixing come to resemble parents' rates only after they have gained sufficient proficiency in both their languages

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