

The 25th Annual
Boston
University
Conference on
Language
Development



November 3, 4 & 5, 2000

**The Twenty-Fifth Annual
Boston University
Conference on Language
Development**

November 3, 4, and 5, 2000

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

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The raw material of second language acquisition

Susanne E. Carroll
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Pennsylvania State University

Presents an extended analysis of the development of L2 Spanish past tense morphology among L1 English-speaking learners.

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Explores the implications of cross-linguistic structures in simultaneous bilingualism.

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Approaches to Bootstrapping
Phonological, lexical, syntactic and neurophysiological aspects of early language acquisition

Volume 1 & 2

Edited by Jürgen Weissenborn and Barbara Höhle
University of Potsdam

These two volumes present a state-of-the-art interdisciplinary and cross-linguistic overview of recent developments in first language acquisition research.

Language Acquisition and Language Disorders, 23
2000. Hb viii, 299 pp. 1 55619 992 9 \$ 89.00

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Syntax and pragmatics

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Welcome

We would like to welcome all of you to the twenty-fifth annual Boston University Conference on Language Development. As you may already know, this conference was started by Paula Menyuk in 1976 and has been organized by graduate students in Boston University's Program in Applied Linguistics ever since. Over the years, various faculty members have generously given their time and energy as advisors to the conference, and several generations of graduate students have achieved continuity from one year to the next. The organizers have been honored to host participants from around the world, including linguists, psychologists, and other researchers of language acquisition and development. We thank them all for the research accomplishments they have shared with us here over the past quarter century.

At this year's conference, we are honored to have Lois Bloom of Teachers College, Columbia University, and Nina Hyams of UCLA as our featured speakers. Professor Bloom will present Friday's keynote address, "Language acquisition and the child: Developmental and theoretical tensions." Saturday's program will close with Professor Hyams' plenary address, which is entitled "Now you hear it, now you don't: The nature of optionality in early grammar." Both addresses will be followed by receptions.

The rest of the program is devoted to a wide range of papers chosen from submitted abstracts. This year we received over 330 submissions, each of which was sent out to five reviewers for anonymous review. Of these, 90 papers were selected for presentation. We are sorry not to have had space to include more of the many excellent submissions we received. We have also 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.

We are committed to continuing 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 2000 Conference Committee

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For general information about the conference, visit our website at:

<http://www.bu.edu/linguistics/APPLIED/conference.html>

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, and 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 the 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 for our web and e-mail account. In addition, we are indebted to the School of Education for the resources they so generously made available to us throughout the year.

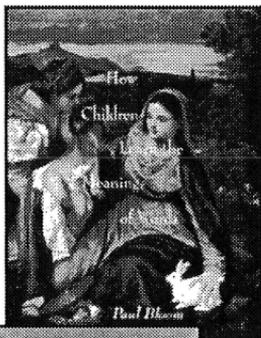
Our greatest thanks and appreciation go to our faculty advisor, Mary Catherine O'Connor. Professor O'Connor has been both beacon and anchor to us, providing us with the guidance and the support without which the conference may well have foundered. We are also very grateful for the help and advice provided by Professor Shanley Allen in the preparation of abstracts for the reviewers and throughout the organization of the conference.

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 Staci Simoes of Conference Services have ensured that we have the proper equipment, facilities and refreshments during the conference. We are also very grateful to Laurie Shaffer 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 grateful for the thought and care which our reviewers gave each submission.

Shanley Allen	Marco Haverkort	Carol Neidle
Arto Anttila	Lowry Hemphill	Elissa Newport
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Ruth Berman	Aafke Hulk	Asli Ozyurek
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The
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Press



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Paul Bloom

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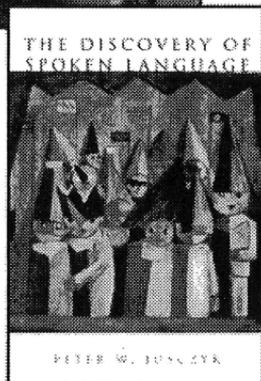
The Discovery of Spoken Language

Peter W. Jusczyk

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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 2^d 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

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

Nina Hyams will give the Plenary Address on Saturday afternoon at 5:00 PM, also in Metcalf Hall (Large). There will be a wine and hors d'oeuvres reception following the address in Metcalf Hall (Small).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parking is available in: The Warren Towers Garage, 700 Commonwealth 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 68.

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 26th Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development is tentatively scheduled to be held on November 2, 3, and 4, 2001, at Boston University.

Friday 9:00 AM

Metcalf Hall (Large)

**Phonetic cues to phonological acquisition:
Evidence from L2 syllabification**

Jeffrey Steele, McGill University

In this paper I argue that L2 learners use phonetic cues in the resetting of syllabification-related parameters. The data come from an elicited production test consisting of repetition, reading, and naming tasks designed to test the syllabification of word-final clusters by 47 beginner, intermediate, and advanced English learners of French. While transferred parameter settings alone would predict that early English learners of French should begin by syllabifying word-final obstruent-liquid clusters with a syllabic liquid (e.g., *couple*: /kʊpl/ → [ku.pɫ]), only 1% of tokens contained syllabic liquids. Rather, learners syllabified such clusters via vowel epenthesis (e.g., kʊpl/ → [ku.pɫə]). I propose that the absence of syllabifications involving syllabic liquids is directly related to phonetic properties of the input; specifically, the presence or absence of voicing and of velarization on the /l/ of the target form [ku.pɫ] serve as cues to the onset syllabification of target C/l-clusters for the English learners.

Friday 9:30 AM

Metcalf Hall (Large)

**A phonetic-phonological analysis of syllable omissions:
Striking comparisons between children with
normally developing language and SLI**

Allyson Carter, Indiana University

Two-year-olds with normally developing language (NL) and older children with SLI similarly omit initial weak syllables from polysyllabic words ('banána' ~ 'nána'). Previous research found phonetic evidence for omitted syllables in NL children (Carter & Gerken 1998). This research asked whether, since superficially the phenomenon appears identical between groups, phonetic evidence could be found for omissions for either group. An acoustic analysis that compared sentences containing reduced disyllabic forms to sentences with similar, unreduced disyllabic words (e.g., "Pat_cinda" [Lucinda] vs. "Pat Cindy"), produced by thirteen NL children and fourteen SLI, revealed for both groups a significantly longer duration for verb-onset to name-onset of '_cinda'-type sentences, indicating that although segmental material is omitted, a prosodic trace remains. In addition, a phonological examination showed similarities between groups in sentential and syllabic factors that affect omission rates, as well as an interesting difference suggesting different strategies the groups use in acquiring adult targets.

The prosodic characteristics and distribution of filler syllables

Thomas Pepinsky, Katherine Demuth, and Brian Roark
Brown University

The status of ‘filler syllables’ in children’s early speech has long been a controversial issue (Peters 1983, 1995). This paper reports on a study of ‘fillers’ in an English-speaking child at the one word stage of development, providing distributional, prosodic and acoustic evidence for the status of ‘filler syllables’. Distributional analysis showed that the same lexical item often occurred both with and without a filler syllable, but that in those contexts where a filler did occur, the discourse target was another word—either a closed or an open class item. These findings provide evidence of prosodic constraints on early productions, limiting early phonological phrases to a foot plus a preceding unfooted syllable—forms more frequently found in early Spanish (e.g., Gennari & Demuth 1997; Lleó 1997, 1998). The implications of these findings, given the fact that this child was receiving bilingual English/Spanish input, are discussed.

BREAK: 10:30–11:00

Learning to identify spoken words

Cynthia L. Fisher, University of Illinois
Barbara A. Church, SUNY at Buffalo

How do we learn to identify words despite variability in their sound patterns? In a preferential looking task, 21-month-olds more rapidly identified words that had been presented twice in an initial study phase than words that had not been heard earlier, showing long-term auditory priming. Further experiments using an elicited imitation task revealed that the representations underlying auditory priming in preschoolers include both abstract and specific information about words: Preschoolers more accurately identified and repeated studied than new words, though all studied words changed pronunciation (e.g., /tʌ.tl/-/tʌ.rl/) from study to test. Other children more accurately identified words that had the same pronunciation at study and test (e.g., /tʌ.tl/-/tʌ.tl/) than words that changed pronunciation from study to test. Word identification benefits incrementally from each experience with a word, and rapidly formed representations of spoken words include components abstract enough to support identification of words across changes in pronunciation, yet also encode specific information about how each word was pronounced.

On the origins of infants' lexical parsing preferences

Daniel Swingley, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

English-learning infants hearing continuous speech tend to pull out Strong-Weak (SW) bisyllables as units, but not Weak-Strong (WS) bisyllables, as demonstrated in several experiments. We propose that this parsing heuristic is learned as a generalization from SW words extracted using a developmentally prior heuristic, also demonstrated experimentally, that groups statistically co-occurring syllables into units. Analyses of corpora of speech directed to infants reveal that important preconditions for the success of this generalization are met: frequent syllables that are likely to co-occur are also likely to be SW words.

Frequently occurring elements can act as anchors in linguistic input

Rebecca L. Gomez, Johns Hopkins University

Jessica Maye, University of Rochester

LouAnn Gerken, University of Arizona

Learning accounts of language acquisition rely heavily on frequently occurring elements (e.g., patterns of agreement between auxiliaries and verb inflections, or frequently occurring determiners signaling noun phrases). Such regularities are thought to act as anchors in the input, signaling syntactic structure. But do they really aid learning? If so, how? One possibility is that learners are particularly sensitive to invariant structure so that cues occurring in highly variable contexts are perceptually salient. We tested this possibility by manipulating the variability of the context in which we embedded frequently occurring patterns. With great enough variability of context, infants should abandon memory-based processing in favor of detection of invariant structure. Indeed, 17-month-olds capitalized on frequently occurring cues in high- but not low-variability conditions. These findings are important for demonstrating the conditions under which infants are able to use frequently occurring patterns as anchors in linguistic input.

LUNCH BREAK: 12:30–2:00

Friday 9:00 AM

Conference Auditorium

The interpretation of two kinds of relative clauses in English-French interlanguage

Laurent Dekydtspotter, Rex A. Sprouse, and Erin K. Gibson
Indiana University

French exhibits the paradigm in (1):

- (1a) (Le) peu de livres [que Marie a achetés l'année dernière] coûtent chers
the few (of) books that Marie bought last year cost expensive
- (1b) *(Le) peu [que Marie a acheté de livres l'année dernière] coûtent chers

In (1a), *le peu* requires an interpretation where all the books that Mary bought last year were expensive (maximalization), whereas *peu* alone allows an interpretation where a small subset were expensive (non-maximalization). Universal principles at the syntax-semantics interface impose maximalization on the discontinuous syntax in (1b).

Our study shows (1) that sensitivity to the incompatibility of [*le*] with [-continuous] sharpens during English-French interlanguage development and (2) even with contextually inappropriate absence of *le*, word order alone suffices to skew interpretation in the predicted direction for English-French learners at all levels. In the absence of relevant input, these findings point to extreme domain-specificity in L2 knowledge.

Friday 9:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

Viewpoint aspect in Bulgarian-English interlanguage

Roumyana Slabakova, University of Iowa

This paper studies the semantic interpretations Bulgarian-speaking learners assign to English verbal forms (the present simple, present progressive, bare infinitive and *-ing* forms). Unlike Bulgarian, English present simple of eventive predicates lacks a continuous reading. With stative predicates, however, the continuous reading of the English present is possible, while the progressive brings forward a temporary state reading. Furthermore, unlike Bulgarian infinitives, English bare infinitives entail a completed event. The Bulgarian-English viewpoint aspect contrast presents a poverty of the stimulus problem to learners. A Truth Value Judgment Task and a guided composition task were administered to 113 Bulgarian learners of English and 26 controls. Results show that L2 learners at all proficiency levels are aware of the English viewpoint aspect entailments. These results suggest that L2 learners are able to learn properties of the grammar that are not explicitly taught in language classrooms. In sum, knowledge of semantic entailments is argued to be constrained by Universal Grammar.

Case drop and specificity in L2 Korean and Japanese

Myunghyun Yoo, Yuhko Kayama, Mizuki Mazzotta, and Lydia White
McGill University

Japanese and Korean accusative case markers can be dropped. Presence or absence of case markers interacts with word order and affects the interpretation of the DP. Accusative DPs lacking case markers must be adjacent to the verb and are interpreted as non-specific, while case-marked DPs need not be adjacent to the verb and are specific. An experiment was conducted on adult learners of Korean and Japanese. One task was a grammaticality judgment task, involving basic SOV and scrambled OSV word orders, with accusative case markers present or absent. The second task was an interpretive task: subjects read a series of brief stories, each followed by a sentence in Korean or Japanese, with accusative case markers either present or absent. The stories set up contexts for specific or non-specific readings; subjects had to indicate whether each sentence was appropriate. Results suggest that L2 learners have unconscious knowledge of these constraints on case-drop.

BREAK: 10:30–11:00

Functional categories in child L2 acquisition

Belma Haznedar, Bogazici University

Recent work on L2 acquisition has dealt with questions concerning a direct relationship between the acquisition of inflectional morphology and the development of functional categories (e.g., Eubank 1993/94, 1996; Vainikka & Young-Scholten 1994, 1996). For Eubank and Vainikka & Young-Scholten, missing verbal inflectional morphology in early L2 acquisition is associated with missing functional categories. On the basis of longitudinal data from a Turkish child L2 learner of English, this paper investigates the acquisition of inflectional morphology and the development of CP, focusing on Vainikka & Young-Scholten's theory of successive developmental sequence of VP-IP-CP. While verbal functional elements 3sg *s* and past tense forms are not produced early on, yes/no & wh-questions and complement clauses are productively used during the same period, providing evidence for CP. Results: (i) No developmental relation exists between the use of verb inflection and CP-related elements. (ii) There is no evidence for Vainikka & Young-Scholten's theory of successive developmental sequence of VP-IP-CP.

Morphological transfer effects in child L2 acquisition of English double-object datives

Melinda Whong-Barr and Bonnie D. Schwartz
University of Durham

In English, only subsets of *to*- and *for*-dative verbs allow **DP-DP** alternates to **DP-PP** forms. By contrast, Japanese disallows double accusative objects (Harada 1973; Poser 1981), whereas Korean disallows them with (directional)*to*-dative verbs but **ALLOWS** double accusatives with *for*-dative verbs, when *cwu-* ('*BEN*(*EFACTIVE*)') appears (Choe 1986; Hong 1991).

We investigate whether L2 children:

- (i) like L1 children, exhibit DP-DP overgeneralization with dative verbs (e.g., Gropen, Pinker, Hollander, Goldberg & Wilson 1989);
- (ii) like L2 adults, exhibit transfer.

Oral grammaticality judgments (McDaniel & Cairns 1990) from Japanese, Korean and English children (6;6–10;10) reveal: all groups overgeneralize with ***to*-datives**, whereas for ***for*-datives**, the L2 groups have distinct profiles.

Combining Full Transfer/Full Access (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996) with Montrul's (1997) proposal regarding argument-changing properties of morphology, we argue that the differential L2 behavior stems from L1 ditransitives: only Korean children **'LOOK FOR'** an overt licensor analogous to *cwu-* ('*BEN*'), gradually acquiring ***for*-dative** double objects verb by verb.

Morphological variability in child SLA: An account integrating truncation and missing inflection

Philippe Prévost, Laval University

In this paper, I examine two hypotheses accounting for the production of finite and nonfinite declaratives in early child L2 acquisition. The Truncation Hypothesis holds that different roots are involved: root infinitives (RIs) are VPs underlyingly, whereas finite clauses are IPs or CPs. The Missing Inflection Hypothesis claims that there is no structural difference between RIs and finite declaratives: they all are, minimally, IPs underlyingly. I investigate contradicting predictions made by the two approaches in longitudinal data from an English-speaking child learning German. While both finite and nonfinite declaratives are found early on, two complementary sets of data can be accounted for by the two hypotheses. Main verbs bearing a nonfinite marker are restricted to non-finite positions, which is consistent with truncation. Uninflected forms occur in the same (finite) positions as verbs inflected for person and number, which suggests they are finite. This latter finding supports the MIH.

LUNCH BREAK: 12:30–2:00

*Friday 9:00 AM**Terrace Lounge***Early morphological development in Spanish-speaking children**

Maria Ileana Jiménez-Castro, Indiana University

This study examined early development of INFL in Spanish-speaking children to test the predictions of Grinstead's, Radford's, and Hyams' accounts, for the acquisition of INFL features. This study investigated whether there is sufficient evidence to conclude that Spanish-speaking children demonstrate use of all functional aspects of INFL from the very beginning of the sentence construction stage of acquisition, or whether some INFL features are acquired sequentially as independent units. Ten Puerto Rican Spanish-speaking children participated in two elicitation tasks that were designed to elicit obligatory use of case, tense, and agreement features. Results suggest a piecemeal pattern of acquisition rather than acquisition of all INFL features as a bundle, and that a full complement of agreement is needed before case is assigned. Results support the position that tense and agreement are independent during acquisition, while case and agreement are structurally united. Findings have clinical and theoretical implications for Spanish-language acquisition.

*Friday 9:30 AM**Terrace Lounge***Early bare stems in an agglutinative language**Natalie Batman-Ratyosyan and Karin Stromswold
Rutgers University

Children acquiring morphologically rich languages are reported to be productive with grammatical morphemes from the earliest stages of acquisition, forming multimorphemic words prior to the production of multiword utterances. We analyzed spontaneous speech data from 3 monolingual Turkish-speaking children. Our results suggest that not all children acquiring agglutinative languages produce multimorphemic words before they produce multiword utterances and that some children productively use only a few inflections by 24 months. Paradoxically, perhaps the strongest evidence for early acquisition of inflectional morphology is that Turkish children's first utterances are bare lexical stems. Given that these are very rare in Turkish, the fact that children can isolate them indicates that children can decompose multimorphemic words into stem + suffixes. Our findings are consistent with Strong Continuity acquisitional theories and with linguistic theories that propose a universal ordering for functional projections (Cinque 1999). Our results also have implications for accounts of lexical learning.

The early expression of finiteness in K'iche' Maya

Clifton Pye, University of Kansas

This paper examines the acquisition of verbal inflection in K'iche' Maya. K'iche' verbs have obligatory inflections for aspect and agreement. They also take termination affixes which simultaneously register verb transitivity, aspect, and derivational status. I examine verb use for three K'iche' children between the ages of 2;1 and 3;8. While all three children initially produced verbs without aspect and agreement marking, they also produced forms with missing verb stems. The part of the verb that K'iche' children produce the most reliably is its most complex morpheme, the termination suffix. The children distinguished between the transitive and intransitive verb stems to mark ergative agreement and used the correct termination suffix. K'iche' children even alternate appropriately between forms with and without the termination suffix. The K'iche' findings, like those for Inuktitut, demonstrate the degree to which current acquisition theory fails to account for all the facts.

BREAK: 10:30–11:00

A discourse-pragmatic explanation for argument realization and omission in English and Japanese children's speech

A. M. Sonia Guerriero, Amy Cooper, and Yuriko Oshima-Takane, McGill University
Yoko Kuriyama, International Christian University

The relationship between argument form (null, pronominal, lexical), pragmatic information (given, new), and surface syntax (subject, object) was investigated in six English-speaking and six Japanese-speaking children at 36 months of age. Analysis of the distribution patterns reveals that children of both language groups use the same discourse-pragmatic strategies for argument realization and omission. "Given" information tended to be null or pronominalized and was most often located in subject position of transitive sentences, while "new" information was most often lexical and located in object position of transitive sentences or subject position of intransitive sentences. These findings indicate that discourse-pragmatic strategies are crosslinguistic and that they may be the underlying motivation for both the form of an argument and its location in a sentence. It is suggested that discourse-pragmatic strategies may explain the null argument phenomenon and the observed null subject/null object asymmetry in early child language.

**Discourse structure in a gestural communication system:
The robustness of ergativity**

Bari Wieselmann Schulman and Susan Goldin-Meadow, University of Chicago

Deaf children whose hearing losses prevent them from making use of spoken language, and whose hearing parents have chosen not to expose them to conventional sign language, use gesture to communicate. Moreover, these gestures have many, though not all, of the properties of conventional language systems. We focus here on one of these properties—ergative structure at the sentence level—and ask whether it has roots in discourse. We observed the spontaneous interaction of a deaf child and his hearing mother, and found that new elements were often introduced into the conversation as patients or intransitive actors, and rarely as transitive actors, thus exhibiting an ergative pattern. Mother also exhibited this ergative pattern in her gestures at the discourse level, but not at the sentence level. Ergative structure is robust at the discourse level and, in the absence of a language model, may be robust at the sentence level as well.

Young children's use of discourse cues in language comprehension

Hyun-joo Song, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The present studies explored young children's expectations about referential relationships between sentences. Three- and 3.5-year-olds listened to short stories accompanied by pictures and repeated the final sentence of each story. The final sentences differed in whether they (a) had pronoun or lexical subjects, and (b) continued the prior subject or shifted to a new one. Children more accurately comprehended and repeated sentences with continued subjects. Pronoun subject sentences were easier to repeat than lexical subject sentences regardless of subject continuity. This finding also held true when lexical noun subjects were systematically stressed. In adults' listening and reading time experiments with the same stories, sentences with continued subjects were more quickly understood than those with shifted subjects. Pronoun subject sentences were easier than lexical subject sentences with continued subjects, but not with shifted subjects. These studies provide the first evidence that young children expect subject continuity in stories as adults do.

LUNCH BREAK: 12:30–2:00

*Friday 2:00 PM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***Word-to-world mapping in Mandarin and English: A crosslinguistic comparison of the situational concomitants of word use**

Jesse Snedeker and Peggy Li, University of Pennsylvania

Crosslinguistic variation in vocabulary composition is usually attributed to variation in the structural properties of languages and correlated differences in the frequency and salience of different words. Here we explore whether another property of the input, the extralinguistic contexts of word use, can account for the similarities and differences in the early vocabularies of English and Mandarin learners. We assessed the potency of word-to-world mapping in each language by asking adult native-speakers to identify nouns and verbs from their extralinguistic contexts in maternal speech. Verbs were identified more often in Mandarin while nouns were identified more often in English. This pattern appears to be attributable both to differences in response bias and to differences in the types of words that the mothers used. Thus, the information available in extralinguistic contexts can help account for the early acquisition of verbs in Mandarin and for the predominantly nominal vocabulary of English learners.

*Friday 2:30 PM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***The structure of early noun vocabularies depends on the language being learned**

Hanako Yoshida and Linda B. Smith, Indiana University

The results of four experiments suggest that Japanese-speaking children learn more animal names and do so earlier than do English-speaking children, who acquire more artifact names earlier. Two experiments ($n=106$ and $n=58$) examined the first 300 nouns acquired by children learning each language. At all developmental points, Japanese-speaking children knew proportionately more (and absolutely more) animal names than English-speaking children. Two experiments ($n=40$ and $n=40$) used a novel noun generalization task to examine what young children know about the different organizations of animal and artifact categories. The results suggest that early learners of English overgeneralize what they know about artifacts to animals whereas early learners of Japanese overgeneralize what they know about animals to artifacts. The role of culture, input, and linguistic structure in early noun acquisitions will be discussed.

Acoustical salience of nouns and verbs in Korean infant-directed speech

Soyoung Lee and Barbara Davis
University of Texas, Austin

This study investigated the acoustic salience of nouns and verbs between infant directed speech (IDS) and adult directed speech (ADS) in Korean to test whether verbs are more perceptually salient than nouns. This issue has been investigated by counting the number of nouns and verbs in Korean mothers' speech. Few acoustic examinations have been conducted. In general, Korean IDS showed higher F0 and longer duration than ADS. In IDS, verbs showed higher F0 and longer duration than nouns. However, descriptions of pitch contours in the three different types of utterances showed that the verb stem in IDS was not always salient. In case of verb stem plus suffix, the suffix showed higher F0 and longer duration than nouns and the syllable of verb stem. These results indicate that verbs in Korean IDS are not always more salient than nouns.

BREAK: 3:30–4:00

Structure in parents' input: Effects of categorization versus comparison

Catherine Sandhofer, Indiana University

This work presents evidence that by subtle means, specifically by encouraging categorization versus comparison, parents structure input to children in ways that profoundly affect learning. In Study 1 the input parents provide to children when talking about dimensional adjectives is examined and the degree to which utterances emphasize categorization or comparison is assessed using two converging measures. The results show that in speech to children, parents overwhelmingly emphasize categorization when talking about the dimensions of color or number, but emphasize comparison when talking about the dimension of size. In Study 2 this parent input data is used to predict the learning trajectories of comprehension, production, and selective attention for three different dimensions. The results suggest that using a comparison-emphasizing structure helps children to pick out the relevant dimension (necessary for selective attention), and categorization-emphasizing structure helps children correctly comprehend and produce dimension terms (but not necessarily selectively attend).

Word learning as Bayesian inference: The case of nested categories

Fei Xu, Northeastern University
Joshua Tenenbaum, Stanford University

We report two experiments with adults and children on how they acquire category labels at the superordinate, basic, and subordinate level by varying how many examples are labeled (1 vs. 3) and how variable the examples are (three green peppers vs. three peppers of different color vs. a pepper, a carrot, and an eggplant). Our results show that both adults and children take into account the two variables in their generalization. We then provide a computational model based on Bayesian inference to these results, taking into account both word learning constraints and the input data.

Two toys say more than two pictures: Young children's novel word extension at the superordinate level

Jing Liu, Roberta M. Golinkoff, Jaye H. Goroff, and Quincy A. Carpenter
University of Delaware

A set of match-to-sample picture/object selection tasks was used to examine 3- to 5-year-olds' lexical extension at the superordinate level. Two perceptually dissimilar standards from different basic level categories (e.g., an apple and a banana), a taxonomic choice (e.g., grapes), a thematic choice (e.g., a basket), and two highly similar perceptual choices (e.g., a red hat and a yellow dolphin) were presented. The two standards were given a novel label, e.g., "a dax," and children were asked to "find another kind of dax" among the four choices. When presented with pictures, 5-year-olds selected the grapes 70% of the time whereas 3-year-olds did 40% of the time. However, when three-dimensional objects were used, 3-year-olds selected the grapes 80% of the time. Five-year-olds selected grapes 67% of the time even when presented with a single three-dimensional standard (i.e., either an apple or a banana). Yet, 3-year-olds failed to show reliable superordinate word extension when presented with a single three-dimensional standard. These findings indicate: 1) Young children's understanding of superordinate words involves multiple exemplars from different basic level categories; 2) Comprehension of the nature of object representation is important in superordinate word acquisition; 3) There is a progression of superordinate word extension from multiple exemplars to single exemplars and from three-dimensional objects to pictures between 3 to 5 years of age.

DINNER BREAK: 5:30-8:00

*Friday 2:00 PM**Conference Auditorium*

**Dual language impairment:
Evidence from French-English bilingual children with SLI**

Johanne Paradis, University of Alberta
Fred Genesee and Martha Crago, McGill University
Mabel Rice, University of Kansas

Can a bilingual have SLI in one language and not the other? In other words, is SLI inherent in the language faculty or can it be tagged to an individual language? If SLI is manifest in one or both languages of a bilingual, do the patterns look like the patterns shown by monolinguals in each language? It is possible that a bilingual child's two languages interact in development, resulting in unique acquisition patterns. The present study addresses these questions with data from French-English bilingual children with SLI and from age-matched monolingual French- and English-speaking children with SLI. Using the Extended Optional Infinitive account of SLI, the children's spontaneous speech samples were analysed for the use of tense and non-tense morphemes in obligatory contexts. Results reveal that the bilingual children have impairment in both languages, and moreover, have similar patterns to their monolingual peers.

*Friday 2:30 PM**Conference Auditorium*

A tool for characterizing grammatical morphology development

Patricia Deevy, Purdue University
Carol Miller, Pennsylvania State University

In acquiring grammatical morphology, English-speaking children first use morphemes inconsistently, eventually producing them with complete accuracy. It has been claimed that initially, correct productions reflect the memorization of whole forms while at later stages, correct productions result from the application of a general rule. Children with specific language impairment (SLI) show ongoing difficulty with grammatical morphology. This has been claimed to reflect an inability to use productive rules and exclusive reliance on memorization. We present a method, initially used by Leonard and Miller (1998), to examine the role of memorization in SLI children's productions. The analysis involves measuring rates of omission as a function of lexical verb type. We extend this analysis to the speech of normally developing preschoolers. Although in neither case is evidence for memorization found, the patterns of use and omission differ across populations and across MLU. We show how the method can be used to explore hypotheses about the development of morphology.

Computational complexity over time: The development of functional categories in French-speaking children with SLI

Celia Jakubowicz, Sonia De Jesus, Catherine Durand, Sophie Monpiou,
Catherine Rigaut, and Marlies van der Velde
University of Paris, CNRS

Twelve normal children and twelve SLI children participated in a two-round study. Testing was carried out with a 13-month interval between the two rounds. Initially, normal and SLI children were aged 3;3 and 6;4 respectively. Results showed that for normal children Determiners, Nominative Clitics and Present are already acquired at age 3;3, while Accusative Clitics and Past Tense get established at about 4;4 on average. At the second round, SLI children show a ceiling effect for Determiners and a near to ceiling result for Nominative Clitics and Present. Half of these children slightly improve regarding Past Tense use and only one regarding Accusative Clitics. For these two categories mean performance remains significantly lower for SLI than for younger controls. We argue that SLI children may catch up with respect to kernel functional categories, while they may lag behind normal children for a relatively long (or even indefinite) time with respect to computationally complex categories, particularly those involving non-canonical merge of arguments.

BREAK: 3:30–4:00

The expression of specificity in a language without determiners: Evidence from child Russian

Sergey Avrutin, Utrecht University
Dina Brun, Yale University

We present data from spontaneous speech of 4 Russian-speaking children between 1;7 and 2;3. In Russian, specificity is expressed through word order (there are no overt determiners in this language.) Pre-verbal nominals are interpreted as specific, and postverbal as non-specific, independently of the grammatical function.

We demonstrate that: 1) Even though adult Russian provides no overt lexical positive evidence with respect to specificity, children know and use at a very early age the mapping between a structural position and a particular interpretational property of a nominal (e.g., specificity). We propose that such a mapping is part of an innate (or very early-acquired) knowledge of the syntax-discourse interface rules. 2) Children make significantly more mistakes placing “non-specific” subjects in the pre-verbal position than they make with objects. We propose that the difference is due to the fact that subjects are weak topics and, thus, are more easily presupposed by children (as more discourse-prominent elements). 3) In finite clauses, both specific and non-specific objects are observed. However, in non-finite clauses, objects are overwhelmingly specific. We argue that this is consistent with the analyses of RIs as descriptions of presupposed events.

The role of aspect in licensing object drop

Erica Thrift, HIL/University of Amsterdam

Nina Hyams, UCLA

Dutch children often drop obligatory objects during linguistic development (Krämer 1995, De Haan & Tuijnman 1988). We show that these null objects are not adult-like topic drop, contra De Haan & Tuijnman. Object drop rarely occurs sentence-initially, the position associated with topic drop (1).

- (1) a. *Maria doet.*
 Maria does (Arnold 2;08)
- b. *nog niet aansteken.*
 still not turn-on-INF (Arnold 2;09)

The data, based on CHILDES transcripts (MacWhinney & Snow 1990), indicate a higher rate of object drop with nonfinite verbs than finite verbs. Particle verbs (i.e., telic) (1b) exhibit higher rates of object drop and nonfiniteness than non-particle verbs (1a).

We propose that Dutch children project AspP in telic predicates. The verb raises to Asp and the object to SpecAspP, resulting in a Spec-head configuration licensing the null object. The lower proportion of finite particle verbs suggests that Asp can act as a temporal or modal variable, vitiating the need for T (cf. Becker 1999).

Expletive determiners in child Dutch and Spanish

Sergio Baauw, Utrecht University

In this talk we will present recent experimental evidence showing that children do not only have difficulties with the proper use of definite articles to refer to the discourse (Karmiloff-Smith 1979; Bamberg 1987), but that in some syntactic contexts they may interpret definite articles as expletive determiners, i.e., definite articles without semantic content. This explains, among other things, why Dutch-speaking children allow the distributive reading of the definite article in (1), which is marginal in the adult language (although possible in Spanish).

- (1) ??De jongetjes hebben het hoofd omgedraaid.
 the boys have the head turned
 ‘The boys turned their heads.’

We will argue that this is the result of the fact that children may keep the D position underspecified for f features, long after the age at which they no longer drop articles (Hyams & Hoekstra 1995; Coopmans, Hyams & Philip 1996).

DINNER BREAK: 5:30–8:00

Friday 2:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

**The acquisition of in-situ WH-questions and WH-indefinites
in Jakarta Indonesian**

Peter Cole, University of Delaware

David Gil, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology

Gabiella Hermon, University of Delaware

Uri Tadmor, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology

In-situ WH-questions are traditionally analysed as involving LF WH-movement. Recently, evidence has been presented that WH-in-situ are variables rather than question-operators.

The two analyses make different acquisition predictions: LF-movement predicts that in-situ WH-questions are acquired *after* WH-indefinites (since LF movement is known to cause a delay), while the WH-variable hypothesis makes no such prediction. However, in our corpus of 42,967 Indonesian utterances, in-situ WH-questions are acquired *before* WH-indefinites.

We describe the distribution of WH-forms in our corpus, proposing an analysis of the question and indefinite interpretations which explains the acquisitional facts: WH-words are free variables. In the unmarked case, this variable results in an “open sentence”, interpreted as a WH-question. Whereas questions straightforwardly reflect the “free variable” meaning of WH-words, indefinite interpretations also require the bounding of the variable within the domain of a negative/modal licenser. The additional step explains why WH-indefinites are acquired after in-situ WH-questions.

Friday 2:30 PM

Terrace Lounge

**Developmental issues in the acquisition
of Japanese unaccusatives and passives**

Tetsuya Sano, Meiji Gakuin University

Mika Endo, Tokyo Women's Medical University

Kyoko Yamakoshi, Cornell University

In this paper, with Japanese experimental data, we reexamine two competing accounts of the development of English passives: Borer and Wexler's (1987) A-chain Maturation and Fox and Grodzinsky's (1998) hypothesis that children cannot transfer a theta-role to the by-phrase in passives and comprehend actional by-phrases by default Agent assignment. First, we observe that children are good at distinguishing unaccusatives and corresponding transitives, although they show morphological alternations in Japanese and Japanese allows null arguments. Second, we observe that children are significantly better with full unaccusatives than with full passives.

- (1) a. buta-san ga zou-san ni tukamat-ta. (full unaccusative)
 pig nom elephant by caught(unacc.)
 ‘The pig was caught by the elephant’

- b. buta-san ga zou-san ni tukamae-rare-ta. (full passive)
pig nom elephant by was-caught(passive) (=same as above)

Based on these, we argue for the continuity (cf. Pinker 1984, Hyams 1986) of A-chains and theta-role transfer to the by-phrase in passives.

Friday 3:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

Subject-object asymmetry in child comprehension of WH expressions

Wouter van Atteveldt, Matthijs van der Meer, Peter Coopmans, and William Philip
Utrecht University

A number of experimental studies in English suggest that long after children have fully acquired knowledge of the adult grammar of WH movement, they nonetheless show a non-adultlike preference for subject readings of constituent WH expressions. In this paper we show that the same preference strongly affects Dutch preschool children's comprehension of WH questions. We argue that the phenomenon reflects a universal processing constraint in L1 development and that this child/adult processing discontinuity must be taken into account to obtain a clear picture of child linguistic competence in a number of domains. In particular we show how a failure to recognize this factor can lead to invalid conclusions regarding Dutch children's knowledge of a specificity constraint of Dutch adult grammar.

BREAK: 3:30–4:00

Friday 4:00 PM

Terrace Lounge

False belief and sentence complements in children with Specific Language Impairment

Carol Miller, Pennsylvania State University

There is evidence that language development plays a causal role in the development of theory of mind, specifically in the ability to succeed on false belief tasks. Children with specific language impairment (SLI) are delayed in language development relative to same-age peers, but little is known about their theory of mind abilities. In this study, 17 preschoolers with SLI, 14 normally developing children of similar age (NDA), and 12 normally developing children with similar language comprehension abilities (NDC) participated in false belief tasks and a measure of comprehension of false sentence complements. The false belief tasks varied in linguistic and conceptual complexity. Children with SLI performed as well as the NDA group, and better than the NDC group when tasks' demands were low. Performance on the sentence complement task correlated significantly with false belief performance only for the NDA group. Implications for SLI and for language and theory of mind are discussed.

Learning what is a word

Eliana Colunga and Linda B. Smith, Indiana University

Does learning words start as associations and become something else? In a recent study, Woodward and Hoyne (1999) showed that 13-month-olds readily associate both words and non-linguistic sounds with object categories. In contrast, 20-month-olds associate words but not non-linguistic sounds with object categories. Are children learning what forms count as words? If so, just what defining features are they learning? The research reported here addressed these questions in a network-simulation study and in empirical tests with children. Our results support the idea that, although what younger and older children are doing may seem different, their early mapping of both words and non-words to objects and their progress in limiting word forms can be explained by associative processes: at the start, at the end, and as the mechanism of change.

*Friday 5:00 PM**Terrace Lounge*

Language outcomes of 42 hemispherectomies: If neither side nor age at insult matters, then what does?

Stella de Bode and Susan Curtiss, UCLA

Our previous research indicated that neither side of resection nor age at insult/surgery allowed for an accurate prediction of language outcome. To make sense of these data, we developed a program of research through which we now hypothesize that variable linguistic outcomes reflect the status and integrity of the remaining hemisphere which, in its turn, depends on etiology.

Our results demonstrated that language outcomes correlated with etiology: the best post-operative language scores were found in Rasmussen's encephalitis with the poorest results in cortical dysplasia of the entire hemisphere. The outcomes of both cortical dysplasia and infarct groups were also significantly worse than for Rasmussen's encephalitis ($p=0.0008$ & $p=0.0269$).

Furthermore, better language outcomes were positively correlated with post-surgery seizure control ($r=0.312$, $p=0.02$) and motor performance ($r=0.734$, $p=0.0002$). These results led us to hypothesize that linguistic outcomes are, in fact, an epiphenomenon of the integrity of the remaining hemisphere, which, itself, is a function of etiology.

DINNER BREAK: 5:30–8:00

Keynote Address

8:00 PM

Metcalf Hall (Large)

Lois Bloom

Teachers College, Columbia University

Language acquisition and the child: Developmental and theoretical tensions

Dessert reception to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)

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*Saturday 9:30 AM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***Effects of speeded and slowed speech on infant word recognition**

Leher Singh, Heather Bortfeld, Karen Rathbun, and James Morgan
Brown University

Individual words are encountered in many different forms. They can vary in such ways as affective style and focusing stress. To recognize words across contexts, infants must map these variable tokens onto a single word type. We examine the usefulness of an attractor model in characterizing this mapping problem. Input tokens gravitate through multidimensional perceptual space towards clusters based on prototypical structure. As more tokens of a word are encountered, the cluster becomes more dense, thereby strengthening its gravitational influence. Therefore, sparsely-populated clusters may require more time to attract words, whereas dense clusters may attract words rapidly. By manipulating speech rate, we investigated this interaction of cluster density and processing time in 7.5- and 10-month-old infants. Increased processing time facilitated word recognition for younger infants, whereas reduced time hindered word recognition for older infants. These findings provide behavioral support for an attractor model of early word recognition.

*Saturday 10:00 AM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***Word segmentation by 7.5-month-olds:
Why three words do not equal one**

Elizabeth K. Johnson, Johns Hopkins University
Joost van de Weijer, Lund University
Peter W. Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University

The results of a recent study showed that 7.5-month-olds extract tri-syllabic SWS words from fluent speech (Houston et al. 1998). Contrary to predictions by MSS (Metrical Segmentation Strategy), infants do not extract parse SWS words into a trochee and a remaining syllable. In addition to distributional cues, we believe 7.5-month-olds are sensitive to the degree of coarticulation between speech sounds. Using the HPP, we familiarized 2 sets of 24 infants with passages containing 3-word phrases (i.e., "pair of mugs") rather than tri-syllabic words (i.e., "parachute"). Infants listened significantly longer to the individual words such as "pair" during the test phase, but not to the entire 3-word phrase "pair of mugs". We suggest that 7.5-month-olds are sensitive to the greater degree of coarticulation within words as opposed to across word boundaries, and are thus using coarticulatory cues to extract multi-syllabic words from fluent speech.

Coarticulatory cues enhance infants' recognition of syllable sequences in speech

Suzanne Curtin, Toben Mintz, and Dani Byrd
University of Southern California

Recent work has indicated that coarticulatory cues in speech are an important source of information in early word segmentation. This experiment investigates whether the familiarity of a string suffers when it incorporates inappropriate coarticulatory information. After familiarization to a string of CV syllables in which stress was controlled, infants were tested to determine if sequences that appeared coherently in the familiarization string were preferred over those in which each syllable appeared non-adjacently during familiarization. The test phase was conducted so that the items had either appropriate or inappropriate coarticulation. The results indicate that infants tested on items with appropriate coarticulation listened longer to strings that had appeared during familiarization than to the appropriately coarticulated control strings that never occurred during familiarization. Interestingly, when presented with miscoarticulated test items, infants showed no preference for previously familiarized strings. We conclude that appropriate coarticulation enhances infants' memory for syllable sequences in speech.

BREAK: 11:00–11:30

New Developments in CHILDES

Brian MacWhinney, Carnegie Mellon University

The Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES) is an important component of the research infrastructure in the field of language acquisition. Until recently, CHILDES data have been limited to written transcripts derived from audiotapes. In the last five years, the basic CHILDES tools have been extended in eight fundamental ways.

1. Morphological analysis in eight languages.
2. Automatic disambiguation using the POST program.
3. Syntactic analysis for English with the LC-Flex program.
4. CA Transcription in the Jeffersonian system and provision of special fonts for IPA and various non-English orthographies.
5. Text-to-speech linkage using the new Transcriber tool.
6. Video linkage and control of digital video decks.
7. Streaming audio and video over the Internet.
8. Linkage of CHILDES to the new TalkBank project in several allied areas.

These various new facilities will be presented and discussed.

**Re-examining the vocabulary spurt and its implications:
Is there really a sudden change in cognitive development?**

Jennifer Ganger, University of Pittsburgh
Michael Brent, Washington University

It is widely held that children undergo a transition at 16-18 months (or about 50 words) from an initial stage of slow vocabulary growth to a subsequent stage of faster growth—the so-called vocabulary spurt. We asked whether vocabulary growth rates in fact take the form of a spurt and whether they can consequently provide empirical evidence for the existence of a change in cognitive development.

We examined new vocabulary growth data from 17 children and fitted these data with linear, quadratic, and logistic curves (the logistic curve represents a shift between two states and thus best represents the vocabulary spurt). We found that only 3 of the 17 children were best fit by the logistic function. Using the same procedure with data gleaned from Goldfield & Reznick (1990), we found that only 3 of their 18 subjects were better fit by the logistic than the other functions.

LUNCH BREAK: 12:30–2:00

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Saturday 9:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

C-command matters

Jeffrey Lidz and Julien Musolino, University of Pennsylvania

Several studies have shown that 4-year-old children differ from adults in their comprehension of sentences containing negation and a quantificational direct object. Whereas adults allow both scopes of the two quantificational elements, young children systematically interpret negation as taking scope over the object. In sum, children, unlike adults, interpret negation and quantified NPs in their surface positions. These findings leave open whether this isomorphism effect is due to the linear order of the two elements or to their hierarchical configuration. To address this issue, we tested 4-year-old and adult speakers of Kannada on such sentences because in Kannada (unlike English) the direct object precedes but is c-commanded by negation. The Kannada results matched the English results: adults allowed both readings whereas the children interpreted the direct object inside the scope of negation. These results differ from previous results in clearly showing that children's interpretations are limited not by linear order but by hierarchical structure.

Saturday 10:00 AM

Conference Auditorium

**Coreference in child Russian:
Distinguishing syntactic and discourse constraints**

Nina Kazanina and Colin Phillips, University of Maryland

In this paper we show that although adult Russian shows more restrictive coreference possibilities than adult English, child Russian is strikingly similar to child English. Child Russian shows a developmental delay between Binding Condition C and a language-specific semantic constraint on coreference.

A classic study by Crain & McKee (1985) shows that 3-year-old English-speaking children know the constraint on coreference known as 'Condition C' and thus appropriately reject (1-Eng) while accepting (2-Eng):

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| (1) | Eng | * He _i ate an apple, while Mike _j was watching TV. |
| | Rus | * On _i s'el yabloko, poka Mish _j smotrel televizor. |
| (2) | Eng | While he _i was watching TV, Mike _j ate an apple. |
| | Rus | *Poka on _i smotrel televizor, Mish _j s'el yabloko. |

Just like in English, Binding Condition C rules out coreference in sentences like (1-Rus) in Russian. Unlike English, however, Russian also disallows coreference in sentences like (2-Rus).

We argue that apart from Binding Condition C, Russian has another, discourse-related condition, which blocks the coreference in (2-Rus). Evidence comes both from linguistic arguments and from the developmental course of Russian children. The Truth Value Judgment task scores from 44 Russian children aged 2;8-4;11 show a large difference in the children's interpretation of (1-Rus) and (2-Rus) (83% vs. 42% rejection respectively),

thus confirming our hypothesis.

For the language-specific condition which rules out (2-Rus) in Russian we propose a discourse-related anti-agent constraint. We claim that similar constraints can be found in other languages.

Saturday 10:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

The acquisition of disjunction: Evidence for a grammatical view of conversational implicatures

Gennaro Chierchia, University of Milan
Stephen Crain, Andrea Gualmini, University of Maryland
Maria Teresa Guasti, University of Siena
Luisa Meroni, University of Maryland

In two experimental investigations of children's knowledge of conversational implicatures (CIs), children were asked to judge the acceptability of the inclusive-or reading of disjunction. There were two linguistic contexts in each experiment, one Downward Entailing (DE), and the other one not DE. The experimental hypothesis was that children would accept violations of CIs more often in the DE context. Experiment 1 used a Truth Value Judgment task with sentences like *Every dwarf who chose an apple or a banana received a jewel* and *Every dwarf chose an apple or a banana*. The result was a higher acceptance of the inclusive-or reading in the DE context (95% vs. 50% acceptance). Experiment 2 employed the Felicity Judgment task, which presents two sentences at a time; both are logically true, but they differ in appropriateness. Here, children preferred the description which adhered to CIs in the non-DE contexts (93%), revealing a sensitivity to CIs that did not surface in Experiment 1.

BREAK: 11:00–11:30

Saturday 11:30 AM

Conference Auditorium

Universal quantification and the competence/performance distinction

Julien Musolino, University of Pennsylvania

Several studies have shown that 5-year-olds differ from adults in their comprehension of ambiguous sentences like (1) *Every horse didn't jump over the fence* (Musolino 1998, 1999; Musolino, Crain & Thornton 2000). Whereas adults allow both scopes of the two quantificational elements, young children systematically interpret the universally quantified subject outside the scope of negation. Based on the observation that Chinese, unlike English, only allows a wide scope reading for such sentences, Musolino et al. (2000) argue that English-speaking children go through a 'Chinese speaking' stage during which only a wide scope interpretation is available. In this paper, we demonstrate that English-speaking 5-year-olds CAN assign sentences like (1) a narrow scope reading if one manipulates the contexts in such a way as to enhance the salience of that interpretation. We conclude that children and adults have the same underlying grammatical knowledge but different preferences regarding the interpretation of sentences like (1).

Scope and specificity in child language

Yi-ching Su, University of Maryland, College Park

The results from two experiments are used to support the hypothesis that English 'a' is given the value [- specific], while Chinese 'yi-ge' is analyzed as [+ specific] at an early stage of language development, and the default value of specificity causes the scope assignment differences found in previous studies.

The first experiment used sentences like "Mickey Mouse didn't ride a dog" in a context in which Mickey Mouse didn't ride one of three dogs. The acceptance by English-speaking children was 33% (versus adults' 50%, $p < .05$). However, the acceptance of the counterpart sentences by Chinese-speaking children was 77% (versus adults' 64%, not significant). The second experiment used the corresponding Chinese sentence of "Tigger didn't jump over a fence" in a context in which Tigger didn't jump over any of three fences. The acceptance by Chinese-speaking children was only 26% (versus adults' 89%, $p < .01$).

LUNCH BREAK: 12:30-2:00

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*Saturday 9:30 AM**Terrace Lounge*

**Partial Constraint Hypothesis:
Acquisition of the L2 psych verbs in English**

Enchao Shi, University of Arizona

This study reports on evidence for the “Partial Constraint Hypothesis” (PCH). The PCH concerns the nature of L2 predicate representations and their relation to L2 syntactic representations. It conjectures that adult L2 learners largely represent L2 predicates through the medium of the L1 equivalents, but their access to the L1 representations has limits. It is critically constrained by the canonical properties of the L1 equivalents in the sense of Grimshaw’s (1981) CSR and Rappaport and Levin’s (1988) PAS. An empirical study was conducted in which the acquisition of 23 English psych verbs was examined. Twenty Mandarin Chinese-speaking adult L2 learners participated in the study, whose L2 development had reached the ultimate stage. Results indicate that their final representations of the L2 psych predicates are still constrained by the PCH, contrary to what has been previously predicted as in Juffs (1996), Montrul (1998), Sorace (1995), and White et al. (1998).

*Saturday 10:00 AM**Terrace Lounge*

**The status of abstract features in interlanguage:
Gender and number in L2 Spanish**

Lydia White, Elena Valenzuela, Martyna Kozłowska-Macgregor,
Ingrid Leung, and Hela Ben Ayed
McGill University

The status of grammatical features (tense, agreement, gender, number, etc.) is currently disputed. According to Hawkins (1998), L2 learners are restricted to features exemplified in the L1. In contrast, ‘full access’ theories claim that L2 features are acquirable (Schwartz & Sprouse 1994; White 1996). We examine features in L2 Spanish DPs (+ gender, + number). Subjects are adult learners, whose L1s are French (+ gender, + number) and English (- gender, + number). A picture identification task was developed and production data were elicited. Results from the picture identification task show: (a) L1 effects at lower proficiency levels; (b) greater accuracy with number than gender; (c) advanced learners are accurate with gender regardless of L1. Comparison across the two tasks suggests greater accuracy in interpretation than production. The results argue against the FFH and suggest that underlying knowledge of abstract features is revealed more clearly in tasks not involving production.

L1 influence with overt/non-overt morphology in the L2 acquisition of argument structure: Evidence from English and Turkish causative verbs

Silvina Montrul, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

This study presents two related experiments on the acquisition of two classes of causative verbs: change of state verbs (*break*) and psychological verbs (*frighten*) in English and Turkish as L2s by speakers of English, Spanish, Turkish, and Japanese L1s. These verbs participate in the causative/inchoative alternation crosslinguistically, but the morphological expression of the alternation varies in the four languages. English has predominantly zero morphology, Spanish has anticausative morphology, and Turkish and Japanese have both causative and anticausative morphology. Assuming the tenets of the Full Transfer/Full Access Hypothesis (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996), results of a picture judgment task with transitive and intransitive sentences manipulating overt/non-overt morphology on the verbs show that morphological errors in English and Turkish are constrained by the morphological patterns of the learners' L1s. In addition to showing that formal features of morphemes transfer but morphophonological matrices do not, this study demonstrates that the morphophonological shape of affixes does transfer.

BREAK: 11:00–11:30

Variables governing diffusion in phonological acquisition

Michele L. Morrisette and Judith A. Gierut
Indiana University, Bloomington

Recent research suggests that lexical diffusion may be guided by the characteristics of words themselves. A word's frequency and its neighborhood density have been hypothesized to differentially influence which words will be vulnerable to sound change in the course of acquisition. Our purpose was to evaluate this proposal by monitoring the course of acquisition by children receiving treatment for functional phonological delays, as an accelerated version of sound change in progress. Four variables were shown to govern diffusion: (1) characteristics of words presented in treatment, (2) type of sound change that occurred (phonetic or phonemic), (3) manner category, and (4) context of newly acquired sounds. A complex of variables thus appears to be responsible for lexical diffusion in acquisition, thereby underscoring the intimate relationship between phonological and lexical dimensions of children's grammars.

**Phonological bootstrapping:
Syntactic form, prosodic form, and telegraphic speech**

David Lebeaux, NEC Research Institute

This paper concerns questions of the genesis of telegraphic speech, and questions at the interface of phonology and syntax, in particular the prosodic/syntactic discrepancies. It has long been noted that there exist discrepancies between the syntactic and prosodic forms, e.g.,

- (1) syntax: (the (picture of Mary))
prosody: ((the picture) (of Mary))
- (2) syntax: (may (have (seen (the man from France))))
prosody: ((may have seen) (the man from France))

Central questions arise as to: (1) why these discrepancies exist, (2) how to account for them in a principled way. In this paper, I argue, first, that telegraphic speech may be seen as an attempt to place together the differing syntactic and prosodic trees, and extract from them their maximal geometric alignment, factoring out the differences. Second, in the syntax/prosody, I attempt to derive the syntactic/prosodic differences in a model of the adult grammar in which generalized transformations exist, putting together two separate trees.

LUNCH BREAK: 12:30–2:00

Lunchtime Symposium

Retrospective: The first twenty-five years of the Boston University Conference on Language Development

12:45-1:50

Metcalf Hall (Large)

Margaret Thomas, Boston College
(12:50-1:15)

Twenty-five years of the BUCLD: The big picture

Since 1976, the Boston University Conference on Language Development has contributed to, and actively shaped, the study of language development. This talk will document both institutional and intellectual continuities within the first quarter-century of the BUCLD, and also evidence for how the conference has changed. Continuity as well as discontinuity achieve their proper proportions when the BUCLD's 25-year history is viewed in the context of a much larger interval in the conceptualization of language learning within western language science.

Paula Menyuk, Boston University
(1:15-1:35)

Reflections on Reflections

Twenty-five years ago, Paula Menyuk founded the Conference on Language Development at Boston University. In commemoration of her leadership, the Conference is pleased to announce the inauguration of the Paula Menyuk Student Travel Award. Each year, beginning in 2001, the Conference will reimburse up to \$300 in travel expenses to a student traveling to the BUCLD to present a paper. After the travel award is presented, Professor Menyuk will reflect on the past 25 years of the conference.

Peggy McCardle, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
(1:35-1:45)

The Present Climate for Language Research

The NICHD has been funding research in language development and disorders for several decades. Typically this research was administered as part of a portfolio of projects in cognitive, social and affective development. In recent years, with restructuring of the Institute's Child Development and Behavior Branch, a new program area has been formed: Language, Bilingualism and Biliteracy Development and Disorders. This new title is an indication of the broader interest in all aspects of language development in the NICHD. Special partnerships and collegial co-funding relationships are being forged not only across institutes within the NIH but also with offices of the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation, and the funding picture is relatively optimistic at present for language research. In the context of an overview of what NICHD is currently funding, I will briefly highlight recent research successes funded by the NICHD which have helped to enhance this situation.

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

Becoming a Word Learner

A Debate on Lexical Acquisition
 ROBERTA MICKNICK GOLINKOFF and
 KATHRYN HIRSH-PAEK
 (Counterpoints: Cognition, Memory, and Language)
 October 2000 216 pp.; 5 halftones & 16 line illus
 paper \$24.95/ cloth \$50.00

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KAREN BARTSCH and HENRY M.
 WELLMAN
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 Welfare Services for Very Young Children
 JILL DUERR BERRICK, BARBARA NEEDELL,
 RICHARD P. BARTH, and MELISSA
 JONSON-REID
 (Child Welfare: A Series in Child Welfare Practice,
 Policy, and Research)
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ELEANOR J. GIBSON and ANNE D. PICK
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ROBERT S. SIEGLER
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 paper \$19.95/ cloth \$40.00

Math Without Words:

Quantitative Development in Infancy and
 Early Childhood
 KELLY S. MIX, JANELLEN HUTTENLOCHER,
 and SUSAN COHEN-LEVINE
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FRIDAY, November 3rd

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

	Session A Metcalf Hall (Large)	Session B Conference Auditorium	Session C Terrace Lounge
9:00	STEELE, J.: Phonetic cues to phonological acquisition: Evidence from L2 syllabification	DEKYDTSPOTTER, L.; SPROUSE, R.; GIBSON, E.: The interpretation of two kinds of relative clauses in English-French interlanguage	JIMÉNEZ CASTRO, M.: Early morphological development in Spanish-speaking children
9:30	CARTER, A.: A phonetic-phonological analysis of syllable omissions: Striking comparisons between children with normally developing language and SLI	SLABAKOVA, R.: Viewpoint aspect in Bulgarian-English interlanguage	BATMAN-RATYOSYAN, N.; STROMSWOLD, K.: Early bare stems in an agglutinative language
10:00	PEPINSKY, T.; DEMUTH, K.; ROARK, B.: The prosodic characteristics and distribution of filler syllables	YOO, M.; KAYAMA, Y.; MAZZOTTA, M.; WHITE, L.: Case drop and specificity in L2 Korean and Japanese	PYE, C.: The early expression of finiteness in K'iche' Maya
10:30			
	Break		
11:00	FISHER, C.; CHURCH, B.: Learning to identify spoken words	HAZNEDAR, B.: Functional categories in child L2 acquisition	GUERRIERO, A.; COOPER, A.; OSHIMA-TAKANE, Y.; KURIYAMA, Y.: A discourse-pragmatic explanation for argument realization and omission in English and Japanese children's speech
11:30	SWINGLEY, D.: On the origins of infants' lexical parsing preferences	WHONG-BARR, M.; SCHWARTZ, B.: Morphological transfer effects in child L2 acquisition of English double-object datives	WIESELMAN SCHULMAN, B.; GOLDIN-MEADOW, S.: Discourse structure in a gestural communication system: The robustness of ergativity
12:00	GOMEZ, R.; MAYE, J.; GERKEN, L.: Frequently occurring elements can act as anchors in linguistic input	PRÉVOST, P.: Morphological variability in child SLA: An account integrating Truncation and Missing Inflection	SONG, H.: Young children's use of discourse cues in language comprehension

Lunch Break: 12:30–2:00

2:00	SNEDEKER, J.; LI, P.: Word-to-world mapping in Mandarin and English: A crosslinguistic comparison of the situational concomitants of word use	PARADIS, J.; GENESEE, F.; CRAGO, M.; RICE, M.: Dual language impairment: Evidence from French-English bilingual children with SLI	COLE, P.; GIL, D.; HERMON, G.; TADMOR, U.: The acquisition of in-situ WH-questions and WH-indefinites in Jakarta Indonesian
2:30	YOSHIDA, H.; SMITH, L.: The structure of early noun vocabularies depends on the language being learned	DEEVY, P.; MILLER, C.: A tool for characterizing grammatical morphology development	SANO, T.; ENDO, M.; YAMAKOSHI, K.: Developmental issues in the acquisition of Japanese unaccusatives and passives
3:00	LEE, S.; DAVIS, B.: Acoustical salience of nouns and verbs in Korean infant-directed speech	JAKUBOWICZ, C.; DE JESUS, S.; DURAND, C.; MONPIOU, S.; RIGAUT, C.; VAN DE VELDE, M.: Computational complexity over time: The development of functional categories in French-speaking children	VAN ATTEVELDT, W.; VAN DER MEER, M.; COOPMANS, P.; PHILIP, W.: Subject-object asymmetry in child comprehension of WH expressions

3:30

Break

4:00	SANDHOFER, C.: Structure in parents' input: Effects of categorization versus comparison	AVRUTIN, S.; BRUN, D.: The expression of specificity in a language without determiners: Evidence from child Russian	MILLER, C.: False belief and sentence complements in children with SLI
4:30	XU, F.; TENENBAUM, J.: Word learning as Bayesian inference: The case of nested categories	THRIFT, E.; HYAMS, N.: The role of aspect in licensing object drop	COLUNGA, E.; SMITH, L.: Learning what is a word
5:00	LIU, J.; GOLINKOFF, R.; GOROFF, J.; CARPENTER, Q.: Two toys say more than two pictures: Young children's novel word extension at the superordinate level	BAAUW, S.: Expletive determiners in child Dutch and Spanish	DE BODE, S.; CURTISS, S.: Language outcomes of 42 hemispherectomies: If neither side nor age at insult matters, then what does?

Dinner Break: 5:30–8:00

8:00

KEYNOTE ADDRESS	LOIS BLOOM, Teachers College, Columbia University <i>Language acquisition and the child: Developmental and theoretical tensions</i> Dessert Reception to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)	METCALF HALL (LARGE)
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Saturday, November 4th

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

	Session A	Session B	Session C
	Metcalf Hall (Large)	Conference Auditorium	Terrace Lounge
9:30	SINGH, L.; BORTFELD, H.; RATHBUN, K.; MORGAN, J.: Effects of speeded and slowed speech on infant word recognition	LIDZ, J.; MUSOLINO, J.: C-command matters	SHI, E.: Partial constraint hypothesis: Acquisition of L2 psych verbs in English
10:00	JOHNSON, E.; VAN DE WEIJER, J.: Word segmentation by 7.5-month-olds: Why three words do not equal one	KAZANINA, N.; PHILLIPS, C.: Coreference in child Russian: Distinguishing syntactic and discourse constraints	WHITE, L.; VALENZUELA, E.; KOZLOWSKA-MACGREGOR, M.; LEUNG, Y.; BEN AYED, H.: The status of abstract features in interlanguage: Gender and number in L2 Spanish
10:30	CURTIN, S.; MINTZ, T.; BYRD, D.: Coarticulatory cues enhance infants' recognition of syllable sequences in speech	CHIERCHIA, G.; CRAIN, S.; GUALMINI, A.; GUASTI, M.; MERONI, L.: The acquisition of disjunction: Evidence for a grammatical view of conversational implicatures	MONTRUL, S.: L1 influence with overt/non-overt morphology in the L2 acquisition of argument structure: Evidence from English and Turkish causative verbs
11:00			
	Break		
11:30	MACWHINNEY, B.: New developments in CHILDES	MUSOLINO, J.: Universal quantification and the competence/performance distinction	MORRISSETTE, M.; GHERUT, J.: Variables governing diffusion in phonological acquisition
12:00	GANGER, J.; BRENT, M.: Re-examining the vocabulary spurt and its implications: Is there really a sudden change in cognitive development?	SU, Y.: Scope and specificity in child language	LEBEAUX, D.: Phonological bootstrapping: Syntactic form, prosodic form, and telegraphic speech

Lunchtime Symposium: 12:45-1:50

Retrospective: The first twenty-five years of The Boston University Conference on Language Development

MARGARET THOMAS, Boston College; PAULA MENYUK, BU; PEGGY MCCARDLE, NICHD

2:00	PAPAFRAGOU, A.; MASSEY, C.; GLEITMAN, L.: Motion events in language and cognition	FELLING, S.: The role of age in L1 transfer: Are adult and child SLA comparable?	ZIMMERMANN, K.: Phonological diversity is not a possible cue for identifying the default inflection pattern
2:30	HOHENSTEIN, J.; NAIGLES, L.: Preferential looking reveals language-specific event similarity by Spanish- and English-speaking children	BIRDSONG, D.; FLEGE, J.: Regular-irregular dissociations in L2 acquisition of English morphology	AVELEDO, F.; CLAUSEN, H.: The development of regular and irregular verb inflection in Spanish child language
3:00	Break		
3:30	LIDZ, J.; GLEITMAN, H.; GLEITMAN, L.: Morphological causativity and the robustness of syntactic bootstrapping	GENESEE, F.; BAYNTON, L.; COMEAU, L.: Parental bilingual code-mixing: Does it really make a difference?	KAPPA, I.: Alignment and consonant harmony: Evidence from Greek
4:00	NAIGLES, L.; BAVIN, E.: Generalizing novel verbs to different structures: Evidence for the early distinction of verbs and frames	DULLAART, J.; VARLOKOSTA, S.: The acquisition of pronominal reference by Greek-Dutch bilingual children: Evidence for early grammar differentiation in bilingual first language acquisition	GOAD, H.: Assimilation phenomena and initial constraint ranking in early grammars
4:30	Break		
5:00	PLENARY ADDRESS NINA HYAMS, UCLA <i>Now you hear it, now you don't: The nature of optionality in early grammar Reception (wine and hors d'oeuvres) to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)</i> METCALF HALL (LARGE)		

Sunday, November 5th

All sessions in the George Sherman Union

	Session A Metcalf Hall (Small)	Session B Conference Auditorium	Session C Terrace Lounge
9:30	MARKSON, L.; DIESENDRUCK, G.: Children's sensitivity to mutual knowledge in communication	FISH, S.; HOFFMEISTER, R.; ALLEN, S.: The acquisition of classifier morphology in ASL by Deaf children: Evidence from descriptions of objects in specific spatial arrangements	KWEON, S.: The acquisition of contraction constraints by adult L2 learners: An experimental study of <i>wanna</i> and copula contraction
10:00	BIRCH, S.; BLOOM, P.: The familiarity principle and the learning of proper names	CHEN, D.: Evidence for early word order acquisition in a variable word order language	SLABAKOVA, R.; MONTRUL, S.: Is nativelike competence possible in second language acquisition?
10:30	XU, F.: The effects of language on object concepts in infancy: A neo-Whorfian perspective	MUNNICH, E.; LANDAU, B.: Language experience and maturation in second language learning: A focus on spatial semantics	TORIBIO, A.: Verb raising and verbal morphology in Spanish language attrition
11:00	Break		
11:30	PLUNKETT, B.; DE CAT, C.: Root specifiers and null subjects revisited	POLKA, L.; COLANTONIO, C.; SUNDARA, M.: Cross-language perception of /d-δ/: Evidence for a new developmental pattern	KELLY, S.: Nonverbal indexicality and children's emerging understanding of advanced pragmatic communication
12:00	ZUCKERMAN, S.; BASTIAANSE, R.: Auxiliary + infinitive structures in child Dutch: Evidence from production and comprehension	MAYE, J.; GERKEN, L.: Learning phonemes: How far can the input take us?	PINET, M.; MOISSINAC, L.; BUDWIG, N.: Children's use of modal verbs in the discursive construction of self in peer play and peer narrations
12:30	BLOM, E.; KRIKHAAR, E.; WIJNEN, F.: Nonfinite clauses in Dutch and English child language: An experimental approach	ESCUDERO, P.: Input, L1 and interlanguage strategies in the development of Spanish speakers' perception of English vowels: spectral and durational cue weighting	ARNOLD, J.; NOVICK, J.; BROWN-SCHMIDT, S.: Eisenband, J.; Trueswell, J.: Knowing the difference between girls and boys: The use of gender during on-line pronoun comprehension in young children

Lunch Break: 1:00-2:30

2:30	PRASADA, S.; CUMMINS, M.: Structural constraints on the interpretation of novel count nouns	RICE, M.; WEXLER, K.: What she saying? SLI children's judgments of questions	MATSUO, A.; VAN DER FEEST, S.: What Dutch children know about telicity and tense
3:00	HÖHLE, B.; WEISSENBORN, J.; KIEFER, D.; SCHMITZ, M.; SCHULZ, A.: Syntactic categorization in 12-17 months old children: Evidence from German	DAVIES, L.; VAN DER LELY, H.: The use of negative particles in children with grammatical SLI	HOLLERBRANDSE, B.; DELFITTO, D.; VAN HOUT, A.; VROEG-PEIXOTO, A.: Italian sequence of tense: Complementation or anaphoricity?
3:30	HOLLICH, G.; JUSZYK, P.; BRENT, M.: How infants use the words they know to learn new words	SCHAEFFER, J.: The modularity of grammar and pragmatics: Evidence from SLI	JOHNSON, B.; FEY, M.: The influence of telicity on children's morpheme selection and production accuracy

*Saturday 2:00 PM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***Motion events in language and cognition**

Anna Papafragou, Christine Massey, and Lila Gleitman
University of Pennsylvania

Languages differ widely with respect to the ways in which they encode motion events. In some languages (e.g., English, German), manner of motion is typically encoded in the verb, while direction of motion information appears in prepositional phrases. In other languages (e.g., Spanish, Greek), the verb usually encodes the direction of motion, while the manner information is encoded in gerunds or prepositional phrases. We designed two studies to investigate whether these language-specific patterns affect speakers' reasoning about motion events. We compared the performance of English and Greek children and adults (a) in non-linguistic (memory and categorization) tasks involving motion events, and (b) in their linguistic descriptions of these same motion events. Even though the two linguistic groups differed significantly in terms of their encoding (linguistic) preferences, their performance in the non-linguistic tasks was identical. The results are inconsistent with the view that language necessarily plays a causal role in both the time-course and the end product of cognitive development.

*Saturday 2:30 PM**Metcalf Hall (Large)***Preferential-looking reveals language-specific event similarity
by Spanish- and English-speaking children**

Jill Hohenstein, Yale University
Letitia Naigles, University of Connecticut

We investigated whether language influences the development of non-linguistic motion event similarity. We hypothesized that, congruent with differences in speech about motion events in English and Spanish, 7-year-old English-speaking children would orient more towards similar manners of motion than their Spanish-speaking peers. However, younger children in both language groups should show no preferences. All participants observed target videos of people engaged in motion events followed by two alternate videos; one with the same path, one with the same manner. The first task asked for similarity judgments while the second presented novel verbs. Using the preferential looking paradigm, eye movements were recorded while children watched the stimulus videos. Children look at the video most similar to the target. Results show linguistic influences on thought about motion event similarity appearing after the age of 3.5. Three-year-olds preferred neither manner nor path matches. Only children learning English developed preferences for manner over path.

BREAK: 3:00–3:30

Morphological causativity and the robustness of syntactic bootstrapping

Jeffrey Lidz, Henry Gleitman, and Lila Gleitman
University of Pennsylvania

Studies under the heading “syntactic bootstrapping” have demonstrated that syntax guides young children’s interpretations during verb-learning. Two hypotheses concerning the origins of syntactic bootstrapping have been proposed. The “universalist” view holds that syntactic bootstrapping falls out from universal properties of the syntax-semantics mapping. The “emergentist” view holds that argument structure patterns emerge from a process of categorization and generalization over the input. These theories diverge in their predictions about a language in which syntactic structure is not the most reliable cue to a certain meaning. In Kannada, for example, causative morphology is a better predictor of causative meaning than transitivity is. Hence, the emergentist view predicts that Kannada speaking children will associate causative morphology (in favor of transitive syntax) with causative meaning. The universalist theory, however, predicts the opposite pattern. Using an act-out task, we found that 3-year-old native speakers of Kannada associate argument number and not morphological form with causativity, supporting the universalist approach.

Generalizing novel verbs to different structures: Evidence for the early distinction of verbs and frames

Letitia Naigles, University of Connecticut
Edith L. Bavin, La Trobe University

These studies investigate whether young 2-year-old children generalize new verbs to different constructions. In Study 1, four novel verb-action pairs were taught interactively to each child (MA=26 months). The modeled verb was presented in either a transitive or intransitive frame. An intermodal preferential looking set-up then tested children’s comprehension of the verbs in each of three frames: transitive (*She’s lorpiping the ball*), intransitive (*The ball is lorpiping*), and neutral (*Lorpiping*). Overall, the children matched the auditory and visual stimuli; children trained with intransitive frames matched with both intransitive and transitive frames. In Study 2, the children (MA=28 months) were taught only two novel verbs, presented in either an intransitive or a neutral frame. Comprehension was tested in all three frames; the results corroborate those of Study 1. These findings are inconsistent with a Verb Island account of children’s early language; instead, they support children’s early distinction of verbs and frames.

BREAK: 4:30–5:00

*Saturday 2:00 PM**Conference Auditorium***The role of age in L1 transfer: Are adult and child SLA comparable?**

Shiraz Felling, Georgetown University

In this paper I argue that studies of L1 transfer in L2 acquisition have typically overlooked the important factor of age. Relevant studies have examined the role of the L1 in both adult SLA (Schwartz & Sprouse 1994, 1996) and child SLA (Eubank 1993/94, White 1990/91), and subjects across studies have been compared, regardless of their age. Here I discuss the possibility that such a comparison is not appropriate, in that the processes of child and adult SLA differ, due to critical period effects. I argue that while full transfer occurs in both cases, young children, because of their age, are able to reset parameters more quickly than adults, resulting in less protracted effects of transfer. To support this view, I examine longitudinal data from a French-speaking child learning English who is able to correctly set the verb-raising parameter extremely early in her L2 development.

*Saturday 2:30 PM**Conference Auditorium***Regular-irregular dissociations in L2 acquisition of English morphology**David Birdsong, University of Texas, Austin
James E. Flege, University of Alabama, Birmingham

Our experimental study of English L2A reveals behavioral dissociations consistent with a dual-mechanism model of morphological representation (e.g., Pinker 1999). A sample of educated Spanish ($n=30$) and Korean ($n=30$) natives at asymptote performed a timed multiple-choice task on 80 items exemplifying (Ir)regularity, Input Frequency, and Noun Plural vs. Verb Past Tense morphology. Results of ANOVAs ($p < .01$) include: (1) higher accuracy for regulars than for irregulars; (2) with increasing age of arrival, a more pronounced decline in accuracy for irregulars vs. regulars; (3) frequency-sensitive performance on irregulars; (4) regularity effects for both noun plurals and verb pasts; (5) depressed KNS accuracy on noun plurals, possibly reflecting L1 influence. We argue for an understanding of the L2A end state of sufficient granularity to accommodate these findings, in particular the Age x (Ir)regularity interaction (Flege et al. 1999), for which we consider possible neurofunctional bases (e.g., Ullman et al. 1997).

BREAK: 3:00–3:30

Parental bilingual code-mixing: Does it really make a difference?

Fred Genesee, Liane Comeau, and Lindsay Baynton
McGill University

Some explanations of child bilingual code-mixing attribute it to the input that bilingual children receive. An underlying assumption of this explanation is that bilingual children are sensitive to and monitor variations in code-mixing in the input and that they adjust their own rates of mixing accordingly. This study sought to test the validity of this assumption directly by examining children's shifts in code-mixing in response to changes in mixing in the input addressed to them. We examined young bilingual children (early 2-word stage; 2;6 years) whose language behavior might be expected to reflect child-centered (i.e., proficiency) rather than external (input) factors. They were recorded during interactive sessions with a trained assistant who used relatively low and relatively high rates of mixing in different sessions. The children demonstrated a significant increase in mixing in the high input sessions in comparison to the low input sessions. The implications of these results are discussed with respect to alternative theories of child bilingual code-mixing.

The acquisition of pronominal reference by Greek-Dutch bilingual children: Evidence for early grammar differentiation in bilingual first language acquisition

Joanna Dullaart and Spyridoula Varlokosta, University of Reading

We report results of an experimental investigation on the acquisition of pronominal reference by 10 Greek-Dutch bilingual children aged 3-7, using a truth value judgment task (Crain & Thornton 1998). A different pattern of behavior with respect to the acquisition of pronominal reference has been reported for the two languages. Greek children do not exhibit a Delay of Principle B Effect (DPBE) in clitic and strong pronoun contexts (Varlokosta 1999). Dutch children exhibit a chance level performance in both weak and strong pronoun contexts (Philip & Coopmans 1996, Baauw 1999). We show that bilingual Greek-Dutch children display an early grammar differentiation with respect to pronominal reference. Although they exhibit adult-like performance in Greek clitic and strong pronoun contexts (accuracy 100%), they do exhibit a DPBE in Dutch weak pronoun and strong pronoun contexts (accuracy 50%). Our results provide strong evidence in favor of the Early Grammar Differentiation approach (Genesee 1989, Meisel 1994).

BREAK: 4:30–5:00

*Saturday 2:00 PM**Terrace Lounge*

Phonological diversity is not a possible cue for identifying the default inflection pattern

Kai Zimmermann, Rutgers University

We explored whether language statistics can reveal that phonological diversity cannot be the crucial cue for identifying which inflectional pattern the learner should treat as the default. This could be done by showing that an inflectional system exists where the set of stems to which the default applies is not the most phonologically diverse. The German plural system was used as a test case. We determined which inflection pattern applied to the most diverse set of stems, where in each case diversity was defined in terms of a certain subset of phonological features. We found that regardless of which subset is considered, the default pattern never covers a larger portion of the phonological space than each other pattern. Hence, regardless of which phonological distinctions the human learner can make (or which distinctions she uses to compute the diversity measure), phonological diversity cannot be the crucial acquisition cue.

*Saturday 2:30 PM**Terrace Lounge***The development of regular and irregular verb inflection in Spanish child language**

Fraibet Aveledo and Harald Clahsen, University of Essex

Studies based on past tense formation in English-speaking children (Marcus et al. 1992) and on past participle inflection in German-speaking children (Clahsen & Rothweiler 1993) suggest that verb inflection in early child language is driven by two different cognitive mechanisms: a system of rule-like symbolic operations for regular inflection, and a set of lexical entries for irregular inflection stored in associative memory. We examined whether such a dual-mechanism account also holds for the acquisition of verb inflection in Spanish investigating longitudinal and cross-sectional data from 15 Spanish-speaking children.

We found a dissociation between regular and irregular inflection in the distribution of errors: regular suffixes are overextended to irregulars, but irregular patterns are not overapplied to regulars. Low-frequency irregulars are more likely to be overregularized than high-frequency irregulars. We also observed a correlation between the occurrence of overregularizations and the frequency of use of finiteness markings in obligatory contexts. These results are interpreted in the light of the dual-mechanism model of inflection (Pinker 1999, Clahsen 1999).

BREAK: 3:00–3:30

Alignment and consonant harmony: Evidence from Greek

Ioanna Kappa, University of Crete

In the present paper we argue for an Optimality theoretic account of CH (Prince & Smolensky 1993; McCarthy & Prince 1993) in Modern Greek (MG) and we will argue that CH is motivated by the need to satisfy alignment. CH follows from the relative ranking of constraints which *parse* and those which *align* place features with the left edge of the harmonic domain (cf. Goad 1996 for English). The harmonic domain for MG is the *trochaic foot*, which seems to be the *minimal prosodic word*. The proposed Constraint Hierarchy is in (1):

(1) PARSEL_{lab} > ALIGNL_{lab} > PARSED_{or} > ALIGNND_{or} > PARSEC_{or} > ALIGNN_{cor}

(1) indicates that for MG it is more important to align the labial or dorsal feature with the left edge of the domain than to parse the coronal one; and we can capture the asymmetry in CH between labials and velars on the one hand and coronals on the other hand.

Assimilation phenomena and initial constraint ranking in early grammars

Heather Goad, McGill University

In this paper, I demonstrate that many assimilation processes which are common across adult languages (vowel harmony, string-adjacent assimilations) are absent from early grammars. At the same time, other types of assimilation processes are common in early grammars (consonant harmony, total vowel assimilation). I argue that the split between types of assimilations can be captured if children's grammars do not initially permit FEATURE SPREADING (OR SHARING). Assimilations which involve FEATURE COPY, however, are licit. The absence of spreading does not require that this operation mature later in development. If markedness constraints outrank faithfulness constraints in early grammars, then markedness constraints which demand one-to-one association between features and dominating material (e.g., CRISPEDGE) will initially be inviolable; this will prevent spreading and restrict early assimilations to feature copy. I propose that the acquisition of morphophonemic alternation and the development of place sharing codas drives early grammars to change to permit spreading.

BREAK: 4:30–5:00

Plenary Address

5:00 PM

Metcalf Hall (Large)

Nina Hyams

University of California Los Angeles

Now you hear it, now you don't: The nature of optionality in early grammar

Reception (wine and hors d'oeuvres) to follow in Metcalf Hall (Small)

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*Sunday 9:30 AM**Metcalf Hall (Small)***Children's sensitivity to mutual knowledge in communication**

Lori Markson, MIT
Gil Diesendruck, Bar Ilan University

Sensitivity to the knowledge state of a speaker influences how one interprets an utterance. The literature on theory of mind suggests that there is substantial development in the child's theory of mind between two and four years of age. How does children's understanding of mind affect their capacity for interpersonal communication? To address this issue, we tested 2-year-olds' ability to determine the intended referent of a speaker's utterance. In one condition, the same speaker taught the child a label or fact for a novel object, and then requested the referent of a second label or fact. In another condition, a second speaker, who was clearly privy to the information told to the child, requested the referent of a new label or fact. Children were more successful at inferring the intended referent when only one speaker was involved, suggesting that children's sensitivity to mutual knowledge in communication becomes more refined with age.

*Sunday 10:00 AM**Metcalf Hall (Small)***The familiarity principle and the learning of proper names**

Susan Birch and Paul Bloom, Yale University

In order to know an individual's proper name, one must be familiar with that individual in some manner—the *familiarity principle*. Young children know this principle and use it when learning new words. When 2- to 4-year-olds hear a proper name they assume that it refers to an individual that the speaker knows, not to one she is unfamiliar with (Birch & Bloom 1999). Is this a general principle of knowledge, or is it specific to language learning? To address this, 3- to 5-year-olds participated in a task that involved application of the familiarity principle in a context that did not involve word learning. Only the oldest children succeeded, suggesting that the familiarity principle initially exists only in the context of language acquisition, with a more general understanding emerging later.

**The effects of language on object 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. Previous studies suggest that infants are not able to use object kind information in object individuation tasks until about 12 months of age. Two series of experiments investigated the role of labeling on infants' representations of kind concepts such as *dog* and *cup*. 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; 2) the facilitation effects may be language-specific; and 3) labels may point to kinds and not simply draw the infant's attention to featural differences.

BREAK: 11:00–11:30

Root specifiers and null subjects revisited

Bernadette Plunkett and Cécile De Cat, University of York

The near-categorical realisation of pronominal subjects in children's Wh-questions, when they continue to omit them in declaratives, is often cited as evidence for a truncation account of early null subjects. This paper presents new data from French which shows that in the earliest stages children are actually less likely to realise a subject in a Wh-question than in a declarative.

Detailed analysis of interacting factors does uncover, for each child, a stage in which, regardless of whether these involve overt movement, Wh-questions contain more pronominal subjects than declaratives. However, any contrast can be attributed to other factors. Thus, one child goes through a stage exhibiting a pattern reminiscent of Philippe from the Leveillé corpus, but this is mainly due to the preponderance of copular questions at that time; although only 4% of subjects in the Wh-questions are null, only 5% are null in all of his contemporaneous copular clauses.

**Auxiliary + infinitive structures in child Dutch:
Evidence from production and comprehension**

Shalom Zuckerman and Roelin Bastiaanse
University of Groningen

This paper investigates Auxiliary-Infinitive structures in child Dutch, as presented in (1):

- (1) a. Hij doet de appel eten
He does the apple eat (inf)
b. Hij gaat de appel eten
He goes the apple eat (inf)

Two experiments are presented:

Experiment 1: A sentence-completion task (production). Results: Aux-inf structures appear only in matrix clauses (where V-movement is required). Aux-inf structures disappear after age 4. The choice of auxiliary (*doet* or *gaat*) is input-dependent.

Experiment 2: A picture-selection task (comprehension). The purpose of this experiment was to check what interpretation children assign to *togaan*-structures that appear in their input. Results: The children failed significantly more with the future-*gaat*-structures'. An error analysis reveals that children judged these structures as representing a present on-going event.

Conclusions: Children view auxiliary-infinitive structures as semantically-equivalent to V2-structures and prefer the former because of their superior economical status.

**Nonfinite clauses in Dutch and English child language:
An experimental approach**

Elma Blom, Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS
Evelien Krikhaar, Groningen University
Frank Wijnen, Utrecht Institute of Linguistics OTS

In both Dutch and English child language nonfinite verb forms occur frequently, as opposed to the adult language. Though in this respect both languages are similar, they differ fundamentally in the way nonfiniteness is expressed. Dutch children use a form containing infinitival morphology whereas children acquiring English take off with bare verb forms. According to Hoekstra & Hyams (1998), this formal difference accounts for the different interpretations of nonfinite forms in Dutch and English child language: the infinitival suffix carries a semantic feature that induces a modal reading, so the Dutch forms are modal whereas the English ones are nonmodal. In this paper Hoekstra & Hyams' claim will be discussed by presenting new *experimental* results. These results will throw an entirely different light on the use of nonfinite clauses in Dutch and English child language.

LUNCH BREAK: 1:00–2:30

*Sunday 9:30 AM**Conference Auditorium***The acquisition of classifier morphology in ASL by Deaf children:
Evidence from descriptions of objects in specific spatial arrangements**

Sarah Fish, Robert Hoffmeister, and Shanley Allen
Boston University

Classifier acquisition in American Sign Language (ASL) is complex, and there is no consensus as to when different classifiers are acquired. In addition, it is not known what syntactic or morphological processes control the acquisition of the various classifiers. As part of a larger study, 90 Deaf subjects (ages three to fourteen) are asked to describe eight video stills depicting the arrangement of objects. We discuss the age-related patterns of acquisition for classifiers, and we show that these patterns hold true for Deaf children of both Deaf and hearing parents. Results indicate path is acquired at an earlier age than the ability to coordinate both hands in a signed frame, and classifiers are not by themselves difficult to acquire. However, when combined with more complex verb frames, production is affected, for while path and handshape are each acquired very early, the combination of both appears to control the development and use of classifiers.

*Sunday 10:00 AM**Conference Auditorium***Evidence for early word order acquisition
in a variable word order language**

Deborah Chen, University of Connecticut

That the acquisition of word order is acquired early and with little error has been supported by reports of English-speaking children using consistent SVO word order in early production. This suggests that the parameters governing word order (i.e., the spec-head and head-constraint parameters) are set early. Possible counter-evidence for this claim is the fact that children acquiring American Sign Language (ASL), a language with greater word order variation than English, use canonical word order (also SVO) less reliably, producing a high percentage of non-canonical OV utterances. However, the verbs in these utterances are identifiable as handling verbs or verbs inflected for aspect or location, factors which license OV order in the adult language. Thus the data from early ASL do not constitute evidence that the word order parameters are set later in ASL than in English. Rather, ASL-signing children, having acquired the basic word order, begin early to modify it in adult-like ways.

**Language experience and maturation in second language learning:
A focus on spatial semantics**

Edward Munnich and Barbara Landau, University of Delaware

Given widespread crosslinguistic differences in spatial semantics, we consider whether first language semantics affects learning of second language semantics. We contrast relationships of support (“on”) vs. vertical displacement (“over” and “under”), which are conflated in Korean, and support vs. containment (“in”), which are conflated in Spanish. Adult native Korean and Spanish speakers, varying in age of immersion in English, showed patterns that were distinct from those of native speakers when describing a variety of spatial relationships in English. We consider the extent to which the same patterns emerged across language groups: Similar patterns across language groups suggest general maturational changes, while differences between the language groups suggest an effect of first language semantics on second language learning. We discuss these findings in the context of research on possible effects of language on cognition, and consider implications for broader issues of second language acquisition.

BREAK: 11:00–11:30

**Cross-language perception of /d - ð/:
Evidence for a new developmental pattern**

Linda Polka, Connie Colantonio, and Megha Sundara
McGill University

Infants discriminate certain non-native contrasts at 6-8 months but not at 10-12 months of age, whereas discrimination is evident at both ages in infants for whom the test contrasts are native. These findings show that phonetic perception is shifting from a language-general towards a language-specific form during the first year. However, it is unclear why a decline does not occur for all non-native contrasts. We tested one hypothesis regarding perceptual decline by comparing discrimination of the English /d - ð/ contrast by English and French adults and infants (6-8, 10-12 months olds) using the headturn procedure. Our results fail to support the hypothesis that when perception of a contrast is difficult for non-native adults a decline in discrimination will be observed in infants from the same language community. Instead we found evidence for a new developmental pattern in cross-language phonetic perception. The findings are consistent with a recent connectionist model (Behnke 1999).

Learning phonemes: How far can the input take us?

Jessica Maye, University of Rochester

LouAnn Gerken, University of Arizona

We have proposed that distributional information in the speech signal is sufficient for the formation of language-specific phonetic categories. But how do these phonetic categories become phoneme categories? In this paper we discuss the role of contrastive features in phoneme acquisition.

We conducted an experiment in which participants were presented with an artificial language containing a potential phoneme contrast (e.g., /d/~D/). They were then tested on an analogous pair of stimuli not presented during training (e.g., /g/~G/). Training did not generalize to the untrained stimuli, indicating that mere exposure to one example of a featural contrast is insufficient for generalization of that feature to new examples of the contrast.

These results demonstrate that language learners do not come to the task with the assumption that they will encounter symmetrical featural systems. We conclude by presenting testable hypotheses to account for how the featural system of a language might be learned.

The development of Spanish speakers' perception of Scottish English vowels: Spectral and durational cue weighting

Paola Escudero, University of Edinburgh

L2 (second language) speech studies suggest that adult Spanish speakers of English, unlike native speakers, rely more on *ondurational* than on *spectral* cues when identifying and discriminating the sounds involved in tense/lax vowel contrasts. However, the knowledge attained and the developmental processes underlying this perception have not been fully addressed.

Data from a series of perception experiments reveal that adult Spanish speakers not only use durational information more than L1 speakers but also can perceive Scottish English /i~/I/ purely or more reliably (than using spectral cues) on this basis. This could be considered as evidence for "category formation" (/i/ and /I/ categories) by L2 learners based on a different weighting of the acoustic information involved. In addition, it will be argued that the patterns that are found throughout the L2 speakers' performance could be seen as reflecting stage-like development in the learning of new contrasts.

LUNCH BREAK: 1:00–2:30

Sunday 9:30 AM

Terrace Lounge

The acquisition of contraction constraint in English by adult L2 learners

Soo-Ok Kweon, University of Hawaii at Manoa

This paper investigates whether L2 learners are guided by UG in the acquisition of a particular linguistic phenomenon, *wanna* contraction in English. *Want to* can be contracted to *wanna* in object extraction question ((1) *Who do you want to kiss t?* → (1 ϕ) *Who do you wanna kiss?*). However, *want to* cannot be contracted to *wanna* in subject extraction question ((2) *Who do you want t to kiss Bill?* → *(2 ϕ) *Who do you wanna kiss Bill?*). There is no trace between *want* and *to* in (1), while *wh*-trace intervenes between *want* and *to* in (2), blocking the contraction (Chomsky 1980b; Jaeggli 1980).

High-proficiency Korean adult learners of English were tested on contraction in possible and impossible situations with an elicited production test. Subjects were placed into four different categories based on the contraction pattern they showed on the test. While some subjects followed the UG-compatible pattern, many did not. This calls into question the general availability of UG.

Sunday 10:00 AM

Terrace Lounge

Is natively like competence possible in second language acquisition?

Roumyana Slabakova, University of Iowa
Silvina Montrul, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

This paper asks whether there is a critical period in the second language acquisition of tense and aspect meaning, and investigates the semantic entailments of stative, accomplishment and achievement verbs with Imperfect and Preterite tenses in Spanish near-native competence. Spanish accomplishments and achievements pattern with the English telic predicates. English statives, however, are ambiguous between a bounded and unbounded interpretation. English speakers of advanced (n=24), superior (n=23), and near-native (n=17) proficiency in Spanish were tested using a sentence conjunction judgment task. Results indicated some significant differences between the control group (n=20), the advanced and the superior groups. Except for achievements in the Imperfect, differences between near-natives and the control group were non-significant. Individual results indicate that quite a number of non-native speakers fall within the range of variation of native speakers. Contrary to the claims of Coppiteters (1987), our conclusion is that ultimate attainment in the domain of aspectual interpretations is possible.

Verb raising and verbal morphology in Spanish language attrition

Almeida Jacqueline Toribio, Pennsylvania State University

While it is well established that speakers may neutralize morphological endings and avoid complex structures in the decline of native language proficiency (Seliger 1989, 1996; Silva-Corvalán 1990), it remains to be known whether such innovations entail changes in formal feature values (Chomsky's 1993 Minimalist Program). To that end, this work analyzes the verb raising and verbal morphology that is attested in the natural language samples of a native speaker of Spanish. Data regarding subject agreement, adverb placement, and positional licensing of null and overt subjects suggests that while specific morphological manifestations may be subject to variability, the underlying formal features are not subject to erosion (Platzack's 1996 Initial Hypothesis; Lardiere 1998, Schwartz & Sprouse 1996, Sprouse 1998). However, the speaker demonstrates default agreement with postverbal subjects, indicative of restructuring.

BREAK: 11:00–11:30

Nonverbal indexicality and children's emerging understanding of advanced pragmatic communication

Spencer D. Kelly, University of Louisville

A puzzle in pragmatic development is how children learn to go beyond speech and use context to understand the intended meaning of an utterance. The present experiment tested whether nonverbal indexical information, gaze and pointing gestures, helped 3- to 5-year-old children comprehend pragmatic communication. In a free-play situation, an experimenter made unconventional indirect requests (e.g., "It's getting loud" to get a child to close a door) to children using only speech, only nonverbal behaviors, or speech and nonverbal behaviors. The results demonstrated that 1) children understood the intended meaning of the experimenter most often when speech and nonverbal behaviors were presented together compared to when they were presented individually, and 2) younger children benefited from the combination of speech and nonverbal behaviors more than older children. Together, the results suggest that nonverbal indices may be one way in which children connect speech to context when learning to understand pragmatic communication.

Children's use of modal verbs in the discursive construction of self in peer play and peer narrations

Martha J. Pinet, Luke Moissinac, and Nancy Budwig
Clark University

Discursive use of modal verbs were studied in 24 American-English-speaking children ranging from three to seven years of age in peer play and story-telling situations. Modal forms, semantic auxiliary functions (agent-oriented/speaker-oriented/epistemic), and self-perspective (self-as-actor/self-as-knower) indexed were examined. Children of all ages used disproportionately more modals in peer play compared to story-telling. With respect to semantic auxiliary functions, the youngest children were limited to using epistemic functions in play interactions. Older children were able to use epistemic functions in both play interactions and story-telling. With increasing age, children constructed self increasingly as knower rather than actor within play interactions. By contrast, children consistently constructed self as knower during story-telling. Discussion focuses on how these data confirm the discursive motivations for modal usage in face-to-face interactions. Also, we will argue that different discursive activities have disparate communicative demands that children respond to by alternately appealing to agentive or epistemic selves (Bruner 1990).

Knowing the difference between girls and boys: The use of gender during on-line pronoun comprehension in young children

Jennifer E. Arnold, Jared M. Novick, Sarah Brown-Schmidt,
Janet G. Eisenband, and John C. Trueswell
University of Pennsylvania

Many studies have shown that young children have trouble interpreting pronouns. However, few studies have looked at the time course over which children use different sources of information to identify pronominal referents. We investigated five-year-olds' on-line comprehension of pronouns by monitoring their eye movements as they viewed a picture and listened to a text like "Donald is bringing some mail to Mickey / Minnie... He's / She's carrying an umbrella...." We looked at their use of two cues: 1) gender (whether only one character matched the pronoun's gender), and 2) order-of-mention (the adult tendency to focus on first-mentioned characters as more accessible, and more likely referents for pronouns). Results show that children used gender quickly (in contrast with Tyler 1983), but their use of order-of-mention was not completely adult-like. We consider several explanations for these findings, including the relative reliability of these cues in parental speech.

LUNCH BREAK: 1:00–2:30

Sunday 2:30 PM

Metcalf Hall (Small)

Structural constraints on the interpretation of novel count nouns

Sandeep Prasada and Megan Cummins, Dartmouth College

Prasada (1997) provided evidence that children can make use of information present within sentential structure to guide the acquisition of the meanings of novel adjectives. Specifically, Prasada (1997) found that 2½- to 3½-year-olds interpret prenominal adjectives (*I saw a sep table*) as naming values on restrictive dimensions (dimensions on which the kind named by the noun varies) more often than adjectives that appear in predicate position (*I saw a table. It was sep*). If children truly are using the distinct structural relations between nominals and adjectives in prenominal and predicate positions to guide their interpretations of novel adjectives, it should be possible to influence children's interpretations of novel nouns by using known adjectives in these structural contexts (*I saw a red dax. / I saw a dax, it was red*). Specifically, children should be more likely to interpret a novel noun as referring to a kind which varies on the dimension named by a known adjective when the adjective appears in prenominal position, than when it appears in predicate position. An experiment with eighteen 2- to 4-year-old children found that this is in fact the case.

Sunday 3:00 PM

Metcalf Hall (Small)

Syntactic categorization in 12-17 month-old children: Evidence from German

Barbara Höhle, Jürgen Weissenborn, Dorothea Kiefer,
Michaela Schmitz, and Antje Schulz
University of Potsdam

In this talk we will present evidence that German children between 12 and 17 months use distributional information of functional elements—i.e., co-occurrence patterns of determiners and nouns—to determine the syntactic category of lexical elements. In an experiment with the head turn preference paradigm we familiarized the children with sequences of the German definite article *ein* and a syntactically ambiguous pseudoword or with sequences of the pronoun *sie* plus a pseudoword. In the test phase the children listened to text passages that contained the pseudoword either in a noun or a verb context. Our results show that children discriminate between the text passages with the familiar syntactic category of the pseudoword and those with the unfamiliar contextual usage of the pseudoword. These results suggest an early knowledge of syntactic features of the functional vocabulary and the usage of this information for further analysis of the input.

How infants use the words they know to learn new words

George Hollich and Peter Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University
Michael Brent, Washington University

Twenty-four-month-olds were familiarized with two phrases (“prettykiosk” and “ritzypylon”). Next, they were taught arbitrary referents for the words *kiosk* and *pylon*. One hypothesis, which was not supported, was that infants should learn the word segmented by the familiar word (*pretty*) better than the word segmented with the unfamiliar word (*ritz*). Instead, infants learned both words equally well. However, a second hypothesis was whether infants could retain these words and make use of them to learn new words. One week later, when the old referents were paired with each other, infants could not remember which of the referents was which. However, if these referents were contrasted with new objects, infants looked at the pylon or kiosk when these were requested and at the novel referents when novel words were requested. These findings suggest that infants not only retained the words, but could also make use of these in learning new words.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON: SESSION B**CONFERENCE AUDITORIUM**

*Sunday 2:30 PM**Conference Auditorium*

What she saying? SLI children’s judgments of questions

Mabel Rice, University of Kansas
Kenneth Wexler, MIT

Much of what is known about the well-documented tense-marking limitations of children with SLI is drawn from observations of simple matrix clauses. In this study we investigate a prediction from the EOI account, that affected children should be more likely than control groups to accept omitted BE/DO forms in questions, for a longer period of time. Grammaticality judgments of Wh- and Yes/No questions over four times of measurement, ages 8-10 years, show that the SLI group consistently performs below a younger control group (ages 6-8 years), as well as below their age controls. This suggests an ongoing maturational lag, and a systematic relationship between TNS and COMP sites.

The use of negative particles in children with grammatical SLI

Lee Davies, University College London

Heather van der Lely, Birkbeck College, University of London

In this paper we test the proposal that movement/feature checking is optional in the SLI grammar (RDDR account, van der Lely 1998) We examine the production of simple negative sentences in 13 Grammatical SLI subjects (G-SLI) and 36 younger language ability (LA) controls. The RDDR account predicts that SLI subjects should have particular difficulty with the realisation of obligatory auxiliary/copular forms in Infl. However, the insertion of the negative particle (not/n't) is not predicted to be problematic, in contrast with the predictions of an input-processing account.

We elicited 54 active and negative sentences. The SLI subjects were significantly impaired with respect to the use of obligatory (auxiliary and copular) forms, across both active and negative sentences. However, negative particles were not subject to errors. Agreement commission errors were also found in negative sentences when a contracted particle was used, implying that contraction of the negative particle was not a syntactic process. We conclude that these findings support the RDDR account of SLI and discuss their implications for the underlying SLI grammar.

The modularity of grammar and pragmatics: Evidence from Specific Language Impairment

Jeannette Schaeffer, Ben Gurion University of the Negev

This paper reports the results of a study on object scrambling in the spontaneous speech of Dutch children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) providing evidence in favor of the internal modularity of language and the hypothesis that children with SLI have grammatical, but no pragmatic deficits.

Our results indicate that, unlike normally developing Dutch children, Dutch children with SLI do not have any problems with object scrambling. Assuming that object scrambling is driven by specificity, that specificity is determined in terms of familiarity of the noun's referent to speaker and/or hearer, and that the ability to distinguish speaker from hearer knowledge is pragmatic ("Concept of Non-shared Knowledge"), these results suggest:

- (a) that (older) children with SLI do NOT lack the pragmatic "Concept of Non-shared Knowledge", contrary to young normally developing children;
- (b) that pragmatic principles develop as a function of age, rather than as a function of language developmental stage.

*Sunday 2:30 PM**Terrace Lounge***What Dutch children know about telicity and tense**

Ayumi Matsuo, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics
Suzanne van der Feest, Utrecht University

This paper investigates how Dutch children (3;09-6;08) produce embedded verbs with different temporality (using Tense/Aspect markings) in constructions where Sequence of Tense (SOT) is observed (see (1) and (2)).

- (1) De aap zei, dat de man een hek afmaakte. Accomplishment
The monkey said, that the man finished a fence.
- (2) De aap zei, dat de indiaan nieste. Semelfactive
The monkey said, that the Indian sneezed.

We focus on whether certain types of predicates are easier for children to produce correct Tense and Aspect markings. We use the elicited production task designed in van Hout (1996).

The results from 26 children and 5 controls show that clear asymmetry between telic and atelic verbs is found in the results from Theory of Mind failers but not from passers. We argue that telicity is an additional property to be acquired before the children give correct tense markings in embedded clauses.

*Sunday 3:00 PM**Terrace Lounge***Italian sequence of tense: Complementation or anaphoricity?**

Bart Hollebrandse, Groningen University/Utrecht University
Denis Delfitto, Angeliek van Hout, and Andrea Vroeg-Peixoto, Utrecht University

In Italian, Sequence of Tense (simultaneity of main and complement clause events) is expressed by an imperfective tense (*Imperfetto*), as in (1).

- (1) Mario ha detto che Gianni mangiava una mela
M. said that G. ate-IMP an apple
'Mario said that he was eating an apple'

Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) claim that temporal simultaneity in (1) is due to the anaphoric nature of the *Imperfetto*. Hollebrandse (1998) claims that at least in English and Dutch complementation is the crucial factor. It is the acquisition process that provides a difference between the two hypotheses: the Anaphoricity and the Complementation hypothesis. To make this distinction we ran three experiments with 59 Italian children (3-6), who were tested on: (i) Aspect (probing knowledge of anaphoricity), (ii) Sequence of Tense, and (iii) Theory of Mind (as a test for complementation). Not all 5-year-olds mastered the *Imperfetto*, while they show temporal simultaneity; therefore the anaphoric nature alone is not sufficient for the child to render simultaneous readings. We conclude that anaphoricity does not play a crucial role in the acquisition of Sequence of Tense in Italian, but complementation does.

The influence of telicity on children's morpheme selection and production accuracy

Bonnie W. Johnson, University of Illinois
Marc E. Fey, University of Kansas Medical Center

This study examined the nature of the influence of telicity on children's morpheme use. Consistent with previous research, in spontaneous speech children ages 2;4 to 3;1 used -ing more frequently to describe atelic events (e.g., *her crawling*) than telic events (e.g., *it dropping*). As anticipated, the reverse pattern was found for -ed. Children used -ed more frequently to describe telic events (e.g., *it dropped*) than atelic events (e.g., *she crawled*). An inadequate number of telic -ing and atelic -ed contexts were observed to examine morpheme production accuracy in spontaneous speech, necessitating the use of an imitation task. On average, children produced -ing with 90% accuracy in contexts that occur frequently (atelic) and infrequently (telic) in discourse. In contrast, children did not produce -ed with equal accuracy across all contexts. The results are most compatible with a language-processing explanation that takes into account an interaction between semantic prototypicality and articulatory complexity.

Alternates

Descriptive imperatives in early child Russian

Eva G. Bar-Shalom and William B. Snyder
University of Connecticut

The analysis of new spontaneous speech samples from a very young Russian child, "Svetlana," indicates that in her speech not only infinitives but also imperatives occurred optionally in descriptive contexts. During the age-range of 1;7 to 2;1, Svetlana's MLU ranged from 1.00 to 1.55 words. During this period she produced some 19 non-adult, non-indicative forms, of which 13 (67%) were OI's and six (33%) were descriptive imperatives. Svetlana also produced some 36 indicative verbs with a 100% accurate use of inflection. Further, a similar occurrence of descriptive imperatives, but not OI's, was found in child Polish (e.g., Smoczyńska 1985). In both languages the imperative forms are similar to the bare stems. We consider the possibility that Svetlana has not yet set the Bare Stem Parameter to its adult value (Hyams 1985). We also examine the possibility that the OI phenomenon is closely tied to the morphosyntactic properties of infinitives.

Complex predicates and restitutive *again*: Evidence for a semantic parameter

Sigrid Beck and William Snyder, University of Connecticut

Snyder and Stromswold (1997) argue that children acquire English complex-predicate constructions (verb-particles, *put*-locatives, *make*-causatives) as a group. We propose

that children are setting a semantic parameter, controlling creation of accomplishment predicates at the syntax-semantics interface. Our account makes a novel prediction for “restitutive” *again*, as in “Mary set the frog in the pond again,” where Mary first captures, and then releases (once), a frog in the pond. Specifically, no child learning English should acquire restitutive *again* before complex predicates such as verb-particles. We analyzed ten longitudinal English corpora from CHILDES (MacWhinney & Snow 1990). Ages of first clear use for a verb-particle construction were 1.75-2.56 years (mean 2.18), and for restitutive *again* were 2.08-3.31 years (mean 2.49). Despite the considerable overlap of age-ranges, no child acquired restitutive *again* prior to verb-particles.

A comparative study of ellipsis and anaphora in L2 acquisition

Nigel Duffield and Ayumi Matsuo, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

This paper develops previous work that compared 1st and 2nd language learners’ knowledge of the subtle ‘parallelism constraints’ on ellipsis constructions in English. The experiments compared the behavior of native-speaker controls with three groups of L2 learners (Spanish, Japanese and Dutch), in a modified replication of the on-line Sentence Completion task developed by Tanenhaus & Carlson (1990). In this task, subjects’ sensitivity to constraints on ellipsis and anaphora is shown if ‘non-parallel’ sentences are accepted significantly less often than their parallel counterparts, as well as in differing response times. For the native speakers, the experimental predictions were confirmed. However, the L2 learners’ results diverge: whereas the Dutch group exhibited target-like behavior, Spanish and Japanese speakers generally reject VPE sentences (irrespective of parallelism). These results are somewhat unexpected: since neither Dutch nor Spanish has VP-ellipsis, these two groups should show comparable performance. In this talk, we report the results more fully and consider both theoretical and methodological explanations of the result.

Acquisition of L2 English verb morphology: The Aspect Hypothesis tested

Ingrid Finger, Universidade de Santa Cruz, Brazil

The research reported here investigates the Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis, according to which learners follow certain universal principles in marking verbal aspect in both first and second language contexts (Andersen 1989, 1991; Andersen & Shirai 1994, 1996; Robison 1990, 1995, among others). It has been argued that the inherent aspectual class of a verb plays a role in its acquisition and that both L1 and L2 learners acquire aspectual distinctions prior to tense features. A controlled experimental study testing 23 beginners and 30 low-intermediate learners attending regular ESL classes in a city in the south of Brazil was developed to investigate whether the Primacy of Aspect Hypothesis holds in the case of native speakers of Brazilian Portuguese learning ESL. A preference task testing comprehension and an elicited production task testing production were developed to investigate whether aspect and tense markings are in complementary distribution when Interlanguage verbal morphology first emerges.

What's in a name? Novel nouns facilitate learning novel adjectives

Toben H. Mintz and Nuria Giralt, University of Southern California

Previous experiments using familiar objects show that toddlers (2;0) can immediately map novel adjectives to object properties, across different object kinds (Mintz & Gleitman 1998). A condition for immediate mapping across categories was the use of taxonomically specific nouns ("horsie"), not vague labels ("thing"). In an experiment with 24- and 36-month-olds, we demonstrate that even unfamiliar nouns facilitate novel adjective-to-property mapping. Subjects were shown multiple unfamiliar objects which shared a property. In one condition, objects were described using a novel adjective and novel nouns (e.g., "a stoof poztaro"). In another condition, vague labels were (e.g., "a stoof thing"). Both 24- and 36-month olds learned the adjective-to-property mapping **only in combination with novel nouns**. These results support the notion that recognizing the taxonomic category of a referent is crucial for young toddlers' adjective acquisition (Klibanoff & Waxman, forthcoming; Waxman & Markow 1998). This can be achieved using specific names, even unfamiliar ones.

The acquisition of focus particles in German

Ulrike Nelderstigt, Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics

This paper presents results on the acquisition of the additive focus particles *auch* (also) and *noch* (still/also) of a monolingual German girl between age 1;10 and 3;06. Focus particles are assumed to associate with the focus of the utterance (cf. Rooth 1992). However, Dimroth (1998) and Krifka (1999) proposed that *auch* can also associate with the topic of the utterance and receives focus status, which is indicated by a pitch accent on the particle. On the assumption that additive particles have the same properties *noch* should have similar properties as *auch*.

Yet, the analysis of child language reveals that the two particles have less in common than has been expected. *Auch* is most frequently associated with the topic of the utterance; focus association is restricted to 7% of the utterances. *Noch*, on the other hand, is almost always associated with the focus of the utterance.

Not too small, not too big: The minimal word hypothesis revisited

Mitsuhiko Ota, University of Edinburgh

This study offers new evidence which unambiguously shows that early productions are minimally bimoraic and maximally disyllabic, as predicted by the minimal word hypothesis (Demuth & Fee 1995). An analysis of longitudinal data collected from three Japanese-speaking children (1;0-2;6) reveals that monomoraic target words such as /me/ 'eye' are lengthened in production, and exhibit a pitch contour characteristic of accented bimoraic structures in Japanese. The analysis also shows that, after controlling for non-structural factors of truncation, there is still a marked difference in the syllable omission patterns of disyllabic targets and longer targets. Few of the disyllabic targets lose a syllable, but almost all of the longer targets are reduced to disyllabic structures in the early stages. These findings indicate that the size limit of early words is not an epiphenomenon due to preservation of prominent elements, but a consequence of a binary foot condition imposed on the output structures.

The status of *he/she don't* and implications for theories of root infinitives

Carson Schütze, UCLA

This paper examines two issues concerning the status of the form *don't* when used with 3sg subjects in English: (i) Do children know that *don't* consists of an auxiliary plus a negative, or do they misanalyze it as pure negation? (ii) If they represent *don't* bimorphemically, what grammatical features underlie the auxiliary portion? Numerous accounts have proposed that *don't* is first misanalyzed as NEG, predicting that it should appear (ungrammatically) in environments where *not* appears; my results do not bear this out. If *don't* contains Aux, why does it fail to agree with its 3sg subject? Guasti & Rizzi (1999) attribute this to a mis-set parameter. I demonstrate that their proposal makes an incorrect empirical prediction: nonagreeing *do* is not found without *n't*. Derivatives of Wexler's (1994) Optional Infinitive (OI) theory better explain the facts, by treating *do* when followed by *n't* as inserted purely to support the clitic.

Some characteristics of infants' use of prosody for clausal packaging

Melanie Soderstrom, Johns Hopkins University
Deborah Kemler Nelson, Swarthmore College
Peter Jusczyk, Johns Hopkins University

Under what conditions can six-month-old infants use prosodic packaging to detect the similarity of two clauses embedded in different linguistic contexts? In a modified Headturn Preference Procedure, infants were familiarized with a passage that included a target clause spoken with interrogative intonation. They were then tested on a different passage that included the same clause, but spoken with declarative intonation. A comparison test passage included the words from the target clause, but not as a single continuous sequence. When tested immediately, infants listened significantly longer to the test passage containing the target sequence, even though its intonational contour had been switched from interrogative to declarative. However, when tested after a 24-hour delay, infants showed no preference for the test passage containing the target sequence.

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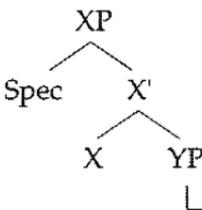
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