

The 24th Annual  
Boston University

Conference on  
Language  
Development



November 5, 6 & 7, 1999



The Twenty-Fourth Annual

Boston University

Conference on Language Development

November 5, 6, and 7, 1999

Organized by the Graduate Students in  
the Program in Applied Linguistics

**Principle B, VP Ellipsis,  
and Interpretation  
in Child Grammar**

*Rosalind Thornton  
and Kenneth Wexler*

Examines young children's interpretation of pronouns within the context of Universal Grammar, focusing on a few distinct types of complex sentences.

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## Welcome

We would like to join in welcoming all of you to the Twenty-fourth Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development. It is our pleasure to be able to receive you here again at Boston University.

We are honored to have Elissa Newport, of the University of Rochester, and Stephen Crain, of the University of Maryland, as featured speakers. Professor Newport will present Friday's keynote address, "Innately constrained learning: Blending old and new approaches to language acquisition." Saturday's program will close with Professor Crain's plenary address, which is entitled "Sense and sense ability in child language." Receptions will follow both addresses.

The rest of the program is devoted to a wide range of papers chosen from submitted abstracts. This year we received over 280 submissions, which were then sent out for anonymous review. Of these, 90 were selected for presentation; we are sorry not to have had space to include more of the many excellent submissions we received. We have included abstracts for those individuals who generously agreed to serve as alternates in case of cancellations; their papers will also be published in our annual Proceedings.

It is our commitment to continue to provide a forum for work in this diverse field here at Boston University. 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 1999 Conference Committee

Sarah Fish and Catherine Howell  
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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 students from the Program in Applied Linguistics. We depend entirely upon the proceeds generated by registration and exhibition fees to cover the costs of hosting the conference. We are very grateful to all our participants for providing this support.

We would like to thank the many graduate and undergraduate students who contributed their time and effort both throughout this past year and during this weekend. We are particularly grateful to the faculty and staff of the Program in Applied Linguistics for their support and encouragement. We thank Professor Carol Neidle for allowing us to use valuable server space in order to run the conference. In addition, we are indebted to the School of Education for the resources they so generously made available to us throughout the year and to Marnie Reed of the TESOL program for her help with recruitment.

Our greatest thanks and appreciation are due to our faculty advisor Mary Catherine O'Connor. Professor O'Connor tirelessly provided us with guidance and support which were, as always, crucial at every juncture in our preparations. We are also very grateful for the help and advice provided by Professor Shanley Allen during our preparation of abstracts for our reviewers.

We would also like to acknowledge the efforts on our behalf of the Office of Conference Services and the Office of Disability Services. The skill and patience of Karen Ryan Schaffer of Conference Services have ensured that we have the proper facilities, refreshments, and equipment at our disposal. We are also very grateful to Laurie Schaffer of Disability Services for providing sign language interpreters.

Finally, we would like to thank our reviewers, listed below, who read and rated the submissions we received this year. The high quality of the submissions we receive each year makes it especially difficult to assemble a program of just 90 papers. We are particularly indebted and grateful for the thought and care which our reviewers gave each submission.

Shanley Allen	Jane Grimshaw	Catherine O'Connor
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Heather Goad	Elissa Newport	Cheryl Zoll
Susan Goldin-Meadow		

# New from John Benjamins Publishing

## Cognitive Exploration of Language and Linguistics

René Dirven and Marjolijn Verspoor  
Gerhard Mercator University Duisburg /  
University of Groningen

Language is explored as part of a cognitive system comprising perception, emotion, categorization, abstraction processes, and reasoning.

*Cognitive Linguistics in Practice*, 1  
1999. Hb xiv, 300 pp. 1 55619 197 9 \$ 60.00  
Pb 1 55619 198 7 \$ 24.95

## Pathways of the Brain The neurocognitive basis of language

Sydney M. Lamb  
Rice University

Shows how the linguistic system can operate for speaking and understanding; how it can be learned by children; and how it is implemented in neural structures.

*Current Issues in Linguistic Theory*, 170  
1999. Hb xii, 418 pp. 1 55619 886 8 \$ 95.00  
Pb 1 55619 888 4 \$ 34.95

## Why We Curse

A neuro-psycho-social theory  
of speech

Timothy Jay  
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts,  
North Adams, Massachusetts

Draws together information about cursing from different disciplines and unites them to explain psychological, neurological, cultural and linguistic factors.  
Philadelphia/Amsterdam 1999.

Hb xv, 328 pp. 1 55619 758 6 \$ 35.00  
To appear November 1999

## Slips of the Tongue

Speech errors in first and second  
language production

Nanda Poulisse  
University of Amsterdam

Contains a detailed survey of the findings of L1 slip research, including studies of slips produced by child L1 learners.

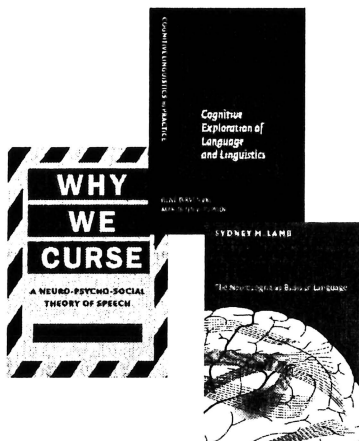
*Studies in Bilingualism*, 20  
1999. Hb xvi, 257 pp. 1 55619 952 X \$ 75.00  
To appear November 1999

## The Japanese Mental Lexicon Psycholinguistic Studies of Kana and Kanji processing

Joseph F. Kess and Tadao Miyamoto  
University of Victoria

Surveys the psycholinguistic dimensions of lexical access to the mental lexicon in Japanese.

1999. Hb x, 268 pp. 1 55619 761 6 \$ 69.00  
To appear November 1999



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## **General Information**

### **REGISTRATION AND SESSION LOCATIONS**

All sessions will be held in the **George Sherman Union**, 775 Commonwealth Avenue. Registration will take place in the 2nd floor lobby. 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**

**Elissa Newport** will deliver the Keynote Address on Friday at 8:00 PM in Metcalf Hall (Large). A reception will immediately follow in Metcalf Hall (Small).

**Stephen Crain** will give the Plenary Address on Saturday afternoon at 5:00 PM, again in Metcalf Hall (Large). There will be a sherry reception following the address in Metcalf Hall (Small).

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

**Parking** is available in: the Warren Towers Garage, 700 Comm. Ave. (entrance on Hinsdale St.) for \$12 (Fri); the lot at 766 Comm. Ave. (next to the Guitar Center) for \$10 (Fri) and \$6 (Sat); the School of Management, 595 Comm. Ave. for \$12 (Fri) and \$6 (Sat); the lot at Granby St. (near Burger King) for \$12 (Fri) and \$6 (Sat); and the lot on Babcock St. for \$6 (Fri).

**Temporary luggage storage space** will be made available next to the registration desk. The area will be staffed during 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 Ziskind Lounge on Saturday and Sunday. For a list of exhibitors, see page 60.

**Refreshments** will be served in the Ziskind Lounge during breaks. A list of local restaurants is provided in your registration packet, and the Food Court on the ground floor of the George Sherman Union offers a wide selection.

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

**ASL interpreters** (Please inquire when you arrive.)  
**Message board**  
**Lost and Found**  
**Campus maps**

**The 25th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development** is tentatively scheduled to be held on November 3, 4, and 5, 2000, at Boston University.

Friday 9:00 AM

Metcalf Hall (Large)

**The role of the expletive in the acquisition  
of a discourse anaphor**

Robin Schafer and Thomas Roeper,  
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

The locative anaphor *there* shares phonemic structure with the expletive *there*. Debates concerning the relationship between these two elements usually focus on diachronic reasoning. We claim that there is a synchronic relationship between these elements—particularly, that the phonemic similarity motivates children to generalize an expletive chain, (1), to an anaphoric chain, (2).

- 1) There<sub>i</sub> is a cat<sub>i</sub> on the mat.
- 2) John is in the corner<sub>i</sub> and Bill is there<sub>i</sub> too.

Thus, we claim that one binding chain can trigger another. We treat the abstract relationship of Feature-movement (Chomsky, 1995), which creates a chain at LF, as a trigger of the discourse anaphora relation. We derive support for this analysis from the order of acquisition of the uses of *there* and from data collected in a comprehension study of the expletive and the anaphoric *there*, e.g., the contrast in (3).

- 3) a. There was a dog.
- b. A dog was there.

Friday 9:30 AM

Metcalf Hall (Large)

**The acquisition of the English copula**

Misha Becker, UCLA

In this paper I reveal some interesting and unexpected patterns of *be*-omission in child English. *Be* is often overt in identificational expressions ('That is my shoe'), nominal predicatives ('John is a student'), and inherent property adjectival predicatives ('John is tall'), while *be* is omitted in accidental property adjectival predicatives ('This empty') and locatives ('Eric at Cathy house'). This pattern of *be*-omission is explained by a requirement that permanent or inherent property predicates be licensed by an overt head, while accidental or temporary property predicates do not require such licensing. The fact that *be* is largely overt in existential expressions ('There is a man in the room'), will instead be accounted for by a predicate-raising account of existentials (cf. Moro, 1993/1997), whereby existential *there* is a raised predicate that moves out of the postcopular Small Clause to subject position. This movement lexicalizes the copula (Moro, 1993), hence forcing *be* to be overt in this context.

**From head to adjunct:****Evidence from the acquisition of German ditransitive verbs**

Heiner Drenhaus, University of Potsdam

The aim of this paper is to provide evidence that the acquisition of German adverbs/particles and negation in structures with ditransitive verbs is better described as a process of reanalyzing these elements from heads into adjuncts, rather than from adjuncts to heads as Lebeaux (1988) and Hoekstra and Jordens (1993), among others, argued. In this study, 22 German children (3;9-6;8) were asked to repeat sentences with ditransitive verbs containing an accusative object pronoun and a dative object DP combined with negation, adverbs, or a particle. In younger children (3;9-6;2), dative marking was disturbed by the presence of the adverbs/particle in different positions but not by negation; older children (6;3-6;8) didn't show the same effect. By using the idea of Formal Features and Merger (Chomsky, 1995/1998) we can explain the varying ability in blocking dative case in terms of the different projection properties of the adverbs/particle. Younger children start with the feature [+project] in adverbials/particles. Later the children lose this feature and therefore it becomes impossible to take the former kinds of complement(s). At the end point of this process the former head is analysed as an adjunct.

---

**B R E A K :      1 0 : 3 0 — 1 1 : 0 0**

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**On the acquisition of an indefinite determiner:****Evidence for unselective binding**Barbara Lust, David Battin, Claire Foley, Annie Koehne and Katherine White,  
Cornell University

Although early research has probed the acquisition of indefinite articles, experimental work has not yet dissociated relevant components of grammatical knowledge. English structures like (1) integrate syntax (coordination, DP structure, VP ellipsis), semantics (lexicon, determination of object reference) and pragmatics (conditions under which the determiner may introduce a new referent).

- 1) Bert touches an apple and Oscar does too

This paper reports new results from a comprehension experiment (act out) testing structures like (1) and matched structures with definite determiners and possessive pronouns. Results from over 100 subjects (aged 3-7; adults) showed that at all ages children distinguished *a*, *the* and the pronoun, crucially allowing the indefinite determiner a wider range of interpretations than the pronoun, while showing a preference for sloppy (variable) readings. Adults differ in preferring a single object reading. Results support 'unselective binding' (Heim, 1982) as a developmental primitive, supplemented by pragmatic learning.

**Imagining articles:  
What *a* and *the* can tell us about the emergence of DP**

Robin Schafer, University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
Jill de Villiers, Smith College

In recent research it has been claimed that the DP projects if and only if there is referentiality or specificity (Chomsky, 1998). Counter to the predictions of that theory, we provide experimental evidence that children master the specific indefinite well before they master the various uses of *the*. 37 children between the ages of 3;6 and 5;5 were presented with a series of very short stories and questions to elicit a DP response. All aspects of the stories were imagined, removing context as a potential source for familiarity or specificity. The results persuade us that familiarity, encoded by the Point of View feature [1 hearer], is what is required for the projection of DP. This alternative proposal also neatly converges with the line of research documenting a lack of DP in child grammar, and that exploring the emergence of Theory of Mind and language POV features.

**Children who build bridges**

Sergey Avrutin, Yale University  
Peter Coopmans, Utrecht University

We present results of an experimental study with Dutch-, Russian- and English-speaking children that addressed their ability to establish discourse reference for definite NPs. Specifically, we investigated whether children are capable of 'bridging': a discourse operation that allows the hearer to interpret a definite NP (e.g., 'the door') through a link to a semantically related indefinite NP in the discourse (e.g., 'a house.'). Children were presented with a picture that contained two potential sources of references: one mentioned in the discourse ('linguistic'), and one not mentioned ('visual'). The results in all three languages were identical: children under the age of 4 sometimes incorrectly rely on the visual source of reference. After 4, their performance is adult-like. Even for the younger children, however, there is a significant difference between responses to True and False situations, the former being almost always correct. We argue that children know the relevant discourse constraints at an early age but until the age of 4 are unable to implement this knowledge because of, presumably, lack of required processing resources.

---

*Friday 9:00 AM**Conference Auditorium***Transitivity alternations with causative psych verbs  
in L2 Spanish**

Silvina Montrul, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Several studies on the L2 acquisition of psych verbs have reported particular problems with object-experiencer verbs, such as *frighten*, supposedly because these verbs violate the canonical mapping of arguments to syntactic positions, or because L2 learners fail to notice the causative meaning in these verbs. This study investigates whether L2 learners know that these psych verbs are causative and participate in the causative/inchoative alternation in Spanish. If L2 learners are sensitive to the different thematic structure and linking properties of the two classes they would be 1) more accurate with transitive change of state verbs than with transitive psych verbs, and 2) more accurate with intransitive psych verbs than with intransitive change of state verbs. Thirty-one English- and eighteen Turkish-speaking learners of intermediate Spanish and a group of twenty native speakers participated in the study. Results of a picture judgment task show that L2 learners are very sensitive to the thematic properties of the two classes.

---

*Friday 9:30 AM**Conference Auditorium***Compound nouns in French-English bilingual children**

Elena Nicoladis, University of Alberta

The purpose of this study was to explore whether level-ordering in compounds could be considered to be an unlearned aspect of linguistic knowledge in child language acquisition (cf. Gordon, 1985). This study compared three- and four-year-old French-English bilingual children's compound formation with that of English monolingual children of the same ages. The results focus on the compound production task, in which children were asked to produce a novel compound describing a silly object composed of two objects that had been previously named. Both irregular and regular plural targets were included in this task. The results showed that the bilingual children were more likely to allow regular plurals in modifying position than the monolingual children. Furthermore, the bilingual children were more likely to make reversal errors in English than monolingual children. These results suggest that level-ordering does not constrain the bilingual children's novel compound production at these ages.

**Of musical hand chairs and linguistic swing**

Kazuko Hiramatsu, William Snyder, University of Connecticut  
Thomas Roeper, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Two important issues in the acquisition of morphology are how children learn whether nominal compounding is productive and, if productive, how they learn which subtypes are permitted. Snyder (1995) has shown that nominal compounding becomes productive 'abruptly' during the acquisition of English. It remains unclear whether children immediately distinguish English from Hungarian-type languages, which exhibit fully productive nominal compounding, yet disallow shape-modifiers. We conducted an elicitation study with children (3;0-5;0) learning English. Children were presented with songs describing novel objects and were asked to provide names for them. The stimuli elicited compounds possible: only in English, in both English and Hungarian, and neither in English nor Hungarian. Most children behaved adult-like, producing appropriate compounds/paraphrases. However, two children provided non-adult responses (head-modifier order) for the shape-modifier items. Our findings are consistent with the existence of a stage during which children learning English have the more restrictive, Hungarian-type grammar for nominal compounding.

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**B R E A K :      1 0 : 3 0 — 1 1 : 0 0**

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**Spatial language without normal spatial cognition:  
Knowledge of spatial prepositions in Williams Syndrome**

Andrea Zukowski, David Schwartz and Barbara Landau,  
University of Delaware

Some researchers have reported odd spatial preposition use by Williams Syndrome (WS) individuals, suggesting a link to abnormal non-linguistic representations of space. We present evidence of striking normalcy in the structure of spatial terms in WS children, suggesting alternate paths of development for spatial cognition and spatial language. We tested knowledge of terms expressing static spatial relationships (*above*, *below*, etc.) in 10 WS children and 10 mental-age-matched controls in both a comprehension and a production task. In comprehension, 8/10 WS children were largely indistinguishable from controls, adhering to axial, distance, and contact preferences associated with the terms. In production, half of the WS children a) produced very few vertical negative terms (e.g., *below*), and b) used some vertical positive terms (e.g., *above*) to describe both positive and negative vertical directions. The remaining WS children, like the controls, produced vertical negative terms much more frequently and almost never misapplied vertical positive terms. This suggests that the acquisition of vertical negative terms may be necessary to highlight the directional component of the earliest vertical terms acquired (which tend to be vertical positive). We suggest that this is likely

to be a normal developmental pattern, and that the WS children may only be delayed at this age. Our results suggest that WS children have acquired much of the information critical to spatial prepositions. Their production errors appear to reflect incomplete acquisition of spatial terms, not a lack of spatial knowledge or a broken architecture.

---

*Friday 11:30 AM*

*Conference Auditorium*

### **Morphology in children with Williams Syndrome**

Yonata Levy, The Hebrew University  
Shulamit Hermon, Sheba Medical Center

Two contradictory claims have been recently proposed to account for the nature of the linguistic abilities that characterize individuals with WS. Karmiloff-Smith et al. (1997) argue that the linguistic knowledge of children with WS is deficient in its rule-based component whereas Clahsen et al. (1998) argue that the computational component of grammar is intact in WS, while the associative component of grammar is deficient. We investigated 10 children with WS, ages 12;8-17;1, MA 5;0-13;4, who are native speakers of Hebrew, on knowledge of morphology. Hebrew has a rich and complex derivational and inflectional morphology and thus offers a way of systematically testing the predictions of the above-mentioned approaches. Our findings suggest that the rule-based, strictly formal parts of the morphological system are relatively preserved, while areas in which an item-by-item learning is required as well as morphological domains that touch upon semantic distinctions are deficient. The findings are discussed in the context of the proposal in Clahsen et al. (1998).

---

*Friday 12:00 NOON*

*Conference Auditorium*

### **Case and agreement in SLI**

Harold Clahsen, University of Essex  
Susanne Bartke, University of Marburg  
Sonja Eisenbeiss, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

Case and Agreement are core components of the computational system of language. Previous studies on SLI in English found that impaired children often produce non-Nom. subjects, e.g., '\*him walk' instead of 'he walks.' The interpretation of these forms is, however, controversial: Are these errors showing genuine case-marking deficits in SLI or are they due to incomplete specifications of finiteness features? In order to tease apart structural case and finiteness marking, we have investigated accusative and dative case (as well as subject-verb agreement) in German children with Specific Language Impairment. We found that case marking and agreement are clearly dissociated in SLI, with agreement being impaired and structural case marking unimpaired. Our results support the view that the non-Nom. subjects in SLI English are tied to impairments of finiteness and are not due to genuine case-marking deficits. Implications for theories of SLI and for linguistic theories of case and agreement will be discussed.

---

*Friday 9:00 AM**Terrace Lounge***Phonologically weak items in abnormal acquisition of French**

Celia Jakubowicz, CNRS, Université Paris 5

Laurie Tuller, Université de Tours

Comparison of language acquisition by SLI children with that of prelinguistically deaf children acquiring oral language offers the possibility of investigating whether distinct etiologies at the base of language impairment give rise to similar or different linguistic symptoms. This study reports the results of elicited production probes of phonologically weak items in the acquisition of French by such children. It is found that these items are not uniformly affected: striking asymmetries between definite determiners, nominative, accusative and reflexive clitics originally found in a previous study of SLI children acquiring French were duplicated in this study of (severely and profoundly) deaf children acquiring French. The results seem to suggest that it is not the case that linguistic symptoms are linked to the etiology of the language deficit. We argue that the patterns of impairment and relative preservation observed here are determined by the complexity of the syntactic computation involved in the more frequently affected items.

---

*Friday 9:30 AM**Terrace Lounge***Children with WMS Syndrome do not show an EOI stage**

Mabel Rice, University of Kansas

Carolyn Mervis, University of Louisville

This investigation is a direct comparison of MLU-matched children with WMS Syndrome, children with Specific Language Impairment, and typically developing children, to determine if the EOI stage evident in SLI is also evident in WMS Syndrome. Spontaneous language samples were analyzed for obligatory uses of past *-ed*, 3rd person *-s*, *be*, *a/the*, plural *-s*, *in/on*, and progressive *-ing*. The WMS group did not show the selective deficit in EOI-related morphology that is characteristic of the SLI group, and instead performed equivalent to the 5-year-old control children. The findings add further support to the conclusion that TNS-marking is part of the linguistic computational system that is not tightly linked to general intelligence.

**Irregular verbs as finiteness markers:  
Acquisition by children with Specific Language Impairment**

Mabel Rice, University of Kansas

Kenneth Wexler, MIT

This is an investigation of tense-marking by young English-speaking children with SLI and two control groups initially matched for age or language level. Irregular and regular forms of past tense were regarded as morphophonological variants of 'spell-out' of finite forms. An experimental elicitation task was administered 7 times over 3 1/2 years. The control groups erred by overgeneralizing irregular forms; the SLI group was more likely to produce a bare stem form for both irregular and regular forms. When the responses were adjusted for attempts to mark finiteness, the percentage correct for irregulars and regular forms were aligned for all three groups of children. Growth curve modeling yielded equivalent models for adjusted finite/irregular forms and regular past tense, suggesting that equivalent mechanisms underlie the surface differences.

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**B R E A K : 1 0 : 3 0 — 1 1 : 0 0**

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**Applying completion entailments to affected objects:  
Advanced problems in the acquisition of the imperfective**

Laura Wagner, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

This study examines children's comprehension of the English progressive and finds that at least one component of its semantics (application of completion entailments to affected objects) is not well understood until age 5. Previous work looking at the completion entailments of grammatical aspect (Weist, 1991; Weist et al., 1997) had found children successfully computing them by age 2;6, but those materials confounded object completion information with agent involvement information. This experiment tests children's comprehension of completion entailments as they apply to the object itself and asks when children understand the process of measuring out an event in terms of an object (cf. Dowty, 1992; Tenny, 1994). A sentence-to-scene matching task that forced children to use object information found chance performance until age 5, but found very sophisticated knowledge of the entailments at that age.

**Passives and implicit arguments in child language**

Maaïke Verrips, Utrecht University

Previous studies have indicated that three-year-old children interpret passives correctly with an implicit argument. Whether they do so because they infer the presence of an agent, or because they have an adultlike syntactic representation, has remained vague. This paper reports an experiment in which children's knowledge of the syntactic properties of implicit arguments is investigated. The results of the experimental study warrant the conclusion that children's passives involve a syntactic implicit argument. Moreover, young children represent implicit arguments overgenerally with anticausative realisations of alternating verbs like *break*.

The account of these overgeneralisations takes the role of the projection principle in acquisition as a starting point. I will argue that retreat takes place on the basis of evidence that is available to Dutch children at a late stage of linguistic development.

**Climb up vs. ascend climbing: Lexicalization choices in expressing motion events with manner and path components**

Seyda Ozcaliskan and Dan I. Slobin,  
University of California, Berkeley

Using descriptions of motion events in picture-elicited narratives, we compare a language with dominant use of path-satellites (English) and one with dominant use of path-verbs (Turkish). Previous research shows cross-typological differences in such descriptions, with early and frequent manner-of-motion description in the first type. The present study demonstrates intra-typological effects. The critical factor is the availability of verbs that conflate path and manner (e.g., *climb*), versus pure path verbs (e.g., *exit*). For scenes which accept such conflated verbs, Turkish speakers encode manner of motion at comparable rates to speakers of path-satellite languages such as English (e.g., 'climb the tree' in both languages, but 'fly out of the hole' in English, versus 'exit the hole' in Turkish). The developmental patterns show an early across-the-board attention to manner in English; in Turkish, single-verb path+manner expressions are used early, but phrasal constructions (e.g., 'exit flying') are rare and late acquisitions.

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**LUNCH BREAK : 12:30 — 2:00**

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*Friday 2:00 PM**Metcalf Hall (Large)*

**Knowing what you know:  
Implicit evidence and the origins of the object-category bias**

Jesse Snedeker and Lila Gleitman, IRCS, University of Pennsylvania

Snedeker, Gleitman, and Brent (1999) argued that the object-category bias could be learned from the input. Since extralinguistic contexts only support the acquisition of object terms, an adaptive learner who could monitor her success should adopt a bias to map words to object concepts. The present study addresses two weaknesses of this argument: 1) we offered no direct evidence that contexts contain information that allows subjects to monitor their performance; and 2) we failed to show that an object-category bias leads to improved performance. In Experiment 1, adults identified words from their extralinguistic contexts in infant-directed speech and rated their certainty. Certainty ratings were higher for correct responses and noun-responses. In Experiment 2, we gave subjects an object-category bias. Performance increased significantly, due to a 40% increase in identification for noun-targets. We conclude that the input provides sufficient information and motivation to create an object-category bias in initially unbiased learners.

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*Friday 2:30 PM**Metcalf Hall (Large)*

**The whole is greater than the sum of the parts:  
An investigation of the object scope principle**

Karen Arnold, Johns Hopkins University  
Kevin Driscoll, Roberta Golinkoff, University of Delaware,  
Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Camille Rocroi, Temple University  
George Hollich, Elizabeth Hennon, Johns Hopkins University

This study investigated a principle of lexical acquisition: object scope (Golinkoff, Mervis & Hirsh-Pasek, 1994; see also whole object assumption, Markman, 1989). Object scope predicts that children attach a novel word to a whole object rather than its parts or attributes. Children from three age groups (12, 18, and 24 months) were tested using the Interactive Intermodal Preferential Looking Paradigm. The experimenter labeled a two-part object while taking it apart and putting it together. Ambiguity was maintained as to the label's referent. Children were tested on the whole object versus one of its parts, and asked for the labeled object. Look times to the whole object were significantly greater than look times to the part; a non-label control showed that this effect was label-driven. Only older children showed evidence of attaching a distracter label to the part. Thus, initial word learning is indeed guided by the principle of object scope.

**Distinguishing count nouns from adjectives:  
Evidence from 14-month-olds' word extension**

Sandra R. Waxman and Amy Booth,  
Northwestern University

Early in lexical acquisition, novel words highlight object categories. Moreover, by 14 months, infants have begun to distinguish between novel words presented as count nouns versus adjectives, and their expectations for novel words accord with this emerging distinction (Waxman, 1999). However, this interpretation is based entirely on novelty-preference tasks. In the experiments reported here, we go one step further, examining infants' specific expectations using a new word-extension paradigm. Results reveal that 14-month-olds can indeed make reliable choices in a word-extension task, that they have begun to distinguish between novel words presented as nouns versus adjectives, and that they actively recruit this emerging distinction when extending novel words. These results converge well with evidence from novelty-preference tasks, indicating that an expectation linking count nouns to object categories emerges early in acquisition, perhaps before those for other grammatical forms, and that this early link supports the emergence of other word-world mappings.

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**B R E A K :      3 : 3 0 — 4 : 0 0**

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**Japanese syntax facilitates children's acquisition  
of names for animals**

Hanako Yoshida and Linda B. Smith, Indiana University

Children learn names for objects rapidly. These names of objects are likely learned from parents' labeling and pointing. In this talk, I present evidence that the language itself influences the way and the rate at which children learn new names of new objects. Many studies show that two- to three-year-old early word learners generalize objects' names systematically as well as differently for different kinds of things (e.g., animates versus inanimates.) Are these generalizations dependent on the lexical items the child already knows or on the linguistic structure of the language in which those lexical items occur? Young children's (20- to 38-month-olds) generalizations of artifacts versus animate-like objects were examined in children learning Japanese and children learning English. The study shows that the Japanese speakers learn animal terms earlier and are more sensitive to animate-like objects. These results support the idea that language structure plays a role in language learning.

**Learning to learn words:  
A cross-linguistic study of the shape and material biases**  
Eliana Colunga, Indiana University

Young children generalize words in systematic ways. They generalize names for solid things by shape and names for non-solid things by material. Where do these biases come from? A possible source is the correlation between perception and language. In this paper I look at the correlational structure in children's early words that could support shape and material biases for both English and Japanese speakers. I then present a simple connectionist network trained on vocabularies following this correlational structure to show how these correlations could create word-learning biases. I show how both the universals and the subtle differences in the way English- and Japanese-speaking children generalize names for solid and non-solid things can be accounted for by the correlational nature of the categories and the early words in both languages.

**The emergence of kind concepts in infancy:  
A neo-Whorfian perspective**

Fei Xu, Northeastern University

Several researchers have argued in recent years that a weak form of the Whorfian hypothesis may be sustained in certain areas of cognitive development. The present study investigates the impact of labeling on infants' representations of kind concepts such as *dog* and *cup*. Previous studies suggest that infants are not able to use object kind information in object individuation tasks until about 12 months of age. In three experiments, we explore how language may play a causal role in the process of constructing kind concepts. Using the Xu & Carey (1996) paradigm, we found that 1) the presence of distinct labels allows 9-month-old infants to succeed on this task earlier, both with familiar and unfamiliar objects and labels, and 2) the facilitation effects may be language-specific.

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*Friday 2:00 PM**Conference Auditorium***The development of early spatial morphology  
in Nicaraguan Sign Language**

Ann Senghas, Barnard College

A new sign language has emerged within a young Deaf community in Nicaragua over the past two decades. By comparing native signers from the community's first cohort (now adults) to its second cohort (now adolescents), we can examine the process of language nativization. As sign languages universally have spatial morphology systems for expressing semantic roles (Supalla, 1995), we expect spatial contrasts to emerge in NSL. The present study compares the interpretation of left-right contrasts by first- and second-cohort signers. In a signed comprehension task, second-cohort signers (but not first-cohort signers) treated the side to which a sign was produced as a meaningful, contrastive feature, making an unambiguous assignment of semantic roles possible. These findings complement patterns observed in sign production (Senghas, Coppola, Newport, & Supalla, 1997). Thus, the second cohort has reanalyzed spatial contrasts to form a stricter, narrower system in which arguments' semantic roles are specified more precisely.

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*Friday 2:30 PM**Conference Auditorium***Adults gesture in an ergative pattern  
when asked to 'talk' with their hands**

Elif Yalabik, University of Chicago

Lisa Gershkoff-Stowe, Carnegie Mellon University

Susan Goldin-Meadow, University of Chicago

Deaf children whose hearing loss prevents them from making use of spoken language and whose hearing parents have not exposed them to conventional sign language use gestures to communicate. Moreover, these gestures have many, although not all, of the properties of conventional language systems. We focus here on one of these properties—the ergative-like structure found in the gesture sentences created by deaf children of hearing parents in both the United States and China. We ask whether adults, requested to use gesture and not words to communicate, adhere to the same ergative patterns as the deaf children—*esp*ite the fact that they are adults and not children, and the fact that they already have a language, English, which is not ergative. We found that the adults' gesture-production probability patterns resembled the deaf children's, suggesting that the ergative pattern is not unique to child language-creators.

**Creolization effects in Native Esperanto**

Benjamin Bergen,  
University of California, Berkeley  
International Computer Science Institute

The artificial language Esperanto is spoken not only as a second language, but also as a native language by children of its proponents. The present study is a preliminary description of some characteristics of the Native Esperanto (NE) of a small number of speakers. It is the first of its kind—previous works on NE are either theoretical treatises or individual case studies. We find, at least for the eight subjects studied, both bilingualism and nativization effects. Among these effects are the loss or modification of the accusative case, which runs opposite to Versteegh's (1993) predictions, and the attrition of the tense/aspect system, to a state with less formal expressive potential than predicted by Bickerton (1985) as the minimal structure specified by the bioprogram. Explanations for these results, including bilingualism, creolization, and nativization effects, are proffered.

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**B R E A K : 3 : 3 0 — 4 : 0 0****Linguistic constraints on child code-mixing:  
Evidence from English-Inuktitut bilinguals**

Fred Genesee, McGill University  
Shanley Allen, Sarah Fish, Boston University  
Martha Crago, McGill University

Code-mixing is well attested in children who acquire two languages simultaneously, but there is limited and contradictory evidence concerning the structural properties of their mixing. Meisel (1994) reported no evidence of constraints in the code-mixing of 2 German-French bilingual children (1;4-3;1 yrs), while Lanza (1997) reported evidence of constraints in the code-mixing of one Norwegian-English bilingual child (2;0-2;7 yrs). The present study examined this issue further with 6 children (1;8-3;9 yrs) acquiring English and Inuktitut simultaneously. English-Inuktitut bilinguals are an interesting case because these languages are typologically distinct—English is isolating with SVO word order, while Inuktitut is polysynthetic with SOV word order—and thus offer maximal opportunity for divergence in surface structures. Analyses of 500 instances of code-mixed utterances by these Inuktitut-English children, based on Poplack's (1980) framework, indicate that their code-mixing exhibited linguistic constraints, but that the constraints proposed by Poplack did not hold for certain types of mixing in these English-Inuktitut data.

**Root infinitives, object omissions and object clitics**

Natascha Müller and Aafke Hulk,  
Universität Hamburg,  
Universiteit van Amsterdam

Bilingual children who are exposed to two languages from birth have been shown to separate the two languages from early on (Gawlitzeck-Maiwald & Tracy, 1996; Genesee, 1989; Dehouwer, 1990; Hulk, 1997; Meisel, 1989; Müller, 1993). Nonetheless the two languages are in contact and may have some influence on each other (Gawlitzeck-Maiwald & Tracy, 1996; Hulk, 1997; Hulk & van der Linden, 1996/1998; Müller, 1997; Müller, Hulk & Jakubowicz, 1999).

In this paper we will argue that crosslinguistic influence is likely to occur when the input in language A generally allows for more than one grammatical analysis and the input of language B contains positive evidence for one of those possible analyses. We will discuss data from bilingual French/Dutch, French/German and Italian/German children which show influence of the Germanic language on the Romance language. The grammatical domains we will study are the following: root infinitives, object drop and object pronouns. We will defend the hypothesis that in the cases we consider here the influence of the Germanic language on the Romance one is indirect.

**Imperatives in bilingual child Icelandic-English**

Ute Bohnacker, Lund University

I longitudinally investigate the acquisition of imperatives in a bilingual Icelandic-English child ('K') and present data on the interaction of parental input and child production. The syntax of imperative constructions in the two languages differs considerably: English imperative verbs don't raise and typically have no overt subject; Icelandic, being a verb-raising language, has verb-initial (V1) imperatives with enclitic subject, with the verb in CP. Compared with data from two monolingual Icelandic peers, bilingual K shows a marked delay in acquiring V1 imperatives. From 1;10-2;11, she exclusively uses a novel imperative construction with unraised infinitival verb; during 2;11-4;7, some targetlike V1 imperatives occur, but nontargetlike constructions predominate and don't die away. I discuss 'Optional Infinitive' explanations, but argue against them. Instead, I suggest that K's Icelandic infinitival imperative construction is transferred from English early on, where the uninflected verb doesn't raise but remains in VP. Ensuing issues of (de)learnability are discussed.

Friday 2:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

**Is thematic-verb raising inevitable in the acquisition  
of a nonnative language?**

Boping Yuan, University of Cambridge

The study reported in this paper examines thematic-verb raising in L2 acquisition of Chinese by French- and English-speaking learners. Both English and Chinese are non-verb-raising languages, whereas French is a verb-raising language. The findings in the study disconfirm the relevant hypotheses in the L2 literature and provide robust evidence that thematic-verb raising is not inevitable in the L2 acquisition. Thematic verbs are found to remain in situ in the L2 Chinese of not only English-speaking learners but also French-speaking learners, and no optionality occurs at any proficiency levels. These findings are accounted for in terms of availability of verbal features. As inflectional morphology generally does not transfer from L1 to L2, and as features of verbal inflection are evidently non-existent in Chinese, any raising of verbs at PF in Chinese would be unmotivated and there would be no suitable functional heads to accommodate the raised verb.

Friday 2:30 PM

Terrace Lounge

**Necessity in grammatical design and L2 acquisition:  
Quantifier-tense interactions in English-French interlanguage**

Laurent Dekydtspotter, Rex A. Sprouse, and Allison Leininger,  
Indiana University

Example (1) allows a construal of *célèbre* as either the individuals famous at the speech time or the individuals famous in 1960, while (2) allows only the latter construal.

- (1) Qui de célèbre fumait au bistro en 1960?  
who of famous smoked at the bar in 1960
- (2) Qui fumait de célèbre au bistro en 1960?

We explain the requirement that restrictions in discontinuous quantification take narrowest scope (de Swart, 1992; Honcoop, 1998) in terms of Full Interpretation and Greed. Intermediate and Advanced English-French L2ers' acceptance rate of speech time answers to discontinuous questions was significantly lower than in continuous questions, but not their acceptance of past time answers to discontinuous versus continuous questions. This poses a learnability problem for (adult) English-French learners, unless L2 acquisition is constrained by design principles barring superfluous operations and representations in precisely the relevant sense.

**Differential effects of attrition in the L1 syntax of near-native L2 speakers**

Antonella Sorace, University of Edinburgh

The phenomenon of residual optionality in L2 endstates can in many cases be attributed to the persistent influence of the L1 on the L2. While it has been observed that there can be effects in the opposite direction, leading to emerging optionality in the L1 syntax, these effects have seldom been investigated within the framework of linguistic theory. Optionality in the L1, like optionality in the L2 endstate grammar, is not found across the board: certain features seem to be more vulnerable to change than others. The hypothesis put forward in this paper is that this differential effect reflects the formal distinction between 'interpretable' features, that is, those which make an essential contribution to meaning, and features which are only relevant to morphosyntax (Chomsky, 1995). More specifically, the proposal is that interpretable features are more susceptible to attrition than non-interpretable features. This paper will focus on the changes in the L1 grammar of speakers of null subject languages after prolonged exposure to English, resulting in (a) the overproduction of overt subjects, and (b) the overproduction of preverbal subjects.

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**B R E A K :      3 : 3 0 — 4 : 0 0****Misplacement of clitics in delayed language**Arhonto Terzi, Technological Educational Institute of Patras  
Kakia Petinou, University of Cyprus

Cypriot Greek clitics are postverbal in finite contexts but must precede the verb if a head (M(ood) or Neg(ation)) is present. We compared two fraternal twins, age 4;5, one with language delay (SLI). We found that M was missing in 35% of the SLI child's subjunctive sentences while the inappropriate negative marker was used in 33% of her negative sentences. Clitics were always postverbal in her speech in a unique instance of clitic misplacement.

We consider postverbal clitics the result of V-to-F movement (F a head above Agr/Tense) not taking place when N or Neg move to F (Uriagereka, 1995; Terzi, 1999). We argue that M and Neg above are underspecified, hence across the board V-to-F. Our analysis explains why clitic misplacement is not attested in Italian or Standard Greek-type languages and argues for the presence of F (see Wexler, 1996 and Guasti, 1993 for Tense and Agr).

## Deviant verb-placement and the Split-CP hypothesis

Manuela Schönenberger, University of Stuttgart

The two children of my study often produce non-target consistent verb-placement in embedded clauses:

- (1) a.% complementizer  $V_{fin}$  atonic subject-pronoun/DP-subject ...  
 b.% complementizer atonic subject-pronoun/\*DP-subject  $V_{fin}$  ...
- (2) a.% ... wh  $V_{fin}$  ...  
 b.% ... relative *wo*  $V_{fin}$  ...

The children adopt verb-movement in (1) because they analyse complementizers as containing only features of illocutionary force, whereas in the target-grammar complementizers are associated not only with illocutionary force but also with finiteness. Rather than base-generating the complementizer in  $Fin^{\circ}$  with subsequent complementizer-movement into  $Force^{\circ}$ , they base-generate complementizers in  $Force^{\circ}$  and move the finite verb into  $Fin^{\circ}$ . In wh-complements and relative-clauses verb-movement always results in the order in (2). Crucially, atonic subject-pronouns never intervene between the finite verb and the subordinator, indicating that the finite verb moves past  $Fin^{\circ}$  to  $Force^{\circ}$ . Verb-movement in (2) is taken to be triggered by the wh-criterion and relative-criterion.

## Variation and continuity in language acquisition: An analysis of early child German and French

William Earl Griffin, University of Texas at Austin

This work outlines a minimalist approach to the problem of language specific and crosslinguistic variation in children's early syntactic development. Formulated within Radford's (1996) Structure-building approach and Clahsen, Eisenbeiss and Penke's (1996) Lexical Learning Hypothesis, I propose two principles which may account for the observations of Poeppel and Wexler (1993), including the [ $\pm$ Finite] verb distinction, and additional facts including the parallel acquisition of grammatical subjects and subject-verb agreement, the difference in the use of overt subjects with finite and non-finite verbs, the presence of matrix infinitive constructions, the initial position of (finite) modals and auxiliaries, and the absence of lexical complementizers, facts which are not explained by previous analyses of early child German. In addition, I show how the analysis may be extended to account for the observations of Weissenborn (1992) which shows that children learning French use subject-verb agreement and overt subjects with greater frequency than their same-aged counterparts learning German.

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

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ELISSA NEWPORT

University of Rochester

INNATELY CONSTRAINED LEARNING: BLENDING OLD  
AND NEW APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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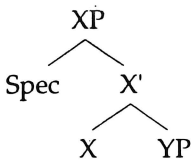
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Reception to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)

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*Saturday 9:30 AM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***Infants' listening preference: Baby talk or happy talk?**

Leher Singh and James L. Morgan, Brown University

When addressing infants, speakers adopt a special speech register termed infant-directed speech (IDS) or baby talk (BT). BT contains prosodic features commonly associated with positive affect. Therefore, infants' observed preference for BT over adult-directed speech (ADS) might represent a general bias towards positive affect. The present study aimed to identify the underlying basis for BT preference by isolating affective and speech-register components of BT. Using a headturn preference procedure, when preference for register was measured while affective valence was controlled, no evidence of BT preference was found. Next, preferences for affect (positive and neutral) within registers were measured. Results showed a preference for positive affect, independent of register. Finally, preference for affect across register was tested, revealing a significant preference for happy ADS over neutral BT speech. Thus, BT preference can be generated or extinguished by manipulating affect.

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*Saturday 10:00 AM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***Evidence for use of phrasal packaging  
by English-learning 9-month-olds**Melanie Soderstrom and Peter Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University  
Deborah Kemler Nelson, Swarthmore College

To speak and understand language, learners must discover the elementary units of meaning and how they are ordered to convey meaningful messages. Previous studies indicate that prosodic marking of clausal units affects how infants encode and remember speech. Yet, discovering the syntactic organization of utterances requires that the learner determine how units within clauses are organized. English-learning 9-month-olds are sensitive to prosodic marking of phrasal units within clauses (Jusczyk et al., 1992). The current study explores whether infants use such prosodic marking of phrasal units in processing and remembering speech. Using the Headturn Preference Procedure, 9-month-olds were familiarized with two target sequences—a prosodically well-formed phrasal unit and a sequence of ill-formed phrasal fragments. During the test phase, infants listened significantly longer to passages with the prosodically well-formed target sequence. Our findings provide the first evidence that 9-month-olds use prosodic information in on-line segmentation of speech into phrasal units.

**The influence of focusing stress on infants' recognition  
of words in fluent speech**

Heather Bortfeld and James L. Morgan, Brown University

In a series of studies, we examine how natural prosodic marking of the given/new distinction influences infants' use of speech rhythm in identifying multisyllabic words. Two groups of 24 English-exposed infants (7 and 10 months of age) were tested on their ability to detect familiarized disyllabic words in fluent speech. Stimuli were chosen based on acoustic analyses and independent ratings of the given/new stress present in naturally produced infant-directed speech (Bortfeld & Morgan, 1998). Stimuli consisted of English target words (for familiarization sessions) and sentences (for testing sessions). A key manipulation between experiments was the age of infants. Within each experiment, familiarization items carried either all given or all new stress, or alternated between the two. Overall, listening times were higher for new-stressed stimuli across both ages, reflecting the superior attention-attracting and maintaining qualities of new-stressed words. Earlier acoustic analyses indicate that mothers alternate consistently between new and given stress when speaking to infants; we discuss this finding in terms of distributed learning.

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**B R E A K :      1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0**

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**When young children name artifacts by their functions:  
Effects of the plausibility of structure/function relations**

Deborah G. Kemler Nelson and Elizabeth Blair, Swarthmore College

When does the current use of an artifact reliably reveal its intended function, and hence its name? If intended, the current function should provide a compelling explanation of the object's structural features. Four-year-old children are sensitive to the plausibility of structure/function relations in using functional information to name novel artifacts. After the functional demonstration of an artifact, children generalized the name either to a similar-appearing, but dysfunctional object or a functional, but less similar-appearing object. In a plausible-function condition, the demonstrated functions were those for which the objects were designed. In an implausible-function condition, they provided less compelling explanations of objects' structures. Children selected the same-function object 86% of the time in the plausible-function condition and only 47% of the time in the implausible-function condition. This may also help resolve discrepant reports of whether preschoolers privilege function when they name.

**Young children are sensitive to how an object was created  
when deciding what to name it**

Paul Bloom, Yale University  
Susan Gelman, University of Michigan

How do children apply names for human-made artifacts, words such as *knife*, *toy*, and *painting*? There is considerable debate over the relative contribution of factors such as shape, current function, and intended function. We address this issue by showing 3-year-olds, 5-year-olds, and adults a series of simple objects and asking them for each: 'What is this?' In one condition, the objects were described as purposefully created; in another, the objects were described as being created by accident. This manipulation had a significant effect on the subjects' responses—subjects were more likely to provide artifact names (e.g., 'a knife') when they believed the objects were intentionally created. This result supports a theory of artifact naming and categorization in which intuitions about design and intent play an important role.

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**SATURDAY MORNING: SESSION B CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM**

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Saturday 9:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

**Missing case inflection:  
Implications for second language acquisition**

Ayse Gürel, McGill University

It has been proposed that the optional use of verbal inflection does not reflect the absence of functional projections in L2 grammar (Lardiere, 1998; Prévost & White, to appear). The present study investigates this claim in the acquisition of the Turkish (L2) Case system. In current syntactic theory, abstract Case checking and the projection of a syntactic functional category are two closely related phenomena. For example, Nominative and Accusative Cases are realized under the functional projections, AgrSP AgrOP, respectively.

This study investigates the relationship between the acquisition of Case inflection (nominative, accusative, dative, genitive) and the emergence of associated functional projections and related word order restrictions in L2 Turkish. Results show that case morphology is omitted despite L2 knowledge of word order restrictions and the presence of syntactic projections. This suggests that the variable use of inflection is not a problem with syntactic representation but rather with surface morphological realization.

**L2 acquisition of Spanish DPs:  
Evidence against failed features**

Lydia White, McGill University  
Joyce L.S. Bruhn de Garavito, University of Western Ontario

Current research on interlanguage (IL) representation focuses on functional categories, investigating the extent to which IL grammars diverge from the L2. According to the Failed Features Hypothesis (FFH) (Hawkins, 1998), L2 learners are 'stuck' with L1 features. According to the Local Impairment Hypothesis (LIH) (Beck, 1998; Eubank et al., 1997), feature strength is permanently inert, resulting in word order variability. We report on production data relating to DPs, elicited from speakers of a [+gender] [+strong NUM] L1 (French) learning a [+gender] [+strong NUM] L2 (Spanish). According to FFH, such learners should have no difficulties with gender. According to LIH, they should exhibit variable noun adjective order. Results show that word order was always correct (contra LIH) but there were problems with gender agreement (contra FFH). Our results suggest that feature strength is robust in the IL but that learners (regardless of L1) have problems mapping between surface forms and underlying abstract features.

**Ça on fait pas! On the L2-acquisition of French by two  
young children with different source languages**

Adriana Belletti, University of Siena  
Cornelia Hamann, University of Geneva

Two young children with Italian and German as source languages were studied longitudinally in their acquisition of French. Two hypotheses were investigated. (A) Early child L2- and L1-acquisition pattern alike in showing a phase of subject omission (O-S) and root infinitives (RI) (White, 1996; Prévost, 1997). (B) There is a first phase of L1-transfer (Schwartz, 1997). Our findings seem (partially) in favor of hypothesis (B).

First, O-S and RIs are absent in either child's French. Where they occur, L2-RIs differ from L1-infinitives. Second, the German child shows transfer of the OV/VO parameter and the analysis of pronouns.

We investigate the puzzle that English children should behave like L1-learners with respect to RIs, O-S and clitic pronouns whereas these two children don't (cf. Hulk, 1997 for Dutch). We also ask why there is no transfer of the null-subject parameter. We look for the answers in possible L1-analyses for the L2-input and in the markedness value of different parametrical choices.

*Saturday 11:30 AM*

*Conference Auditorium*

**Listening ahead: Repetition enhances infants' ability  
to recognize words in fluent speech**

Anne Fernald, Stanford University  
Gerald McRoberts, Lehigh University

In ID-speech adults often use a repetitive 'slot-and-frame' format with new information added in a predictable location (e.g., *Can you see the dog? Can you see the kitty?*) We hypothesized that redundancy in carrier phrases across utterances would enable infants to recognize familiar words more quickly and accurately. The reliability and time course of comprehension were assessed by tracking infants' eye movements as they looked at pictures in response to spoken words. In three experiments, 18-month-old infants (n=144) were presented with familiar target words either in a fixed carrier phrase or in carrier phrases that varied across trials. Infants who heard target words in a repeated frame were faster and more accurate than infants who heard target words in varying frames. Infants may benefit from the repetitiveness of ID-speech because processing demands are reduced when a predictable frame allows them to listen ahead for the focused word in the 'slot.'

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*Saturday 12:00 NOON*

*Conference Auditorium*

**Incremental referentiality-based language processing in young  
children: Evidence from eye movement monitoring**

Julie Sedivy, Katherine Demuth, Gitana Chunyo and Shelby Freedman,  
Brown University

Very little research to date has investigated the properties of on-line language processing in children. In this paper we report experimental work with 5-8 year-olds using a temporally-sensitive experimental paradigm which monitors the subjects' eye movements to a visual display in response to simple spoken instructions. Work with adult populations in this paradigm has demonstrated that adults interpret referential expressions in an incremental manner, assigning expressions to referents in the visual display rapidly on the basis of incoming speech rather than waiting for complete constituents to accrue before attempting semantic interpretation. Our experimental results show that children similarly show evidence of incremental semantic interpretation. The eye monitoring paradigm used in this study shows sufficient sensitivity for studying fine-grained temporal aspects of language processing in children. Potential applications of this methodology for studying ambiguity resolution and anaphora interpretation will be discussed.

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*Saturday 9:30 AM**Terrace Lounge*

**Temporal dependencies:  
Complement and relative clauses compared**  
Bart Hollebrandse, University of Massachusetts, Amherst

This paper focuses on the restrictions on interpretation of temporal dependencies between matrix clauses and relative clauses (1a) and matrix clauses and their complement (1b).

- (1) a. Koekiemonster raakte een olifant aan die op een bordje stond.  
'Cookie Monster touched an elephant that was on a plate.'  
b. Koekiemonster zei dat de olifant op een bordje stond.  
'Cookie Monster said that the elephant was on a plate.'

Hollebrandse (1998) argues that for Dutch children up to 5 complement clauses are temporally independent of their matrix clauses. This paper provides further support for this claim, based on experimental results on relative clauses. The paper further argues for two tense-linking systems: a discourse and a syntactic one (Sequence of Tense). Children initially only use the discourse system.

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*Saturday 10:00 AM**Terrace Lounge*

**Children's knowledge of the grammar of  
restrictive relative clauses**  
Cathy Fragman and Helen Goodluck, University of Ottawa

Using an act-out task we find that 3-5 year old children differentiate between proper names and full NPs as heads of English relative clauses introduced by *that*, a distinction that argues that they are aware of the block on proper names as heads of restrictive relatives, and that *that* relatives are restrictive. Children are less prone than adults to be biased to take the linearly closest noun as antecedent of the relative clause. We propose that our data can best be integrated with the existing literature on children's knowledge of relative clause constructions by assuming an adult-like grammar on the child's part, operating in conjunction with an immature parser.

**Functional *wh* and the acquisition facts:  
The relation between weak crossover and quantified question  
asymmetries in child language**

John Lewis, McGill University

Chierchia (1991,1993) observes that a question such as (1a), under the pair-list reading, can be assigned the semantics in (1b), or equivalently (1c), and that this leads naturally to a weak crossover account of the absence of such a reading for questions like (2a). The account predicts that *wh*-quantifier asymmetries should pattern together with weak crossover.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>(1) a) <i>Who does everyone love?</i><br/>         b) which <i>f</i> is such that for everyone<sub><i>e</i></sub>, <i>x</i> loves <i>f</i>(<i>x</i>)<br/>         c) for which <i>f</i>: everyone<sub><i>e</i></sub>, [<i>x</i> loves <i>f</i>(<i>x</i>)]<br/>         d) [<sub>CP</sub> who<sub><i>i</i></sub>, [<sub>IP</sub> everyone<sub><i>e</i></sub>, [<sub>IP</sub> <i>t<sub>i</sub></i> love [<sub>TP</sub> <i>e</i><sup>PRO</sup> ] ] ] ]</p> | <p>(2) a) <i>Who loves everyone?</i><br/>         b) which <i>f</i> is such that for everyone<sub><i>e</i></sub>, <i>f</i>(<i>x</i>) loves <i>x</i><br/>         c) for which <i>f</i>: everyone<sub><i>e</i></sub>, [<i>f</i>(<i>x</i>) loves <i>x</i>]<br/>         d) [<sub>CP</sub> who<sub><i>i</i></sub>, [<sub>IP</sub> everyone<sub><i>e</i></sub>, [<sub>IP</sub> [<sub>TP</sub> <i>t<sub>i</sub></i> <i>e</i><sup>PRO</sup> ] ] love <i>t<sub>i</sub></i> ] ] ]</p> |
|--|---|

Drawing on the initial absence of weak crossover effects in child language (Thornton, 1990), an acquisition study was designed to investigate that prediction. A composite experiment targeted both knowledge of weak crossover and of the availability of pair-list readings for quantified *wh*-subject questions, like (2a). The findings were consistent with Chierchia's proposal in that children who lacked knowledge of weak crossover also failed to show the adult pair-list asymmetry; however, some children showed knowledge of weak crossover, but not of the adult pair-list asymmetry.

**B R E A K :      1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0**

**Language acquisition from variable input:  
Differences between parameter setting and lexical acquisition**

Alison Henry, John Wilson, Sile Harrington and Cathy Finlay,  
University of Ulster at Jordanstown

This paper reports the results of a major three year study of the acquisition of English in Belfast, focusing on what happens when children are exposed to 'variable input', that is, alternate settings for parameters, or two lexical items for the same concept. Our findings show that where alternate parameter settings are involved, children from the onset of output of constructions which exemplify the settings use both, suggesting that there are no 'default' parameter settings and that both are equally 'easy' in acquisition terms. Moreover, the children closely reflect in their output the proportion of use they hear in input. We show however that where purely lexical variation is involved, there is an initial one-form-one-meaning preference, and where two forms are acquired, their usage does not reflect that in input.

**Some notes on the null object phenomenon in child Spanish**

Hanako Fujino, Sophia University  
Tetsuya Sano, Meiji Gakuin University

In this paper, we show that there is a null object stage (25-45%) in child Spanish, in contrast to child English (0-10%), although adult Spanish prohibits null objects. The shift to the non-null object stage coincides with the acquisition of clitic pronouns. Also, there is a 'trade-off' between null objects and clitics. We checked if the object of obligatorily transitive verbs was a lexical NP, a clitic, or null. When the null object stage and the non-null object stage are compared, the rate of lexical NP objects remains about the same (50-60%). This means that children at the null object stage realize lexical NP's as much as they do in the adult grammar. Objects are dropped only when they are pronominal. Thus, following the methodology in Hyams and Wexler (1993), we argue that the Spanish null object phenomenon is grammatical in the sense that it is not caused by processing overload.

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**LUNCH BREAK : 12 : 30 — 2 : 00**

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(pending approval)

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## LUNCHTIME SYMPOSIUM

**Metcalf Hall (Large): 12:45 - 1:45**

**Attention to Multiple Interactive Cues  
Offers Insights for Language Researchers  
(or)**

**Why Each Blind Man Saw Only Part of the Elephant**

Psycholinguistics has a long history of adopting myopic solutions to the complex problem of language acquisition. Though many pay lip service to interactive theories of development, most explain language growth through appeal to nativistic, or social or cognitive sources of information. We attempt to break the mold by proposing an integrative approach to the study of language development. Children construct language as they differentially attend to and integrate multiple sources of information over time. It is in the interaction of cues that children discover reliable ways to segment the sound stream, build categories of knowledge, and map words and grammar onto objects, action and events. This approach might appear to be less than parsimonious. Yet, the presenters will demonstrate how hybrid approaches to the study of language better account for the ways in which young children process their input and learn their native tongue.

Discussant: Lois Bloom, Columbia University

Peter W. Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University  
*Using multiple cues to segment words*

Lisa Gershkoff-Stowe, Carnegie Mellon University  
*Category knowledge as an activity-dependent and environmentally embedded process*

Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Temple University  
Roberta Golinkoff, University of Delaware  
George Hollich, Johns Hopkins University  
*The emergentist coalition model of word learning*

**Unfortunately, we are unable to provide lunch;  
however, symposium attendees are welcome to bring their own.**

**All conference attendees are welcome.**

# FRIDAY, November 5th

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

## Session A

## Session B

## Session C

Metcalf Hall (Large)

Conference Auditorium

Terrace Lounge

9:00	SCHAFER, R.; ROEPER, T.: The role of the expletive in the acquisition of a discourse anaphor	MONTRUL, S.: Transitivity alternations with causative psych verbs in L2 Spanish	JAKUBOWICZ, C.; TULLER, L.: Phonologically weak items in abnormal acquisition of French
9:30	BECKER, M.: The acquisition of the English copula	NICOLADIS, E.: Compound nouns in French-English bilingual children	RICE, M.; MERVIS, C.: Children with WMS Syndrome do not show an EOI stage
10:00	DRENHAUS, H.: From head to adjunct: Evidence from the acquisition of German ditransitive verbs	HIRAMATSU, K.; SNYDER, W.; ROEPER, T.: Of musical hand chairs and linguistic swing	RICE, M.; WEXLER, K.: Irregular verbs as finiteness markers: Acquisition by children with specific language impairment
10:30	B r e a k		
11:00	LUST, B.; BATTIN, D.; FOLEY, C.; KOEHNE, A.; WHITE, K.: On the acquisition of an indefinite determiner: Evidence for unselective binding	ZUKOWSKI, A.; SCHWARTZ, B.; LANDAU, B.: Spatial language without normal spatial cognition: Knowledge of spatial prepositions in Williams Syndrome	WAGNER, L.: Applying completion entailments to affected objects: Advanced problems in the acquisition of the imperfective
11:30	SCHAFER, R.; DE VILLIERS, J.: Imagining articles: What <i>a</i> and <i>the</i> can tell us about the emergence of DP	LEVY, Y.; HERMON, S.: Morphology in children with Williams Syndrome	VERRIPS, M.: Passives and implicit arguments in child language
12:00	AVRUTIN, S.; COOPMANS, P.: Children who build bridges	CLAHSEN, H.; BARTKE, S.; EISENBEISS, S.: Case and agreement in SLI	OZCALISKAN, S.; SLOBIN, D.: Climb up vs. ascend climbing: Lexicalization choices in expressing motion events with manner and path components

Lunch Break: 12:30 — 2:00

2:00	SNEDEKER, J.; GLEITMAN, L.: Knowing what you know: Implicit evidence and the origins of the object-category bias	SENGHAS, A.: The development of early spatial morphology in Nicaraguan Sign Language	YUAN, B.: Is thematic-verb raising inevitable in the acquisition of a nonnative language?
2:30	ARNOLD, K.; GOLINKOFF, R.; HIRSH-PASEK, K.; DRISCOLL, K.; ROCKOI, C.; HOLLICI, G.; HENNON, E.: The whole is greater than the sum of the parts: Investigating the object scope principle	YALABIK, E.; GERSHKOFF-STOWE, L.; GOLDIN-MEADOW, S.: Adults gesture in an ergative pattern when asked to talk with their hands	DEKYDTPOTTER, L.; SPROUSE, R.; LEININGER, A.: Necessity in grammatical design and L2 acquisition: Quantifier-tense interactions in English-French interlanguage
3:00	WAXMAN, S.; BOOTH, A.: Distinguishing count nouns from adjectives: Evidence from 14-month-olds' word extension	BERGEN, B.: Creolization effects in Native Esperanto	SORACE, A.: Differential effects of attrition in the L1 syntax of near-native L2 speakers
B r e a k			
3:30	YOSHIDA, H.; SMITH, L.: Japanese syntax facilitates children's acquisition of names for animals	GENESE, F.; ALLEN, S.; FISH, S.; CRAGO, M.: Linguistic constraints on child code-mixing	TERZI, A.; PETINOU, K.: Misplacement of clitics in delayed language
4:00	COLUNGA, E.: Learning to learn words: A cross-linguistic study of the shape and material biases	MÜLLER, N.; HULK, A.: Crosslinguistic influence in bilingual children: Root infinitives, object omissions, and object clitics	SCHÖNENBERGER, M.: Deviant verb-placement and the split-CP hypothesis
5:00	Xu, F.: The emergence of kind concepts in infancy: A neo-Whorfian perspective	BOHNACKER, U.: Imperatives in bilingual child Icelandic-English	GRIFFIN, W.: Variation and continuity in language acquisition: An analysis of early child German and French

8:00 P.M. METCALF HALL (LARGE) KEYNOTE ADDRESS

ELISSA NEWPORT, University of Rochester  
*Innately constrained learning: Blending old and new approaches to language acquisition*  
 Sherry Reception to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)

# SATURDAY, November 6th

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

## Session A

Metcalf Hall (Large)

## Session B

Conference Auditorium

## Session C

Terrace Lounge

9:30	SINGH, L.; MORGAN, J.: Infants' listening preference: Baby talk or happy talk?	GÜREL, A.: Missing case inflection: Implications for second language acquisition	HOLLEBRANDSE, B.: Temporal dependencies: Complement and relative clauses compared
10:00	SODERSTROM, M.; JUSCZYK, P.; KEMLER NELSON, D.: Evidence for use of phrasal packaging by English-learning 9-month-olds	WHITE, L.; BRUHN DE GARAVITO, J.: L2 acquisition of Spanish DPs: Evidence against failed features	FRAGMAN, C.; GOODLUCK, H.: Children's knowledge of restrictive relative clauses
10:30	BORTFELD, H.; MORGAN, J.: The influence of focusing stress on infants' recognition of words in fluent speech	BELLETTI, A.; HAMANN, C.: Ça on fait pas! On the L2-acquisition of French by two young children with different source languages	LEWIS, J.: Functional WH and the acquisition facts: The relation between weak crossover and quantified question asymmetries in child language
11:00	B r e a k		
11:30	KEMLER NELSON, D.; BLAIR, E.: When young children name artifacts by their functions: Effects of the plausibility of structure/function relations	FERNALD, A.; MCROBERTS, G.: Listening ahead: How repetition enhances infants' ability to recognize words in fluent speech	HENRY, A.; WILSON, J.; HARRINGTON, S.; FINLAY, C.: Language acquisition from variable input: Differences between parameter setting and lexical acquisition
12:00	BLOOM, P.; GELMAN, S.: Young children are sensitive to how an object was created when deciding what to name it	SEDIVY, J.; DEMUTH, K.; CHUNYO, G.; FREEDMAN, S.: Incremental referentiality-based language processing in young children: Evidence from eye movement monitoring	FUJINO, H.; SANO, T.: Some notes on the null object phenomenon in child Spanish

Lunchtime Symposium: 12:30 — 2:00

Attention to multiple interactive cues offers insights for language researchers (or) Why each blind man saw only part of the elephant

2:00	HÖHLE, B.; WEISSENBORN, J.: The origins of syntactic knowledge: Recognition of determiners in one year old German children	HALE, C.; TAGER-FLUSBERG, H.: Will training on language influence theory of mind development?	SWINGLEY, D.; FERNALD, A.: Rapid activation in the 24-month-old's lexicon
2:30	TINCOFF, R.; SANTELMANN, L.; JUSCZYK, P.: Auxiliary verb learning and 18-month-olds' acquisition of morphological relationships	VAN DER LELY, H.; HENNESSEY, S.: Linguistic determinism and theory of mind: Insight from children with SLI	LA BELLE, C.: A longitudinal study of lexical and prosodic differentiation by a French/English bilingual child (1;6-2;6)
3:00	B r e a k		
3:30	MARCUS, G.; RAO, S.: Rule learning in infancy? A challenge from connectionism	HALL, D.; LEE, S.: Learning proper names and count nouns: Evidence from 20- and 24-month-olds	GOETZ, P.: A comparison of monolingual and bilingual children on a series of theory of mind-related tasks
4:00	ABU-AKEL, A.; BAILEY, A.: Acquisition and use of determiners in English by young children	BIRCH, S.; BLOOM, P.: Children are sensitive to speakers' knowledge when learning proper names	DE VILLIERS, P.; CHURCH, J.; GIORDANO, R.; WHALEN, M.; HOFFMEISTER, R.: Reference to protagonists' mental states in the written narratives of Deaf children: The contribution of English syntax and ASL skills

B r e a k

5:00 P.M. METCALF HALL (LARGE)

PLENARY ADDRESS

**STEPHEN CRAIN, University of Maryland**

*Sense and sense ability in child language*

**Sherry Reception to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)**

# SUNDAY, November 7th

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

## Session C

Terrace Lounge

## Session B

Conference Auditorium

## Session A

Metcalf Hall (Small)

9:30	SCHÜTZE, C.; WEXLER, K.: An elicitation study of young English children's knowledge of tense: Semantic and syntactic properties of optional infinitives	SCHANER-WOLLES, C.: Within-language dissociations in mental retardation: Williams and Down Syndrome	SCHMITT, E.: The lost word: Language attrition in children
10:00	PARADIS, J.; CRAGO, M.: Is French SLI EOI?	DE BODE, S.; CURTISS, S.: How the brain copes with the phantom hemisphere and supports language	ARMON-LOTEM, S.: Language attrition: Why are resumptive pronouns so susceptible
10:30	BLOM, E.; WYNEN, F.: How Dutch children's root infinitives become modals	JOHNSON, C.; CHRISTE, E.: Blind children's representation of complex scenes in a narrative	CAHANA-AMITAY, D.; RAVID, D.: Optional bound morphology in Hebrew texts: A developmental perspective
11:00	B r e a k		
11:30	BRUHN DE GARAVITO, J.: The L2 acquisition of dative clitic doubling in Spanish	GUALMINI, A.; CRAIN, S.; MERONI, L.: The acquisition of disjunction: Evidence from conditional sentences	WAKABAYASHI, T.: Getting the point across: Content and dynamics in Japanese and American mothers' storytelling to preschool children
12:00	GAVRUSEVA, E.: Aspect parameter in the guise of optional infinitives in child L2 English	KAMAWAR, D.; OLSON, D.: Children's understanding of opaque contexts	LEE, S.: Characteristics of maternal speech in Korean: Would Korean and Japanese maternal speech show similar characteristics?
12:30	SLABAKOVA, R.; MONTRUL, S.: Acquiring semantic properties of preterite and imperfect tenses in L2 Spanish	LYNCH, E.; PHILIP, W.: Felicity, relevance and the acquisition of the grammar of <i>every</i> and <i>only</i>	BHATTIA, S.; COMPARINI, L.: Indexing self-other relationships through the use of directives: The linguistic construction of agency, class-based hierarchy and familial connection in Indian and Mexican-American caregiver-child interactions

Lunch Break: 1:00 — 2:30

2:30	BARKER, B.; NEWMAN, R.: The cocktail party effect in infants: Following one's mother's voice	GOLDFIELD, B.: Are verbs hard to understand?: Continuity vs. discontinuity in early lexical development	DUFFIELD, N.; MATSUO, A.: Ellipsis and anaphora in first and second language acquisition
3:00	ROARK, B.; DEMUTH, K.: Prosodic constraints and the learner's environment: A corpus study	SMITH, L.; IVERSON, J.: Actions are more powerful than words: New evidence on names and gestures	PAPAPRAGOU, A.: Early communication: Beyond speech-act theory
3:30	MAYE, J.; GERKEN, L.: Learning phoneme categories without minimal pairs	DIESEL, H.; TOMASELLO, M.: How complex are early complex sentences?: The acquisition of finite complement clauses	CHO, S.: Discourse functions of empty noun phrases in early child Korean

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*Saturday 2:00 PM*

*Metcalf Hall (Large)*

**The origins of syntactic knowledge:**

**Recognition of determiners in one year old German children**

Barbara Höhle and Jürgen Weissenborn, University of Potsdam

Segmentation of the input into words and the syntactic categorization of these words are among the fundamental tasks the language learning child has to solve. There is evidence that rhythmic pattern corresponding to lexical items in the input initially help the child to start the segmentation process. But first, rhythm alone is not a reliable cue to segmentation into words given that in many languages word stress is not fixed, and second, it leaves open the question of how the child can solve the categorization problem. In an experiment using the head turn preference paradigm we provide evidence that already one year old children can make use of the distributional regularities of high frequent functional lexical items like determiners to solve the segmentation tasks. We will suggest that they may also use the co-occurrence properties of functional items for syntactic categorization.

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*Saturday 2:30 PM*

*Metcalf Hall (Large)*

**Auxiliary verb learning and  
18-month-olds' acquisition of morphological relationships**

Ruth Tincoff, Johns Hopkins University  
Lynn Santelmann, Portland State University  
Peter W. Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University

Learning the relationships among sentence constituents is a fundamental prerequisite for decoding language structure. In particular, morphology helps to mark important relationships among and within phrases. To use this information language learners must acquire both the co-occurrence relationships between morphemes and the various forms of the morphemes that appear in the relationships. Previous research (Santelmann & Jusczyk, 1998a/1998b) shows that 18-month-olds are sensitive to some verbal morpheme relationships, but not others. The present study further explores 18-month-olds' sensitivity to relationships between forms of *be* and the suffix *-ing*. Using the Headturn Preference Procedure we show that, although 18-month-olds have acquired some relationships between verb forms, they have not yet generalized this ability to related forms. We are further investigating factors that may influence 18-month-olds' sensitivity to relationships between morphemes. Together, these findings contribute to our understanding of the complex interaction between lexical learning and processing of grammatical forms.

*Saturday 3:30 PM*

*Metcalf Hall (Large)*

**Rule learning in infancy? A challenge from connectionism**

Gary Marcus and Shoba Bandi Rao, New York University

Marcus et al. (1999) argued that infants might possess a mechanism for learning abstract algebra-like rules. Altmann and Dienes (1999) challenged this account with a variant of the simple recurrent network and state that the grammatical regularities in the familiarization phase create statistical regularities. Using a slightly different series of test trials, Marcus (1999) found that the Altmann Dienes model relies on position-specific information rather than on genuine abstract rule. In this paper, we present results from 14 seven-month-old subjects, who were given the same order of test trials as the computer model. The average looking times were greater for the inconsistent pattern than the consistent pattern. This argues against Altmann and Dienes's mapping-encodings-of-words-onto-encodings-of-words account and is consistent with an account in which infants are indeed abstracting algebra-like rules.

---

*Saturday 4:00 PM*

*Metcalf Hall (Large)*

**Acquisition and use of determiners in English  
by young children**

Ahmad Abu-Akel and Alison L. Bailey,  
University of California, Los Angeles

Research on children's acquisition of determiners in English relied on the adult system to 1) establish whether or not children display the same system, and 2) to delimit the maturational course which transforms an earlier system into the mature system. However, accounts to date are incomplete: optionality in the use of determiners has been attributed to an immature pragmatic system (e.g., Hoekstra & Hyams, 1995) without specifying the necessary pragmatic knowledge. In a comprehensive account of the acquisition of *a* and *the*, using naturalistic data, we describe children's use of the referring properties of DPs and the developmental schedule (i.e., when children cease to omit determiners in obligatory contexts). Our data support the Full Clause Hypothesis. We propose that the decrease in omissions of determiners is a developmental process that not only requires control of morphosyntax but ability to maintain extended discourse necessary to manifest the full range of DPs referring properties.

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*Saturday 2:00 PM**Conference Auditorium***Will training on language influence  
theory of mind development?**

Courtney Melinda Hale and Helen Tager-Flusberg,  
University of Massachusetts, Boston

Does language drive the development of theory of mind understanding? It was hypothesized that mastery of sentence complements, in particular, is critical to the development of theory of mind. Preschoolers who failed both false belief and sentence complements tasks were randomly assigned to training on false belief, complementation, and relative clauses. Results showed that mastery of sentence complements facilitated the development of a representational theory of mind. Training on both false belief and complements increased not just false belief understanding, but also other aspects of theory of mind understanding in comparison with control group training on relative clauses. In contrast, training on false belief did not increase complements performance. Results also showed that all three groups trained equally well and significantly improved their scores over time. We conclude that language, specifically knowledge of sentential complements, contributes to theory of mind development in preschoolers.

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*Saturday 2:30 PM**Conference Auditorium***Linguistic determinism and theory of mind:  
Insight from Specific Language Impairment in children**

Heather K.J. van der Lely and Susan Hennessey,  
Birkbeck College, University of London

The cognitive determinism of language versus the linguistic determinism of cognition has long been a controversial issue. This paper investigates the proposed dependence of false belief understanding on mastery of the fundamental syntax of complementation in SLI subjects and younger language matched control children. ToM was tested using the Sally-Anne task. We investigated embedded complements under NPs and sentential complements embedded under verbs of communication and mental state. The results revealed that the G-SLI subjects were not impaired in ToM, but were significantly impaired in comprehending and producing the sentences with embedded compliments under NPs and sentential complements in comparison to the LA controls. The results indicate that mastery of the syntactic process of complementation is not a prerequisite for false belief. We will argue that these linguistic abilities may be acquired relatively independently and are domain specific.

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*Saturday 3:30 PM**Conference Auditorium***Learning proper names and count nouns:  
Evidence from 20- and 24-month-olds**

D. Geoffrey Hall and Sharon C. Lee,  
University of British Columbia

This study reports the first unambiguous demonstration that 2-year-old children can use syntactic cues to map proper names onto individual objects and count nouns onto object categories. On each of four trials, 64 toddlers (younger group mean = 20 months; older group mean = 24 months) first manipulated two identical-looking dolls or stuffed animals. Both toys were removed from view. One was then brought out, placed in location A, and labeled. Children in the Proper Name condition (N = 32) heard 'This is X'; those in the Count Noun condition (N = 32) heard 'This is an X.' The labeled toy was moved to location B, and the second identical-looking toy was brought out and placed in location A. Children were asked 'Where is X?' (Proper Name condition) or 'Where is an X?' (Count Noun condition). Older children selected the labeled object significantly more often in the Proper Name condition than in the Count Noun condition.

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*Saturday 4:00 PM**Conference Auditorium***Children are sensitive to speakers' knowledge  
when learning proper names**

Susan Birch, University of Arizona  
Paul Bloom, Yale University

One distinction between common nouns (e.g., 'dog') and proper names (e.g., 'Kip') is that in order to know the proper name of an individual one must be familiar with that individual. The present study tested whether children can use the speaker's knowledge status to infer the referent of a proper name. Sixteen three-year-olds, 16 four-year-olds, and 24 undergraduates were presented with six pairs of stuffed animals. The experimenter pretended she was familiar with one animal and unfamiliar with the other. Both animals were covered. Subjects in the Proper Name Condition heard, 'Where did Kip go? Find Kip!' Subjects in the Common Name Condition heard, 'Where did the dog go? Find the dog!' Three and four-year-old children, like adults, were more likely to select the familiar animal in the Proper Name Condition, but not in the Common Noun Condition, suggesting they appreciate that knowing an individual's proper name requires previous knowledge of that individual.

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*Saturday 2:00 PM**Terrace Lounge***Rapid activation in the 24-month-old's lexicon**Daniel Swingley, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics  
Anne Fernald, Stanford University

In three experiments, 24-month-olds viewed pairs of pictures of familiar objects and heard sentences such as 'Where's the car?' The timing of eye movements to the pictures was noted precisely, providing an estimate of how rapidly and accurately children identified spoken words. On control trials, infants saw two pictures and then heard a sentence naming one of the pictures. On 'mismatch' trials, infants heard either a familiar word matching neither picture, or a nonce word. Fast, robust refixation responses were identical in control trials and real-word mismatch trials, indicating word recognition. In sharp contrast, responses to nonce words were irregular and slow. Thus, rapid lexical activation in 24-month-olds does not depend on the availability of visual supporting context.

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*Saturday 2:30 PM**Terrace Lounge***A longitudinal study of lexical and prosodic differentiation  
by a French/English bilingual child (1;6-2;6)**

Chris L. LaBelle, UCLA

Because prosodic features are thought to be acquired earlier than lexical or segmental features of a language, this longitudinal study examines not only productive lexical equivalents, but also the stress patterns, and phonological truncations of a simultaneous French/English speaking child from the age of 1;6 to 2;6. Analysis of the child's phonological truncations and stress patterns shows the child rarely discriminates between either speaker or lexicon for stress production. However, she does display a strong trochaic bias regardless of language, speaker, context or type/token distinction. We suggest that this bias is due to an underlying trochaic template supplied by universal grammar (UG) (Allen & Hawkins, 1980; Archibald, 1995). The phonological truncations observed, which were drawn from a separate data set, confirm this interpretation. The acquisition of lexical equivalents displays a very specific pattern that documents an early dominance of the French lexicon, with a later dominance of the English system.

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**B R E A K :      3 : 0 0 — 3 : 3 0**

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Saturday 3:30 PM

Terrace Lounge

**A comparison of monolingual and bilingual children  
on a series of theory of mind-related tasks**

Peggy J. Goetz, University of Michigan

This study compares monolingual preschoolers to bilingual Mandarin-English speaking preschoolers in a series of theory of mind-related tasks. Thirty-two monolingual English speakers, 32 monolingual Mandarin speakers and 40 Mandarin-English bilingual speakers were tested with a Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, an appearance-reality task, a perspective-taking task, and two false belief tasks. Four-year-olds performed significantly better than 3-year-olds in all language groups. Bilinguals performed significantly better than both monolingual groups at the first testing time. At the second testing time, the monolinguals' performance improved significantly over the first testing time, but the bilinguals' performance did not improve significantly so there was no longer any significant difference among the three language groups. This research indicates that the language and sociolinguistic awareness of bilinguals may promote their meta-representational skills.

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Saturday 4:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

**Reference to protagonists' mental states in  
the written narratives of Deaf children:  
The contribution of English syntax and ASL skills**

Peter A. de Villiers, Jessica Church, Roberta Giordano, Melissa Whalen,  
Smith College  
Robert Hoffmeister, Boston University

Gray and Hosie (1996) speculate that deaf children's delayed development of a mature theory of mind (Peterson & Siegel, 1995/1997) is a major factor underlying their difficulties with narrative acquisition and English literacy. This study investigates 50 deaf students' reference to the desires and cognitions of protagonists in their written English narratives, relating it to 'through-the-air' English and ASL skills and several background variables. Reference to characters' desires was common and unrelated to age, hearing loss, or any of the language measures. In contrast, reference to thoughts or knowledge was closely related to age, reading levels, and both English and ASL skills. Stepwise regression revealed that the complexity of the children's reference to cognitions was predicted by three separate variables: 'through-the-air' production of complex English syntax; ASL production skills; and age. Children with extensive exposure to ASL were significantly more likely than children with less ASL to make reference to characters' cognitions in their written English narratives. We argue that intensive ASL exposure complements the children's developing English syntax skills to facilitate the expression of cognitive state contents in their written narratives.

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**B R E A K :      4 : 3 0 — 5 : 0 0**

Saturday Afternoon

Page 42

2:00 PM - 4:30

**STEPHEN CRAIN**  
**University of Maryland**

**SENSE AND SENSE ABILITY IN CHILD LANGUAGE**

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**Reception to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)**

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*Sunday 9:30 AM**Metcalf Hall (Small)***A elicitation study of young English children's knowledge of tense: Semantic and syntactic properties of Optional Infinitives**

Carson T. Schütze, UCLA

Kenneth Wexler, MIT

We report an elicited production experiment with young English-speaking children (ages 2-4) that explored the tense/aspect meanings with which children use main verb Optional Infinitives (OIs), and whether OIs license null subjects more than finite verbs. The findings converge on the conclusion that OIs involve underspecification of grammatical Tense features. Our findings are:

- 1) Children under 3;0 produced verbal inflection sensitive to our tense/aspect manipulation (past versus present habitual). We can therefore be confident that when the children produced OIs, they intended these to have the meaning appropriate to the context.
- 2) All groups produced substantial numbers of OIs in both past and present habitual conditions. Thus, (English) OIs are *not* restricted to modal/irrealis meanings.
- 3) Children omitted subjects substantially more often with OIs than with finite main verbs. This follows from the view that nonfinite clauses license null subjects (PRO) in a way that finite clauses do not.

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*Sunday 10:00 AM**Metcalf Hall (Small)***Is French SLI EOI?**

Johanne Paradis and Martha Crago, McGill University

Our goal was to determine whether Rice & Wexler's (1996) EOI characterization of English SLI is valid for French SLI. We examined the language production of Quebec French-speaking seven-year-old children with SLI, normally-developing age-matched children and younger MLU-matched children. Samples from all three groups were coded for phenomena similar to those examined in English SLI, for example, the presence/absence of tense and non-tense morphemes and accuracy in subject-verb agreement. Results showed both similarities and dissimilarities with the English findings. For example, the SLI group omitted tense morphemes more frequently than the age-matched group, while no significant differences were found between them for the other target morphemes/structures. However, the MLU-matched group did not omit tense morphemes more frequently than the age-matched group and the prevalence of root infinitives was relatively less than has been found for English SLI children. We discuss the interaction of two factors to explain the French-English differences: (1) age differences in the SLI groups and (2) null subject properties in Quebec French.

**How Dutch children's infinitives become modal**

Elma Blom and Frank Wijnen, Utrecht University, UiL/OTS

New corpus data from six Dutch children confirm the claim that root infinitives (RIs) in Dutch are primarily used to express wishes, desires and needs (Van Ginneken, 1917; Ingram & Thompson, 1996; Hoekstra & Hyams, 1998). Strikingly, the association between modality and RIs does not appear from early on, but arises as children reach the optional infinitive (OI) stage. In the OI stage (as defined by Wijnen, 1997) children begin to use finite verbs next to their infinitive counterparts: finiteness has become productive. Our claim is that the morphological distinction between finite/nonfiniteness and the establishment of a link between modality and infinitives are closely related. To link modality and infinitives, it is required that Dutch children recognize infinitival morphology (Hoekstra & Hyams, 1998). This they do in the OI stage. Before the OI stage there is no verbal morphology: early infinitives are treated as unanalyzed forms. By implication, they are not associated with modality.

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**B R E A K :      1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0**

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**The L2 acquisition of dative clitic doubling in Spanish**

Joyce L.S. Bruhn de Garavito, University of Western Ontario

It is usually assumed that the dative clitic (*le*) in Spanish doubles indirect objects. However, prepositional phrases indicating goal, location, possession, etc., appear with clitic doubling. These cases (1a) contrast with sentences in which there is a full prepositional phrase (1b). Masullo (1992) suggests that the clitic doubled sentences are the result of preposition incorporation (Baker, 1989).

- (1)      a.          Felipe \*(le) puso un mantel a la mesa.  
                          'Philip put a tablecloth on the table.'
- b.          Felipe (\*le) puso un mantel en la mesa.  
                          'Philip put a tablecloth on the table.'

I report on a study of near-native speakers. I show that their performance regarding subtle constraints on incorporation is indistinguishable from that of native-speakers. This is taken as evidence that their grammar is constrained by UG.

**Aspect parameter in the guise of optional infinitives  
in child L2 English**

Elena Gavruseva, University of Iowa

Some recent studies investigate the optional infinitive/root infinitive stage in child and adult L2 acquisition (Grondin & White, 1994; Haznedar & Schwartz, 1997; Prévost, 1997). This paper examines the use of 'bare' VPs in L2 English of a Russian-speaking 8-year-old child and aims to provide a principled syntactic explanation for their distribution. The analysis reveals that 'bare' VPs were used in all tense contexts, with no detectable decrease at later stages in acquisition:

- (1)
- a. She *like* only TV (present)
  - b. She *lie* (present continuous)

Following some recent studies in aspectual properties of verbs, I attribute the properties of 'bare' VPs in child L2 data to the transfer of an aspectual parametric value from Russian into English. I argue that this child treats aspectual distinctions in English as a property of verb meanings per se (as is the case in Russian), instead of deriving them compositionally (Verkuyl, 1993).

**Acquiring semantic properties of  
preterite and imperfect tenses in L2 Spanish**

Roumyana Slabakova, University of Iowa  
Silvina Montrul, University of Illinois

This study investigates how English-speaking learners of Spanish learn the semantic entailments associated with preterite and imperfect in L2 Spanish. English and Spanish differ in encoding viewpoint aspect (Smith, 1991/1997). Semantic entailments differ as well: the preterite entails a one-time bounded event while the imperfect entails an unbounded event or state. English past tense is neutral as to one-time versus habitual event.

42 intermediate and 27 advanced English-speaking learners of Spanish participated in the experiment as well as 18 Spanish native speaker controls. A truth value judgment task with stories tested three conditions: (a) change of meaning preterites (*saber* 'know'), (b) habitual versus one-time events, and (c) generic versus specific subject interpretation. Conditions (a) and (b) are subject to explicit teaching and practice in L2 classrooms, whereas condition (c) is not. Our results suggest that L2 learners are able to learn properties of the grammar that are neither explicitly taught in language classrooms, nor obvious in the input.

*Sunday 9:30 AM*

*Conference Auditorium*

**Within-language dissociations in mental retardation:  
Williams and Down Syndrome**

Chris Schaner-Wolles, University of Vienna and Austrian Academy of Sciences

In this presentation, based on a systematic cross-grammar investigation of 82 persons with DS and a control group of 40 children matched for DA, it will be argued that within-language dissociations are equally characteristic of DS and WS. It can be shown that the vast majority of DS persons suffer from a deficit that affects the acquisition of grammatical morphology much more than the mastery of basic sentence structure and regular morphological patterns. Typically, the DS persons mastered the acquisition of the German clause structure, a verb-second language, despite their problems with the acquisition of the finiteness morphology. It will be argued that the general structure of the within-language dissociations for DS and for WS is of the same kind: in both cases, irregular patterns tend to be defective, and the regular structures are overgeneralized.

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*Sunday 10:00 AM*

*Conference Auditorium*

**How the brain copes with the phantom hemisphere  
and supports language**

Stella de Bode and Susan Curtiss,  
Neuro/Psycholinguistics Laboratory, UCLA

We have studied the spoken language of 38 children who have undergone hemispherectomy as part of the UCLA Pediatric Epilepsy Surgery Research Program and analyzed, among other factors, the relation between acquired versus developmental pathology and spoken language outcome. In this paper we will present language outcomes following specific etiologies (stroke, Rasmussen's encephalitis and cortical dysplasia) and examine these etiologies in terms of their impact on the remaining, presumably, unaffected hemisphere. We will argue that language development following hemispherectomy critically depends on the factors characterizing etiology, with the integrity of the remaining hemisphere being a key variable.

**Blind children's representation  
of complex scenes in a narrative**

Carolyn E. Johnson and Elisabeth Christe, University of British Columbia

Our objective was to determine how blind children conceptually represent temporal and spatial information in stories they hear, as demonstrated by their own retellings and answers to comprehension questions. Four blind children, 7;5 to 10;4, and five sighted children matched for age and gender were recorded telling *Frog, where are you?* After a week of hearing eight versions of the story that varied perspective in the search scenes, the children were recorded telling the story. Transcripts of the stories were analyzed for temporal and spatial terms, with an emphasis on the search scenes. Both groups used a variety of spatial and temporal terms and performed well on comprehension questions. Sighted children narrated more events as being simultaneous and tended to overestimate distances more often than the blind children. Blind children used a higher proportion of verbatim repetitions in their retellings.

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**B R E A K :      1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0**

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**The acquisition of disjunction:  
Evidence from conditional sentences**

Andrea Gualmini, Stephen Crain and Luisa Meroni, University of Maryland

Much previous research (e.g., Braine & Romain, 1983) reached the conclusion that the acquisition of adult truth conditions for disjunction is a late, and not universal, achievement. This conclusion is unwarranted, however, because the Inclusive-or reading was not felicitous in prior research. Chierchia et al. (1998) showed that young children assigned the truth conditions associated with Inclusive-or in contexts that suspended conversational implicatures. The present study used a particular linguistic construction, conditional (if... then...) statements, to suspend conversational implicatures. Fourteen children, ranging in age from 3;2-5;9, participated in a game in which a puppet guessed which among a set of objects was hidden behind the curtain of a theater. The puppet expressed its guess using sentences like 'If there is a gorilla or a zebra behind the curtain, then I get a coin.' Immediately following the puppet's guess, the curtain was opened and the child decided whether or not to give the puppet a coin. The findings indicate that children assign to disjunction the same truth conditions as adults do, including the truth conditions associated with Inclusive-or.

**Children's understanding of opaque contexts**

Deepthi Kamawar and David R. Olson, University of Toronto

Two studies investigating children's ability to deal with opaque contexts will be presented. The first examines children's sensitivity to a variety of opaque contexts (referential, linguistic and intentional). Results indicate that children improve with age, and that they find some contexts easier than others. The second study examines children's performance on referentially opaque contexts more closely in an attempt to determine some of the skills necessary for successful performance on such contexts; namely, meta-representational and meta-linguistic ability. Meta-representational ability was measured using false belief tasks and meta-linguistic ability was measured using tasks requiring children to compare and evaluate statements containing referring expressions. The results will be discussed in terms of the contributions of meta-representational and meta-linguistic ability to successful performance. These studies are of interest to anyone concerned with: (1) children's understanding of the representational nature of language; and (2) the necessary abilities for sensitivity to opaque contexts.

**Felicity, relevance and the acquisition of  
the grammar of *every* and *only***

Emily Lynch, Harvard University  
William Philip, Utrecht University

Numerous studies concur that by the age of preschool, if not earlier, children know the adult-grammatical properties of quantifiers such as *every* and *only* (Philip, 1995; Crain et al., 1996, and many others.) However, some researchers suggest that this knowledge may be only partial (e.g., Philip, 1995; Crain et al., 1992), while others claim that it is complete (e.g., Crain et al., 1996). In this talk we will present experimental evidence which casts doubt on the latter claim because it reveals that children's grammatical performance can be significantly enhanced or inhibited by manipulations of nongrammatical factors defining relevance, while adult performance never shows such effects. In addition, our work uncovers an experimental artifact of this nature in the findings of Crain et al. (1996) and provides strong evidence that satisfaction of the so-called 'conditions of plausible assent and dissent' has no significant effect on preschool children's comprehension performance.

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*Sunday 9:30 AM**Terrace Lounge***The lost word: Language attrition in children**

Elena Schmitt, University of South Carolina

The study discusses the principles and mechanisms of language attrition in a group of Russian immigrant children in the United States. The purpose of the project is three-fold: 1) to demonstrate that language loss among children is governed by the principles of language contact; 2) to identify the mechanisms and structural patterns of language loss among children; 3) to demonstrate the relative hierarchy of language loss based on data collected for this study. Naturally occurring conversations of immigrant children consisting of a total of 760 utterances are analyzed within the framework of the Abstract Level Model and the 4-M Model. The analysis shows that children's bilingual speech is rule-governed and that the mechanisms involved in bilingual production in children are the same as those in adults. In the conclusion, a relative hierarchy of language loss in children is outlined and a model of language attrition is proposed.

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*Sunday 10:00 AM**Terrace Lounge***Language attrition:  
Why are resumptive pronouns so susceptible?**

Sharon Armon-Lotem, University of Maryland

This paper examines the use and misuse of resumptive pronouns and stranded prepositions in child first language attrition and second language acquisition, during the first six months of L2 exposure. An elicitation task for resumptive pronouns in relative clauses was administered to 7 Hebrew-speaking children, aged 3;3-7;11, after 3-6 months in the USA, and to 24 Hebrew-speaking children, aged 2;8-5;5, in Israel. It shows that L1 attrition is already evident by the loss of resumptive pronouns in the incipient stages of bilingualism, when it is least expected. A follow-up study of controlled naturalistic data of four of the children, recorded two years later, shows that this trend is extended to use of unacceptable stranded preposition. The current findings support the view of resumptive pronoun in child language as a last resort overt spell-out of traces which readily gives up in the face of new input from L2.

**Optional bound morphology in Hebrew texts:  
A developmental perspective**

Dalia Cahana-Amitay and Dorit Ravid, Tel Aviv University

Hebrew has several bound inflectional morphemes that have syntactic alternatives and so may be termed optional bound (OPB) morphemes. OPBs emerge only during school years and may therefore be considered a yardstick for literacy development. As such, they should pattern with text type and age. We focus on three OPBs—Genitives, Accusatives, and Double Compounds—in Hebrew spoken and written narratives and expositions produced by schoolchildren and adults. Regarding text type, OPBs occurred mainly in narratives and in writing. We attribute this to the observation that writing contains more lexical nouns and verbs, a necessary requirement for OPBs, than speech. Developmentally, OPBs were observed mainly in adults who produced longer texts with richer lexical inventory, more diverse content and careful planning. Hebrew OPBs systematically pattern with text type and age and thus provide unique insight into how bottom-up language-specific categories interact with top-down genre- and modality-appropriate text production in development.

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**B R E A K :      1 1 : 0 0 — 1 1 : 3 0**

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**Getting the point across: Content and dynamics in Japanese  
and American mothers' storytelling to preschool children**

Tomoko Wakabayashi, Stanford University

Through social interactions, children acquire the subtle communicative skills necessary for functioning as competent members of society. This research explores the content and dynamics of narratives in the common socialization context of storytelling. Thirty Japanese and thirty American mothers were asked to tell stories using four pictures of children in situations that were emotionally charged and open to many interpretations. The study was conducted during home visits in Kyoto and San Francisco. Half of the participants in each culture told stories to an adult, and half told stories to their 3-year-old child. Japanese and American mothers emphasized different themes and used different narrative styles to engage their child in the stories. By examining stories told to adults and to children, the study reveals different cultural schemas in interpretations of the pictures, as well as how these schemas are actually introduced and animated when interacting with children in storytelling.

**Characteristics of maternal speech in Korean: Would Korean and Japanese maternal speech show similar characteristics?**

Soyoung Lee, Ohio State University

The present study reports the similarities and differences between Korean and Japanese maternal speech. The interactions of eighteen Korean mother and infant dyads living in Seoul, Korea were examined using similar toys and the same criteria as Fernald and Morikawa's (1993) so that the findings of Korean maternal speech could be compared with those of Japanese maternal speech observed in Fernald and Morikawa.

The results showed that there were no significant differences between Korean and Japanese maternal speech in terms of the number of noun labels and the number of questions. Korean mothers, however, used noun labels with less consistency, more action verbs and more isolated verbs than Japanese mothers. These results could be explained by the cultural differences between the two maternal speech. That is, Korean mothers like to direct their children to act or describe the object's action while Japanese mothers favor affect-oriented speech such as greeting.

**Indexing self-other relationships through the use of directives: The linguistic construction of agency, class-based hierarchy, and familial connection in Indian and Mexican-American caregiver-child interaction**

Sunil Bhatia, Connecticut College  
Lisa Comparini, Clark University

Drawing on Hindi and Spanish-language data sets, we investigate how caregivers and their children use directives to construct distinct and culturally relevant meanings about self-other relationships. Analyses of transcripts of spontaneous videotaped interactions between caregivers and children highlight: a) Indian caregivers' linguistic construction of agency as it is related to class-based hierarchy, and b) differences between Mexican-American caregivers' and children's linguistic construction of agency in the context of familial connection. Specifically, we explore how Indian caregivers from different social class backgrounds use directives as positional appeals and positional control rules to construct hierarchically relevant meanings about children's sense of personhood. Additionally, we foreground that while Mexican-American caregivers and their children make similar use of person versus non-person references, their use of mitigation to construct rich and subtle configurations of agency and family connection differs in ways consistent with their socially defined familial roles.

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**LUNCH BREAK : 1 : 0 0 — 2 : 3 0**

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*Sunday 2:30 PM**Metcalf Hall (Small)***The cocktail party effect in infants:  
Following one's mother's voice**

Brittan A. Barker and Rochelle S. Newman, University of Iowa

Previous research (Newman & Jusczyk, 1996) demonstrated that infants can selectively attend to the speech of a female talker while a male talker speaks simultaneously. However, more recent research suggests that infants have more difficulty when both voices are female (Newman, unpublished). The present experiment examined 7.5-month-old infants' ability to attend to their own mother's speech while another woman speaks simultaneously. Infants heard their mother repeating target words during a familiarization phase while another woman spoke simultaneously. During the test phase, infants heard their mothers read passages containing either the familiar target words or novel words. Infants listened longer to the target-word passages, suggesting that they were capable of separating the simultaneous speech of the two women in this condition. A control group of infants performed the same task, but listened to the mothers of the infants in the experimental group. These infants showed no preference for the familiar words.

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*Sunday 3:00 PM**Metcalf Hall (Small)***Prosodic constraints and the learner's environment:  
A corpus study**

Brian Roark and Katherine Demuth, Brown University

Spanish first language learners contrast with English learners in producing some untruncated trisyllabic words from a very early age. Conversely, it appears that English learners produce coda consonants earlier than their Spanish counterparts. It has been suggested that these (and other) differences are due to the frequency of particular phonological word shapes in the learner's environment. This paper looks at Spanish and English adult speech in the CHILDES database. Among other statistics, we calculated the frequency of initial unfooted (weak) syllables, the frequency of coda consonants, and the average word length. The results show a remarkable consistency within languages on all measures, and a very large difference between the two languages in each dimension, which may account for some of the cross-linguistic acquisition differences. It thus appears that the learner's environment can play a critical role in the time-course of first language acquisition.

**Learning phoneme categories without minimal pairs**

Jessica Maye and LouAnn Gerken, University of Arizona

Can learners infer phoneme categories from distributional information, without knowledge of word meaning? To address this question, adult subjects were presented with an artificial language, containing a potential phoneme contrast. Stimuli were re-synthesized from natural speech to form a continuum from /d/ to /t/ (/t/-stimuli were created by excising the /s/ from /st-/ syllables). One group of subjects was trained on a monomodal distribution, in which the stimuli from the center of the continuum were heard more often than the endpoints; while the other group was trained on a bimodal distribution, in which the endpoint stimuli were heard more often than the center. Subjects trained on a bimodal distribution were more likely to treat the experimental contrast as representing a phonemic distinction than subjects trained on a monomodal distribution, indicating that the distributional information provided by phoneme exemplars can be utilized by language learners in order to extract phoneme categories.

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**SUNDAY AFTERNOON: SESSION B CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM****Are verbs hard to understand?****Continuity versus discontinuity in early lexical development**

Beverly A. Goldfield, Rhode Island College

Some have argued for a universal noun to verb sequence in development. This research examines verb comprehension versus production and tests the hypothesis that verb learning represents a later, discontinuous stage of lexical development. Study One consists of parent-report data of nouns and verbs comprehended and produced from 8 to 14 months. Study Two examined verb comprehension and use in 42 parent-child dyads observed at 20 months. Results indicate that: (1) children comprehend verbs and verb phrases as early as they comprehend nouns; both noun and verb comprehension increase between 8 and 14 months. At 20 months, children comprehended more than 2/3 of the verbs used in behavioral directives. Verb-learning is thus continuous in comprehension. (2) Children produce more of the nouns and fewer of the verbs that they understand, and (3) parents often elicited nouns but not verbs. The scarcity of verbs in production may reflect, in part, functional differences in the input, with nouns used to sustain verbal interaction and verbs used to maintain nonverbal behavior.

**Actions are more powerful than words:  
New evidence on names and gestures**

Linda B. Smith and Jana Iverson, Indiana University

The results from four experiments suggest that two year olds link actions to objects more readily than they link words to objects and that they spontaneously interpret gestures based on these actions as referential. Experiment 1 examined how parents introduce novel objects to their children; they introduced multiple objects at a time, named each often, demonstrated actions more, and often used gestures based on these actions to refer to objects. Subsequent experiments used a novel noun learning task derived from parental behaviors. Four novel objects were each paired with a unique novel name and an arbitrary action on the object. During testing children performed at chance level when asked to select objects by their name but chose almost perfectly when asked to select an object by the gestured action. In brief, children link arbitrary actions to objects more readily than words and interpret gestures based on these actions as referential.

**How complex are early complex sentences?  
The acquisition of finite complement clauses**

Holger Diessel and Michael Tomasello,  
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology

At around 2;6 years of age, English-speaking children begin to use complex sentences such as, 'I think Daddy's here,' or 'See Snoopy's sleeping.' These sentences have been analyzed as bi-clausal constructions that consist of a matrix clause and a sentential complement. In this paper we show that the matrix clauses have all the features of a parenthetical clause (cf. Hooper, 1973): they are short and formulaic, occur with a first or second person pronoun as subject, include a light cognition or perception verb in the present tense, and frequently follow the apparent complement clause, which is virtually never marked by a complementizer. There are only two verbs in our data that function as 'real' matrix verbs: the verbs of communication *say* and *tell*. All other 'matrix verbs' are used as parenthetical evidential markers or attention getters that are adjoined to an independent clause.

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*Sunday 2:30 PM**Terrace Lounge***Ellipsis and anaphora in first and second language acquisition**

Nigel Duffield, McGill University

Ayumi Matsuo, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

This paper compares 1st and 2nd language learners' knowledge of the constraints on ellipsis constructions in English, focusing on subtle contrasts between VP-ellipsis (VPE) and VP-anaphora (VPA). These contrasts are of theoretical interest because they appear to be truly underdetermined by the evidence available to the learner (Crain, 1991), and because languages systematically vary in the availability of VP-ellipsis. The discovery that both young children and adult L2 learners can distinguish these two forms delivers significant empirical evidence in addressing the dual questions of the existence and point of emergence of such knowledge in acquisition (Crain, 1991; Epstein et al, 1996; Schwartz & Sprouse, 1996; White, 1997.) Our results—from two parallel experiments, employing the same stimuli but with different methodologies—show that whereas children correctly distinguish VPE from VPA, two groups of L2 learners (L1 = Spanish and Japanese) showed greater difficulty in demonstrating their knowledge of the contrast.

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*Sunday 3:00 PM**Terrace Lounge***Early communication: Beyond speech-act theory**

Anna Papafragou, University of Pennsylvania

In this paper I present some problems with speech-act accounts of early communicative abilities, focusing in particular on children's ability to produce and understand several types of requests. Within speech-act pragmatics, it is often assumed that the comprehension of a class of requests is achieved through conventionalization (Searle, 1975) or standardization (Bach & Harnish, 1979). I propose an alternative analysis of the comprehension of requests in terms of an inferential process constrained by considerations of relevance (Sperber & Wilson, 1986/1995) and argue that it offers a better account of the developmental data than standard speech-act models. I suggest that genuine understanding of so-called indirect requests requires the formation of complex anticipatory hypotheses about the speaker's intentions and thus presupposes advanced theory-of-mind capacities. I also give some evidence that progress in mindreading significantly enhances the comprehension of more complicated types of requests.

**Discourse functions of empty noun phrases  
in early child Korean**

Sook Whan Cho, Harvard University

This paper examines how Korean children express communicative intents, initiate, and maintain a topic in the absence of noun phrases. For this purpose, this study analyzes longitudinal naturalistic data of three Korean-speaking monolingual children between the ages of 14 months and 35 months. A pilot study of two children observed that the typically egocentric child role acts and cognitively simpler concepts and concrete topics emerge early and the referent of joint attention is dropped correctly more often than that of disjoint attention. It also indicated that these children demonstrate sensitivity to the degree to which accessible information is verbalized. As a corollary, it is noted that Korean children express communicative intents in almost the same order as in English-speaking children (Ninio & Snow, 1996; Snow et al., 1996). It is further speculated that nouns and verbs in early speech are highly similar across languages from the perspective of discourse function.

**ALTERNATES**

**Phonological effects on article omission in  
the acquisition of Italian**

Paola Crisma, University of Trieste and Padova  
Elisabetta Tomasutti, University of Padova

In this paper, based on spontaneous and elicited production, we assume that in Italian child language articles are always present in the underlying representation, and are deleted by virtue of three phonological constraints:

**NO CODA**

We show that omission of *il* and *i* in child production is the effect of a NO CODA constraint.

**PROSODIC WRD=1 FOOT**

We distinguish two types of DPs:

*la palla* la.(pál.la)

*la bambina* (là.bam)(bí.na)=two trochaic feet

Article omission is obligatory with DPs of the second type: we propose a constraint banning branching prosodic words, resulting in the deletion of the article.

**PARSE SYLLABLE**

The article of a DP following a final-stressed verb may be parsed into feet with the verb: spontaneous and elicited data confirm that article omission in this context significantly decreases.

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## **Structure building and early peripheral elements in child French**

Cécile De Cat, University of York

This paper argues for the Structure Building approach to syntactic development on the basis of an analysis of peripheral elements in early child French. Evidence from new data from four very young children shows that left- and right-peripheral elements are adjoined to a structure smaller than IP in the initial stage. The two subsequent stages are distinguished on the basis of the constructions displayed: in Stage 2, when both Tense and Agreement are available, there is a boost in the production of peripheral elements (22% of verbal utterances), and in Stage 3, during which CP becomes established, double dislocations appear and a predominance of left dislocations is observed (24% of verbal utterances (i.e., 60% of peripheral elements in general)). One of the main implications of this analysis is that child French does not display checking of a Topic head outside IP (Rizzi, 1997).

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## **The acquisition of functional categories and inflectional morphology in child L2 acquisition**

Belma Haznedar, Bogazici University

This paper investigates whether there is a direct relationship between the acquisition of inflectional morphology and the development of functional categories (e.g., Eubank, 1993/94, 1996; Lardiere, 1998; Vainikka & Young-Scholten, 1994, 1996.) Longitudinal data from a Turkish child learner of English are analyzed to examine the acquisition of verbal inflection and CP. Findings:

- 1) Verbal functional elements 3sg *-s* and past tense forms are not produced early on, but questions and complement clauses are productively used during the same period.
- 2) There are numerous utterances with complement clauses with *because* and *if* before the acquisition of verbal inflection.
- 3) Utterances which unambiguously invoke a CP occur with an uninflected form of the verb.

These results suggest that no developmental relation exists between the regular use of verb inflection and the production of CP-related elements. There is also no evidence for Vainikka & Young-Scholten's theory of the successive development of phrase structure.

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## **The interaction between input and economy: Acquiring optionality in French wh-questions**

Aafke Hulk, University of Amsterdam  
Shalom Zuckerman, University of Groningen

Wh-questions in French seem to allow for optionality in regard to Wh-movement as well as for the requirement for subject-verb inversion. In this paper we concentrate on the following question: what are the preferences of French speaking children and adults with regard to the options available in adult French. We report results from an experimental elicitation task with 32 French-speaking children (mean age: 4;7) and 22 adults. The experiment compares the production of the various Wh structures between children and adults, and more specifically between children and their parents.

The results:

- Children produce virtually no inversion structures.
- Adults use inversion in 60% of the cases.
- Children use more Wh-in-situ than their parents.
- There is a clear difference between the various Wh-elements.
- Two doubling errors (Wh both fronted and in-situ).
- A correlation was found between adults' non-inversion structures and children's in-situ structures when divided over the various Wh-elements.

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## **(De) coupling of spatial language and spatial cognition: Evidence from Williams Syndrome**

Barbara Landau, Andrea Zukowski, and David Schwartz,  
University of Delaware

We discuss three hypotheses concerning the relationship between spatial language and spatial cognition, with special reference to evidence from Williams Syndrome. The Strong Coupling Hypothesis suggests that non-linguistic spatial cognition and spatial language reflect the same underlying structure, that the two systems interact fully and symmetrically, and that spatial language emerges from non-linguistic spatial cognitive representations. The Weak Coupling Hypothesis suggests that there is partial overlap in the structure underlying the two systems, but that there is no necessary interactivity, and that spatial language may emerge independently of non-linguistic spatial cognition. The Decoupling Hypothesis suggests that the two systems emerge on completely independent paths, do not interact, and may reflect similar structures only as a consequence of the functional requirements of spatial behavior. Evidence from three experiments supports the Weak Coupling and Decoupling Hypotheses, and suggests that the acquisition of spatial language emerges at least in part by mechanisms independent of non-linguistic spatial cognition.

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